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Настоящая книга представляет собой сборник воспоминаний участников лингвистических экспедиций Отделения теоретической и прикладной лингвистики МГУ под руководством А. Е. Кибрика и С. В. Кодзасова и других связанных с ними полевых исследований. Экспедиционная традиция, основанная А. Е. Кибриком, оказалась уникальным явлением не только в отечественной и мировой лингвистике, но и в социальной действительности 1960-х и последующих годов.

Для широкого круга лингвистов и нелингвистов, для всех, интересующихся историей отечественной науки второй половины XX века.

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FIELDWORK AMONG THE HAWK PEOPLE OF THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON*

Denny Moore

Arrival in the village

After months of hampered preparations I was happy to be going in to an indigenous village in the tropical forest on 13 June 1975. I caught a ride in the boat of an American missionary, bringing in what would hopefully be appropriate and sufficient supplies. The dry season was already starting and the level of the river was low but still adequate. Since there were only two of us I had to be the *proeiro*, standing in the front of the boat with a pole to push us away from any rocks. After about four hours of weaving through rapids and speeding in the tame stretches we reached the opening of an *igarapé* on the right and entered there. An *igarapé* is a creek in the dry season and a small river in the rainy season. There were some fallen trees blocking the way and in all we chopped through five of these. But one was huge and a few inches below the water. Though I had some doubts, my companion had us take out the weighty supplies and then made a fast run with the boat directly at the log. The boat sailed over it cleanly and we reloaded and continued.

Φ414

He said to keep watch; sometimes there were animals swimming across the *igarapé* who could be taken easily. White herons glided ahead of us and the forest overhung parts of the water. Flocks of butterflies hobnobbed occasionally on rocks and sand bars. In one place purple flowers were dropping in the water and were quickly snatched by fish. In the more open stretches low mountains covered with trees could be seen. I was trying not to fall in love with the place but my resistance was wavering.

About 5:30, as the sun was low, we reached the village of the Hawks, the indigenous people whose language I would study. People came down to meet us, having heard the motor. There was the local agent of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), a medical attendant, a motorist for the boat, and a number of small brown indigenous Hawks, smiling and

* I was very fortunate to be able to discuss fieldwork and linguistics with Alexandre Kibrik during his stay in Belém, Brazil, at the end of the 1980s. His great vitality, intelligence, and character remain an inspiration and one of my fondest memories.

curious. I explained the nature of my work to the FUNAI agent, who was professional and helpful. The Hawks talked among themselves but said little to me. A temporary place for me was found with the medical attendant. For the next few days I walked around with him to see where things were and how people lived. Unfortunately he was rather immature and not popular with the Hawks. He would leave in a couple of weeks for another area.

Setting up

There was a small two-room thatch hut that was unoccupied and I moved into that, though it was in disrepair and empty. It was not possible to live with a family since a man should not be alone in a house with the owner's wife. It was quite a bit of work to fix the hut and build some furniture (table, benches, shelves) from the local materials, mainly boards from *pachiuba* palm trunks. Pieces of the trunk were first quartered lengthwise. Then the softer inside was cut out leaving a sort of board, flat on one side and rounded on the other. People came to see what I was doing, but it was sometimes difficult to get information from them, even for simple questions such as, "Is that your mother?" or "What is your name?" There was a clay oven for cooking, though it turned out to be time consuming to cut firewood and bring it in. My kerosene lantern gave reasonable light but used quite a lot of kerosene.

Frequently people in Amazonia sleep in hammocks, to avoid the things that crawl on the floor at night. One night the large cockroaches where I slept were more restless than usual (landing on my forehead) and I reached for my flashlight to see what was going on. Something bit me and the light fell but illuminated the floor — covered by a black swarm of ants, who were dragging down the roaches relentlessly. When the ants started down my hammock strings I got some repellent spray and sent them away. Later people told me to throw water or ashes on the ants but to be careful about using fire, since the thatch houses easily burn down. One strategy is just to leave the house for a while and let the ants eliminate the roaches and spiders. There were surprisingly few mosquitos, though the few who were present sometimes carried malaria. The biggest inconvenience was the *pium*, tiny biting insects that attacked uncovered skin, though they did not come into the shade.

To see what the local practice was for purchasing food from the Hawks I checked with the FUNAI agent and the two families of missionaries. The FUNAI agent advised me to "just take whatever you want."

Taken aback by this casual exploitation, I replied that I could not do that, that I needed good relations with the people. He seemed to think that odd but said he could see how that might be a concern in my case. The missionaries paid for meat with shotgun shells and less for root crops. They never gave anything for free, to avoid incessant requests. What seemed fair to me was to pay the same prices that were normal in the city and to have useful items (soap, cloth, kerosene, etc.), also at the normal price, to use as payment, since money was of no use in the village but goods were scarce. The local food was excellent: meat from game animals, fish, sweet manioc, yams, sweet potatoes, bananas, pineapples, papayas, maize, and some forest fruits. Women brought chicken eggs to sell and the payment was always considered their money. It was better to purchase things from various families so as to spread the small benefits around. For linguistic consultants I paid by the hour at a rate of about twice the minimum wage.

The ways of the Hawks

It took a while to get accustomed to the behavior of the Hawks. Since there are no jobs to report to, nor any hierarchy, anyone can wake up each day and decide what to do, or whether to do anything at all, though women have their domestic duties which are difficult to escape. There are no jails or mental hospitals and the folks who would be inhabitants of these institutions in the city are living, more or less normally, in the villages. In this anarchy social skills, charm, and leadership are important, as is knowledge of what is going on. A man should be intelligent, competent, attractive, cheerful, aware, hardy, and courageous. Most of the Hawks over 35 years of age had killed someone from the outside, but there was no interest in homicide and no gross macho behavior. There seems to be no profanity. Some considered the missionaries to be child beaters since they paddled their children. People generally listen without interrupting and qualify what they say, whether it is an opinion or an assertion, as well as indicate what their evidence is. Indigenous visitors to a house do not necessarily say anything. They may just come in, exchanging greetings, sitting down, watching what is going on and then leaving at some point, exchanging goodbyes with the host. Later you learn that everybody in the village knows how you hold your coffee cup, how you failed to light the lamp, or what you said about someone. The Hawks were still doing imitations of the anthropologist Harald Schultz, who had passed through there 22 years earlier. Students

should be advised to keep their behavior professional since it will be reported widely for years, in intimate detail. I kept waiting to enter into culture shock and discover that my initial fondness for the Hawks was misplaced. But after about three months it appeared that they really were as great as they seemed.

There was an impressive display of Hawk social control one day. A Hawk who was raised mostly away from the tribe had returned and was known to steal objects from others, though no one confronted him with this. Three men were working chopping out grass in a living area and the thief went to join them. They moved two meters away, without saying anything. He moved closer and they moved away another two meters and he finally stood by himself, working alone. When he left he said goodbye to each one, as one should do, and they just looked at him. When the Hawks are being cold to you you feel truly miserable. When they turn on the charm and affection there is no resisting. I was never sure to what extent I was making decisions and to what extent I was being astutely led by the Hawks to do what they wanted.

Where the Hawks lived then and their history

The Hawks lived in three main areas, each about 45 minutes from the others. On the post where the FUNAI staff lived there were two groups of houses, each group more or less centered on a leading man. The second area had a leading man who was a strong supporter of the church, which was located there. The third area, the Waterfall village, had the main shaman as its leading man. All the villages were on the banks of *igarapé*s which flowed into the main *igarapé*. It was possible to go by boat to the nearest city, Vila de Rondônia, a town of perhaps 5.000–10.000 inhabitants, via the *igarapé* and then the Rio Machado, when there was sufficient water. If the *igarapé* was too low it was possible to walk 4–5 hours on a trail alongside the *igarapé* to reach the river, whose level did not drop so much. A popular radio broadcast included messages for people in the interior. So if the FUNAI agent needed to be met with mules to transport goods at the mouth of the *igarapé* on a certain date that would be broadcast and the motorist of the boat would go there as directed. To maximize working time and minimize expenses I tried to go out as seldom as possible, staying in the village for months at a time, though periodically it was necessary to go out to resupply, move my meager grant money around, and contact FUNAI and other Brazilian institutions. The department of Anthropology at the University of Brasília was my official base. They were very helpful, as was an American anthropologist who was in Brazil for a project with Gê groups.

There were about 135 Hawks on the reserve at that time. Their first sustained contacts with outsiders were with rubber tappers who were pulled into the forest to extract rubber for the war effort in the 1940s. Many Hawks had died from introduced diseases in the 1950s, though I did not get a quantitative estimate. One Hawk told me that his wife took medicine but died anyway at that time. I asked him what the medicine was and he replied that it was tea made from dried dog manure — a doubtful remedy used by the local settlers. The Hawks had attacked the neighboring Macaw tribe in 1958, having heard from a Hawk woman living among the Macaws that they planned to kill a Hawk named Wild Honey. The remaining Macaws fled to a *seringal*, a rubber plantation, and then ended up on another *seringal* owned by a man named Firmino, who kept them in debt slavery until a FUNAI agent brought them to the reserve. This FUNAI agent also exploited the Hawks, taking their production and repaying them with little. They figured this out and lowered production. Unlike the Macaws, the Hawks always stayed independent.

Ф415

The missionaries

The German missionary, of the New Tribes Mission, arrived about 1966 and set up a household and began work on the language, in spite of having only rudimentary training for this. He was, however, an excellent practical medic and helped stabilize health and end the population decline. An American missionary arrived later. In 1975 most of the Hawks had converted, though there were said to be some still interested in shamanism. One night one of the Hawks showed me a book of old woodcuts, I think by Albrecht Dürer, that portrayed souls being tortured in Hell. The missionaries showed that to the Hawks (at night, of course) to frighten them into becoming Christian. Another Hawk told me that in the past when he was sick the missionary had prayed with him and given him antibiotics. He said that he recovered and foolishly thought that it was the antibiotics that had helped when it really was the prayer. I observed to him that antibiotics seem to work fine for me and for others with no prayer.

Ф416

After I had been among the Hawks for a year another two missionaries arrived, one a Brazilian from Bahia and one a young Canadian. The Canadian explained his views to me one day and it became obvious that we were living in radically different worlds. He said that good works were OK, but that in order to escape from eternal damnation one had to accept Jesus. If that were done then you were probably safe. So it was

imperative to spread the word and have the maximum of people accept Jesus. The Devil used native religion as a means to confuse people and hide the truth. He said that satanic powers had more freedom to act among primitive peoples. Some of their missionaries were among the Waiká (their term for the Yanomami) in a dark *maloca* (big communal house) when they felt something pinching them all over their bodies. They knew who it was (presumably Satan, I guess, unless he delegates this sort of task). I asked him if he respected native groups' religions. He replied that he did, certainly. So I asked how he could respect them if he thought that they were the work of the Devil. He replied that what he meant was that he would replace native religion in such a way as to disturb as little as possible the rest of their lifestyle. Of course, since native religious practices were protected by Brazilian law the work of converting souls was usually carried out discreetly and missionary work tends to vary between overt self-righteousness and more clandestine and discreet measures.

Linguistics

After setting up a household and becoming acquainted with people and living conditions it was time to start the study of the language. There were a number of branches of the Tupi language family in the western territory of Rondônia that were unstudied and important for comparative Tupi studies. Munduruku was known to be tonal, but that was considered exceptional in the Tupi family. The Hawks spoke a language of the Mondé branch of the Tupi family. Their speech was mutually intelligible with that of the Wide Belts, a large and warlike group that was mostly uncontacted to the east. The Zoró tribe also spoke a dialect very close to that of the Hawks and had lived together with them at points in the past. Missionary linguists with the Suruí tribe to the east had told me that one of their SIL consultants had concluded that the language was not tonal, but that, oddly, it appeared to be possible to stress a two-syllable word on both syllables. That sounded impossible. In the village I noticed a constant pitch contour in the usual greeting and commented on it to the German missionary, who laughed and said that in a couple of years I might understand things.

There were not many adequate consultants, since few people spoke much Portuguese and had the proximity, time and inclination for such work. But there were three brothers who did and we worked a great deal together. I will refer to them as Half Red, Belly (though he was trim and

handsome), and His Instep. They had a younger brother, Tree Frog, and a sister, Rose (from her Portuguese name). Their intelligence and patience were crucial, though they were not always available or interested in working.

I am generally translating Hawk names into English here, though this may create some misinterpretation, since the names do not denote qualities of the person. There are three ways that Hawk men receive names. Childhood names are often pornographic (e.g., Little Dick). Names can be inherited from a man's grandfather or mother's brother. The third kind of name is poetic. When something fascinates you, in that instant you can put that to be your name. One older man's name was Asleep Horizontal. He and another Hawk had slipped up to a window in a settler's house many years earlier and had seen the man sleeping in his hammock inside. Withdrawing, the Hawk said that he would put that to be his name, Asleep Horizontal. I eventually acquired the name Diiinibii, the name of a mythical figure, since it sounded like Denny.

Within about three days of linguistic elicitation there had appeared a minimal quadruple of two-syllable words that had the same consonants and vowels. If the difference between the words were stress then there could only be two different words, one with initial stress and one with final stress. Tone differences could be much more complicated. Having no musical talent I could not hear the pitch difference, though Hawk visitors to my house could easily distinguish the words. I had a meeting with the German missionary, who was the linguist of the two. Listening to my tape of the words, it was clear that stress could not account for the differences. He showed me his phonetics exercises for tone — all with a long line above words — he could not hear pitch at all. Despair set in. It is easy to imagine that you are hearing tone correctly when you are not. A few errors are enough to sidetrack the analysis. But one day Belly, having figured out what my problem was, whistled two words in a clear, deliberate way and the tone was easy to hear. At the end of that afternoon of working with whistling words, the sounds were becoming much clearer, the sky turned blue, and I went for a swim feeling so relieved and jolly that a Hawk girl remarked behind me, "He's happy!"

At first it seemed like the tone and length system was just high, low, and rising tones which could be either short or long. But the system was considerably more complex, with the tone changing in certain environments. It took several months of detailed work to reach an adequate level of transcription and understanding of the tone alternations. The work was

more difficult since the main consultants were often working on building an airstrip for the missionaries. The missionary linguist worked away steadily, but his consultant, a solid Christian, did not have the same talent as the three brothers who worked with me. The missionary noticed that the tone level dropped after certain long tones which ended in low tone when final. His analysis was that this drop, “downstep”, was due to the length of the preceding tones which provoked the drop. But there were lots of long tones which did not provoke the drop, so that analysis was clearly false. Nevertheless, he stoutly maintained it and put it into the writing system he was developing. At one point he went to a workshop organized by the Summer Institute of Linguistics where another missionary linguist would be present who worked with the language of the Wide Belts. On his return I asked him what that missionary had to say about tone—he had been the first to detect that the language was tonal, independently of me. The response was that there had not been time to talk (though the event went on for a month). So it became clear that he was not open to discussion. The unfortunate aspect is that his confusions were incorporated into the writing system for the Hawks.

Cooperation

In spite of differences, it was possible to maintain good relations with the missionaries, whose main contribution was in health. It was important to keep up working relations between myself, FUNAI, and the mission, since we were far from the city in an environment that presented certain hazards and we might need each other at any time. Whoever went into town took in letters from everyone to mail and brought back mail, as well as small supplies that might be needed. Cooperation was easy with the first FUNAI agent, who was responsible and reasonable. Of course, he knew I would be talking to the FUNAI headquarters in Brasília and he did not want a bad report. We all played soccer together, with the unspoken rule being that there had to be an equal number of *Jalaay* (non-indigenous people, plural) on each side, so as to not pit an indigenous team against a non-indigenous team, which would be bad socially and politically. After I had been in the village for about 15 months the FUNAI agent suggested I move into a FUNAI building that was hardly used and was considerably better than my thatch hut. That was much more adequate, especially since I was by then using a kerosene burner for cooking and a gas lamp for illumination, as well as a table with real boards brought from town.

Soon thereafter, however, that agent left and a new one arrived who was much less professional. He had photographs of his previous career as the strongman in a small travelling circus. The Hawks noticed quickly that he was a classic pathological liar, who invented various stories and could not be trusted to do his job. They gave him an indigenous name which translates as Big Liar, though he probably never knew it. A FUNAI doctor began appearing by airplane, staying only part of one day each time. He diagnosed one man as having malaria and another as having TB. In the hospital it turned out that the one said to have malaria actually had TB and the one who supposedly had TB actually had malaria. He liked writing out prescriptions and one day asked one of the more traditional women what her name was so he could do the prescription. Traditionally you don't ask a Hawk his or her name and she demurred. He became frustrated and said, "You there, her husband, you must know her name." He demurred also. The doctor was enraged, "I can't work this way!" Finally someone suggested "Antônia" and that calmed him down. When I checked the prescriptions they were all the same: both chloroquine, in case it was malaria, and chloramphenicol, in case it was a bacterial infection. Since the Big Liar had a tendency to hide the cases of sickness to present a good image of the post, I brought them out. One was a boy with lumps on his neck whose father had had TB. The doctor placed his stethoscope on the boy's chest and said, "He's perfectly fine!" I pointed to the lumps and he said, "Oh, scrofula." So we got medicine to treat the boy and he grew up to be a fine man who sometimes works with me. The Hawks sized the doctor up quite well and gave him an indigenous name which means Little Liar. Since he stayed for only a few hours and frequently appeared with no prior notice, it was not possible to vaccinate the Hawk children who lived away from the post. To overcome this, I tossed out the coffee from my thermos and put the ice and vaccine in it, where it could stay cold for up to three days, and went to the other villages to reach the children there myself.

Ф417

The forest

One of the best aspects of fieldwork in Amazonia is the opportunity to explore the forest. Since there is a certain danger, even Hawks tell someone where they are going and when they will be back. I always carried a compass, cigarette lighter, and a knife or short machete. Especially in the rainy season, when clouds cover the sky, it is easy to get lost.

However, by following the flow of water, it was always possible to get back to the main *igarapé*, which had a trail cut alongside it which would lead one back to the villages. The Hawks gave me some tips. Look behind you every five minutes to see if you are being followed by a jaguar. When a herd of peccaries comes at you clacking their razor tusks, climb up on anything—they can't climb at all. In my native state of Michigan there are many accomplished hunters. But the Hawks were at a far more advanced level, detecting signals that were invisible to me, knowing the habits of all the animals, and moving in on the game with incredible stealth or calling it in to shoot up close. One conversation with a hunter who had killed two peccaries with a single-shot shotgun left me open mouthed:

- “Did you shoot the two of them when they were close to each other?”
- “No, I shot one and then I shot the other.”
- “Didn't the second one run away when you shot the first one?”
- “Yes, she ran away.”
- “You ran after her?”
- “No, she came back.”
- “She didn't see you shoot the first one?”
- “Yes, she saw that.”
- “So why did she come back?”
- “I called her.”
- “How did you do that?”
- “Like this...”—makes a sound with his fingers in his mouth.

No matter how much one might pay for an “Amazon forest tour” for tourists, there is no comparison with the real forest, for free, with the indigenous masters showing their skills. The number of species in Amazonia is immense and the forest vibrates with life. While the *Jalaay* keep the forest at bay and go there with trepidation, the indigenous peoples live as part of that complex system, which they study and understand, with accumulated knowledge being handed down through generations. For them it is a free supermarket, pharmacy, hardware store, and park. When you walk through the deep forest with its giant trees, you feel like a tiny ant in a huge cornfield, insignificant, as though you could be snuffed out without making the slightest difference. You look around as you move, to see what other beings are there with you. They seem sort of like companions, even though you may want to eat them and they may want to eat you. The air is so pure that it sometimes seems like you

could see tiny green vitamins floating in it. There is no light pollution and the stars are vivid. At night it seems like there are as many different sounds as there are stars. The Hawks walk very quickly and silently, looking about constantly and taking care where they step. When I came back from a hunt, I would tell the Hawks where I went and what I saw. They would give me tips and encourage me to continue. If I got something I would give part of it away, which gave them incentive to train me well. I asked them once why they went to the forest and got peccaries and deer but I only got monkeys and birds. They explained, "When you first came here, you didn't see anything. Now you have learned to look up, but you are not looking enough at ground level. If the animals are there for us they are there for you. If you once see them, even if you miss them, from then on you will know what you are looking for. Stay with it. You are a good shot; you just need to learn more."

Φ418

I went to help clear field plots a few times, to get a feel of how that was done. Curiously, one man cut most of the way through a large tree and then walked away. Then he cut most of the way through another large tree. This continued until about ten trees were mostly cut but still standing. Then the man studied the situation and gave a final chop to the last tree, which fell against the next one, which fell against others. There was a tremendous noise of crashing trees and when the dust settled all ten were on the ground. The man smiled mildly at me and explained, "One helps the others to fall." It was a safer and more efficient way to bring the trees down.

Learning from each other

Talking to the Hawks in the beginning we had observed that they could teach me what they knew and I could teach them what I knew and we would all come out ahead. That worked out well. One wish of several of the men was to learn to read and write in Portuguese. Later in my field stay I managed to acquire literacy books meant for illiterate Brazilians, from a program called MOBREAL. Some of the words were too urban for the Hawks to recognize but those could be explained. I contributed two nights a week during various periods to literacy in Portuguese. I suggested to the missionary from Bahia that he contribute 2 nights per week also. He laughed and said that the Hawks would not learn to read. Knowing them all I can say that they had more native intelligence than he had. In fact they did very well. One boy, River Bottom, was obviously smart but unruly. I mentioned to his father, Wild Honey, that the boy was

intelligent and should come to study. He looked at me seriously and said, "He'll be there." And he was, with his hair combed. He learned to read Portuguese even though he didn't speak it. His father stopped by once and gave me a small basket of *pama* fruit, which I interpreted as a mark of gratitude. To give the boy a chance to show his stuff I wrote messages in chalk in some places, to make people curious, so they would call on him to sound the words out. One of the cryptic messages was "Let's eat vulture." Since the Hawks are anxious about failing in anything I included an older man who would have difficulty in the class. He stumbled a lot and that made the others feel more secure.

One thing that baffled the Hawks was money and commerce. Their counting system goes by fingers and toes and when they wanted to learn some arithmetic so as to check accounts they had been discouraged by the former FUNAI agent who had exploited them. One of the three brothers asked me one day how prices are determined. Why do some things cost a lot and other things less? I replied that if there were a lot of something and few people wanted it then the price would be low. But if there were little of something and much demand, then the price would go high. Further, one had to know about the price of labor. If someone doesn't want to pay as much as they should the workers don't have to accept that; they can go on strike. He said that things were becoming clearer.

One day one of the leading Hawk men popped in and asked how long a meter was. I held up my hands to show approximately how long it was but he said he wanted to know exactly how long it was—please mark it on the piece of arrow cane he had. So that was carefully measured and marked and he cut it to length and went away, leaving me puzzled. Some months later he commented that the people were happy with the way I was bringing in cloth for them. I said that I was pleased that they thought it was good. I looked for bright colors and low prices. And I always gave just a bit more than the two meters bargained for. He said that he knew that. I asked him how he knew that and he replied, "Don't you remember that day you marked a meter for me? Since then every woman who bought cloth from you came to my house afterwards to measure and see if you were honest." I told him that it was very good that they were careful not to be cheated.

Another time Half Red, who is brilliant, showed me his system for buying goods for the other Hawks when he went to town. He opened his wallet, which had a foldout plastic part with many compartments. He

would put the first person's money in the first compartment, the second person's money in the second compartment, and so forth. Then, in town, he would buy the first item on the first person's list, which he had memorized, putting the change back in the compartment. Then he bought the second item for the first person and proceeded until there was not enough money left to buy more items. That money stayed in the compartment as the person's change. Then he did the same with the money of the second person, then the third, etc. I explained comparison shopping to him, and we went together sometimes to get lower prices and bargain. He became quite adept at this, with his strong memory.

An important factor in determining the future of any group is its economic base. With some appropriate way of earning a modest income, the Hawks would be less subject to exploitation and external control and also less inclined to leave the reserve. I discussed this with them. One day mules appeared bringing in loads of Brazil nuts. Half Red, without saying anything, had organized people to extract and sell the nuts. The problem then was to avoid internal exploitation and see that each person was paid for his work. This little industry created more work for the FUNAI agent and loosened missionary control but it was popular among the Hawks. Interest increased in other possible sources of income, such as cutting rubber, if done without exploitation.

With increased earnings and access to the city there was an increasing problem with the money being used for the recreation of the migrant lower class: alcohol and prostitutes, both of which seemed marvelous to some of the Hawks. The Hawk women, naturally, took a very dim view of these activities and men complained if their brothers-in-law spent money in the *zona* instead of buying things for their wives. Since the men would talk to me about their adventures, I slipped in casual arguments to discourage excesses. When asked about brothels in the United States I replied that people don't talk about it much since they were embarrassed if they went there — an attractive guy would get it for free; only ugly guys would pay. I observed that the people in the *zona* think that you are stupid if you let them take your money. They are all laughing behind your back. The system exists because the owners want to drain capital from the peons so that they will never have anything of their own and will remain a cheap dependent labor force. Also the *Jalaay* are kinky — sometimes they make little holes in the wall of these establishments and watch the action inside the rooms. These comments at least took some of the prestige away from the *zona* and discouraged wasting money there.

Naturally, sex was a topic of conversation with the Hawks, who were sometimes baffled by the practices of the *Jalaay*. One day a group of five men were in my house for some time for no particular reason and I had the feeling that this was a committee with something on its mind. Finally one man broached the subject.

– “Friend, we have heard that the *Jalaay* – not your people, Friend, but those who live around here—that they want to marry, umm, unh, VIRGINS. Is that true?”

– “Well, Friend, I do not know well the ways of the local people here and it appears to me that things are different among people in the larger cities and in the universities. But, what you say does seem to be more or less true.”

– (General astonishment) “But why?”

– “Well, Friend, among the *Jalaay* some people have many things and some have almost nothing, unlike the Hawks where everyone has equal opportunity and access to the forest. The men of the *Jalaay* leave what they have to their children, so they want to be sure that those really are their children. They don’t recognize more than one father, as the Hawks do.”

That seemed to make some sense out of this strange custom of the *Jalaay*. The Hawk men were very fond of fat women, who do have higher reproductive success. They joked frequently about wanting a woman with a fat “thing” (crotch). Hopefully nurses and other female visitors never knew how they were being evaluated. The Hawks are less inhibited talking about sex than the *Jalaay*, whom they sometimes like to embarrass. Years later, after I returned to Brazil, a woman with the state educational agency showed me a list of names of schools, proudly stating that the names were chosen by the indigenous peoples themselves. With typical Hawk humor they had given as the name of one school a verb which means “to pull back the foreskin of the penis”. The woman was a bit surprised but appreciated the joke.

Revival of traditional culture

Traditional Hawk culture made a comeback in 1976, after I had been among them for nine months. The FUNAI agent suggested a traditional festival for Brazil’s Day of the Indian, on 19 April. Half Red was fond of traditional culture whereas two other leading men were important in the local church. As he began organizing an event, there was discussion and dissent. The American missionary had told me that after the last festival people had been depressed for two days because they thought that

they had offended Jesus. I pointed out to Half Red that it was illegal in Brazil to interfere with native religion and he had the law firmly on his side. He took the matter up with the FUNAI agent who in turn warned the missionaries against interfering. I promised to photograph the event and record the music. It went ahead, with broad participation except for the families of the two leading men most associated with the church. The people danced on Friday night and again on Saturday night, with some dancers in pairs with long flutes and some dancers in a line with short flutes. On Sunday they went to the church, which provoked the German missionary, who told everyone that people must understand that the path of Jesus and the ways of the *Goñaneey* spirits do not go together. In response two thirds of the congregation walked out, led by Half Red, a master strategist. That led to an internal schism, which often happens where missionaries divide the community. The majority were with the traditional faction. When I played the recordings even the children of the religious group asked for them to be played over and again. When the pictures were developed, it was clear that many of them had been participating in the festival in the dark. The position of the missionaries became more difficult and the frightful coldness that the Hawks use so well was turned against them. There were rumors of shamanism in the Waterfall village, though I did not investigate that at the time.

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After about a year the shamanism had really returned and I was invited to watch, which was a rare opportunity for a *Jala*. As it got dark the men sat on two lines of logs that formed a big L, with the women and children behind. Lighting was prohibited. The shaman, Flying Partridge, had called his spirit family down from the sky for the occasion. Up there, things are like they are down here—forest with villages. The shaman has a spirit wife up there and had also acquired a spirit son, *Zheerēey*, who, though only two years old, was already grown. The shaman inspected the food that had been brought for the event and then left, walking down a path to the *igarapé*. His family could be heard some distance away, by the *igarapé*, speaking to each other. The Hawks, as usual hardly respectful, were calling out, “Come here with us; we want to see you!” Then the shaman’s son entered the clearing, making sounds like a peccary. It was dark and what was most visible was the boxlike structure of fresh white thatch around his head, which broke up his silhouette. His movements were somewhat jerky. He talked to people, with considerable repartee, and handed out food which people had brought. These spirits speak the language of the Macaw, from whom the Hawks

borrowed this practice. Then *Zheerëey* did some curing and sang. He had the men get up and dance, me included. Then he left and the shaman's spirit appeared and announced that the soul of an elderly man who was seriously ill (apparently with congestive heart failure) was going to the sky, in which case it would not return and he would die. There was crying by his family. But the shaman would try to prevent his reaching the sky and bring him back. Then he went away to fetch his wife. She appeared, a rather tall lady, and, as one of my consultants noted, about the same size as the shaman. She spoke in a tiny feminine voice. She did some curing and addressed primarily the women. She summoned the women to dance but they did not perform so well and the men booed. She called her spirit son and left. He returned and said that there was progress on keeping the soul from the sky. Then he went away and the shaman returned and the performance, of about three hours, was over. The people showed little religious spirit or awe of the supernatural and were more interested in the singing and dancing.

Shamanism among the Hawks is somewhat underground, even when it is not being repressed. Things happen that people realized are shamanic. One time there were loud eerie howls coming from the shaman's house and some concerned people ran there and opened the door to see if he were safe. He was sleeping, seemingly unaware of any sound, and woke up and asked what was happening. When a series of shamanic events was going on, each event often left off at a point of suspense, like a cliff-hanger movie series. People would relate the latest episode and we all were on edge to see what would happen next.

A Hawk visitor told me one day that *Zheerëey* had gone after the Blind Man. That was puzzling—there were no blind Hawks that I knew of. The visitor explained that the Blind Man lived in the sky, not too far from the home of the shaman's spirit and his spirit family. *Zheerëey* had gone to visit neighbors, leaving his mother to take care of the peccaries that he had been raising to bring to the forest where the Hawks lived, to give them good hunting. However, she became worried that he might have sex with someone in that village and went after him. He was fully grown but was only two years old, after all. He was annoyed that she was following him around and neglecting the peccaries. When they returned the peccaries were no longer there. After suitable inquiries *Zheerëey* learned that the Blind Man had come by and walked off with all the peccaries. So he descended to the Hawks one night and asked his earth brother to make an extra long sword club for him to use to smite

the Blind Man for his transgression. That took a couple of days but then *Zheerēey* reappeared, took the club up to the sky and went off to where the Blind Man lived. We were all eager to hear the denouement of this story and expected that the Blind Man would get a severe whacking. But in the next session the story turned out to be different. In fact, arriving with the Blind Man, *Zheerēey* recognized his peccaries mixed in with those of the Blind Man and he became angry and said he would strike the Blind Man. However, the answer he received stopped him. The Blind Man said that he did, in fact, pass by *Zheerēey*'s house with his own herd of peccaries. Possibly *Zheerēey*'s peccaries had joined his herd. "How should I know—I'm blind. If those are yours, take them." That sounded like a rather dubious defense to some, but *Zheerēey* let the Blind Man off with a warning to not let it happen again.

Even for those of us who have little sympathy for mysticism, the Hawk shamanism was amazing. The shaman was dramatist, magician, singer, dancer, healer, actor, and costume designer. He mixed everyday events with those in the sky and produced imaginative, galvanizing performances that were unpredictable and completely original. His work seemed like the Renaissance compared to the Dark Ages of the rather tepid and constricted indigenous church. The shamanism could not cure the elderly man with the heart condition, who decided it might be good to go to a hospital and see what they could do there. But he died first, probably because a second disease complicated his case. The split in the community continued. It was hard for the man named Wild Honey, who had been a follower of the church but closer to the faction of Half Red. He, like the shaman, was a deadly warrior, but had a philosophical bent and a manner that seemed simple, profound, and dignified. He did anything well. If you were around him for a while, you thought that if you developed yourself perhaps you could be like him someday. Like the shaman, he was always kind and encouraging to me.

Health and sickness

Health and sickness were always important factors in the indigenous villages and also in the region as a whole. Reading ethnographies of Amazonian groups and the history of New World native peoples in general, there were recurring accounts of terrible epidemics among newly contacted peoples. What was being done to stop this? What should I do in the field? An anthropologist in Brasília had said to me, with a look of concern but also slight amusement, "I hope you're are ready to see your

friends die.” That summed up the defeatism, ignorance, and passivity that were common. Looking over the causes of death, there appeared to be only a small number of diseases causing most of the mortality and these could be cured or prevented. So I studied the remedies and took a copy of the *Merck Manual* and *the Physician’s Desk Reference* to the field with me. The head nurse of the Summer Institute of Linguistics gave me a consult and confirmed what I had thought. The question was fresh in my mind since I had had health problems which cost me considerable time. A doctor had diagnosed my mononucleosis in New York but said it was inconsequential and I should go about my usual robust schedule. Within two days I could hardly walk and I lost months of time that was needed to prepare for the field. A friend who helped me pack transmitted her low-grade virus, which struck me soon after arriving in Brasília. At one point I collapsed on the sidewalk during rush hour, with people stepping over me. That brought on the post-mononucleosis weakness syndrome, which, however, was diagnosed by an astute Brazilian physician and helped by corticosteroids.

When I was finally in the field Hawks with various diseases appeared for treatment, mostly people with skin disease, malaria, and tuberculosis, aside from one snake bite, dysentery, and a few infections. By the time I left I had had four cases of falciparum malaria myself, which was not hard to treat but which is lethal if untreated. My neighbor, the boat driver, had severe falciparum and, as was frequently the case in the region, was afraid of the medicine. He turned yellow, with a purple mouth, and was evacuated shortly after I had left the village to travel. By the time I returned he had died in the hospital. I could have saved him, but he was uncooperative. In Brasília I came down with hepatitis B, from a polluted injection, and spent 18 days in a hospital. For the next year and a half I repeatedly became weak and tired and then better and then worse again and it was not clear what the cause was, though I tended to think it was the result of the hepatitis. Only years later would it be diagnosed as tropical sprue, which can be controlled though not cured. A few substances provoke it to become active, alcohol being one of them, unfortunately. Otherwise it is not a problem.

One of the worst medical emergencies occurred about fifteen months after my arrival in the village. There was wailing, which woke me up. In the house where the women were wailing the fourth brother, Tree Frog, about fourteen years old, was bent forward, with blood streaming out of his mouth. It had formed a pile of red foam covering his feet. He was in

treatment for tuberculosis. As it happened, I had read the previous day in the *Merck Manual* about massive lung hemorrhages from tuberculosis. It said that corticosteroids could provide “dramatic clinical relief”, which was just what we needed. The Big Liar gave an injection of vitamin K for bleeding but tried to push the boy to rest on his back, in which position he would have drowned in his own blood. I lost patience and pushed the agent away and gave the corticosteroids. Before long the bleeding stopped, though no one could sleep well that night. The next day the boy, who had been very brave, flashed a smile when I entered. Since he was taking the treatment for tuberculosis it seemed better to taper off the corticosteroid. The Hawks wanted to evacuate the boy. I was wary of this, given the poor level of the hospitals. In three days the wailing repeated and it was necessary to administer the corticosteroid again to stop the severe bleeding. Then an airplane came to evacuate the boy. Half Red had managed to call for it without the Big Liar’s knowledge. We were all sitting down thinking about what had happened. The Big Liar took a drag on his cigarette, looked to the right, then to the left, then up, then down, then took another drag and, exhaling, pronounced:

– “GREEN VEGETABLES...are the strongest food there is. Many people don’t know it, but that is what gives us our resistance. Now what do we have here? Spinach? No, not even lettuce. That is the real reason for these problems and we can’t do anything about it.”

The Hawks were glancing at each other and thinking that maybe they needed a new agent. One way to get a new one is to wait for rotation. The Big Liar became nervous that we might be thinking about the second way. I had ranged in the .22 rifle that belonged to the post and was using it to hunt occasionally. The agent continued lending it to me – but without the clip, apparently thinking that he was unlikely to be assassinated with a single shot.

In six weeks Tree Frog returned, looking fatter. The FUNAI doctor, the Little Liar, said that he had been X-rayed and was completely cured. The boy said that he had never had an X-ray—that was another lie. He did look better and we continued the treatment. The boy became quite friendly after the ordeal. He was a great fan of shamanism and kept me informed about what was going on. He made model boats to float in the *igarapé*, and I put a rubber band motor on one of those. When I left to return to the United States, I made sure to leave a supply of the corticosteroid with the two younger missionaries, with instructions on how to treat the bleeding. Overall, during my two and a half years in the village,

out of a total indigenous population of 200, in spite of pressure from malaria and TB, aside from the elderly man with the heart condition, we only lost two small children, one of whom was brought in too late and another who died in a hospital, probably from mistreatment. My combat medic training in the US Army was mostly useful for its way of making it clear that there will not always be that wonderful physician nearby to take care of things—you must do it yourself and prepare for that.

The Zoró

Medical questions were relevant again toward the end of the dry season of 1977, when the Zoró tribe was coming into contact and making overtures to their old neighbors, the Hawks. The Hawks, Macaws, and Zoró had been in peaceful, if uneasy, contact for a while in the past. But then there were incidents and the Zoró moved farther east. They were in lethal skirmishes with the Suruí, who were traditional enemies. Five years earlier Belly had been shot with a Zoró arrow in his side when traveling on the eastern edge of Hawk territory. Half Red responded with a war party but came back without finding the Zoró.

We had heard that the Zoró were coming out to ranches occasionally, to ask for items. They appeared unexpectedly with a demarcation team that was surveying and demarcating the eastern border of the Hawk reserve. The survey work was done for the day, the pots were put on the fire, and the men went off to bathe. One Hawk saw a naked man hiding behind a tree and, assuming he was a Hawk, told him to stop playing games. The figure bolted — it was a Zoró. The survey team left the pots there and hurried through the forest, reaching the post after a couple of days, tired and nervous. Another day a Hawk was beating the fish poison root, *timbó*, when he heard his companions saying, from afar, “The fish are dying. The fish are dying.” When he saw them again he asked why they were saying that and they answered that they had said nothing. Obviously it was Zoró. Large footprints were seen in the fields near the Waterfall village. Belly told me that they must be Zoró, since he knew the footprints of all the Hawks and they were different. A boy, River Bottom, walked his friend home, about five minutes from the post, as it was getting dark. On his way back a man hidden behind a tree flipped a part of an arrow, the part used to bind the shaft to the point, at him. It struck his cheek and he picked it up and raced away into the village. There the older men looked at the piece and smiled and said it was made by Zoró — they had given their calling card and signaled peaceful

intent. If they had wanted to kill the boy it would have been easy. There were still too many Hawks with shotguns at the ready, so I went walking in the forest alone, speaking some Hawk / Zoró, and leaving strings of glass beads on branches. This took no courage; certainly they would not kill a *Jala* speaking their language. But it was useful to calm the situation.

In October of 1977 an airplane landed and took away two young Hawks to work on the contact with the Zoró. Unfortunately this was in the middle of a chickenpox epidemic, with no effort made to determine if the two would bring disease to the Zoró. We had been discussing the situation of the Zoró and thinking how we could avoid the mass death from epidemics. One idea was to invite them to visit the Hawks where they could be vaccinated and where the German missionary was a good source of health care. The Hawks could explain to the Zoró that the vaccines gave you a little bit of the disease and then you did not get the big disease. They could explain that antibiotics were poison for the little eaters-of-us causing the disease but were not poison for us. I alerted the missionaries to the problem of pneumonia complications, which is the effective killer in cases of colds or other respiratory diseases and which can be cured with antibiotics.

An issue of the glossy news magazine *Manchete* arrived in November, with an article on the contact with the Zoró. The Hawks were aghast at the article. There had been no attempt to determine who the Zoró were nor what language they spoke. Apoena Meireles, the senior FUNAI *sertanista* in charge of the contact, appeared as the hero, bringing Suruí, the mortal enemies of the Zoró, on the expedition, having them shake hands with the Zoró, which was a meaningless gesture to the indigenous people. Worse, the Suruí would see the Zoró location and could return in force. Actually, the Zoró had already been in contact intermittently with the ranches, but the article still made it seem like the beginning. Later someone said that the FUNAI worker Zé Bel was annoyed because Apoena would not let him have his picture taken and then skipped out to the city, leaving Zé Bel with the work. The Hawk men were enraptured with the picture of a young Zoró beauty in the article. They happily rubbed their hands on her crotch in the picture and then rubbed that on their own crotches. A Hawk woman got into the spirit of the thing and held up her little son, "Give my boy some too." I was saying, "Let's keep her alive, Guys."

In December I managed a quick trip out and accidentally met Zé Bel in town. He was worried because there were a number of sick Zoró and

he asked me to request medicine from the FUNAI office in the town of Riozinho. When I was there I talked to the other member of Apoena's team, Aymoré. He said that he had only one package of medicine. I said that even that was probably not enough. He replied that it would go to the Suruí, not to the Zoró. Further, he said that the Zoró could not stay where they were and they would be transferred to the Suruí reserve. I said that that would lead to disaster—the two groups were violent enemies and the Suruí were full of TB and would infect them. But he dismissed the objections. Back among the Hawks I related events and we thought about how to get the Zoró out of the dangerous situation that they were in. Certainly the Little Liar could not be relied upon to provide the necessary health care. Apoena had had his picture taken and would not be back. That was the situation when I left Brazil in January.

Neighboring groups

While in Brasília, before going to the territory of Rondônia, I spent time trying to gather information on the region and on the native groups who lived there. It was not yet clear that the Hawks were the best place to do research and in any case I had interest in returning to the less acculturated groups in the area of the Aripuanã Park for anthropological work. There were few reliable sources of information. The Suruí were the group that was most known. Their land had been invaded by settlers who were encouraged by the roads into indigenous land that were opened by INCRA, the land rights agency. The Suruí were resisting and expelling the invaders. Their contact by a FUNAI team in 1969 was a disaster, with many dying later. A French medical doctor who had been present denounced the lack of medical care. A fake vaccination campaign had been photographed and a *National Geographic* article, written by what was probably the same photographer, Jesco, had portrayed the contact as a noble and exciting adventure, carried out by experts in contacting isolated indigenous groups (*sertanistas*). This is the same photographer mentioned by in the book *Anxious Pleasures: The Sexual Lives of an Amazonian People*, written by the anthropologist Thomas Gregor, who mentions the strange sexual adventures of the photographer with indigenous men and boys on the Xingu. Some Hawks were on the Suruí contact expedition and recounted that one night when Jesco was drunk he opened fire with his revolver in their direction. They forgot about snakes, electric eels and sting rays and dove deep into the *igarapé*.

I had tagged along with Jesco for one afternoon in Brasília since he was

one of the few who had knowledge of the native groups in Rondônia. He did provide useful information and tips. He was an amazing wheeler-dealer, charming and helpful, who seemed to be able to go anywhere and do anything among native groups, in return for favorable publicity for FUNAI, especially for the *sertanistas*. At the appointed time I was in front of the bank where we were to meet. Behind me someone said in English, "Are you perhaps waiting for Jesco?" I turned to see this fellow, tall, rotund, with a round, pink moon face and one wall eye pointing off to the side. In the bank he distributed books of color photos from the Xingu while everyone greeted him eagerly. After the bank he asked if I wanted to meet the Vilas Boas brothers, *sertanistas* who had established the Xingu reserve and who had been recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. I said little in their presence, hiding my bad Portuguese by saying I was shy being in the presence of such famous people. Afterwards Jesco asked, "Do you want to meet the president of FUNAI?" We went there but the president was out. Jesco conferred with the high level staff, giving them information on who was doing what and who was favorable or not. I got a lift back and in the car said to Jesco, who was at the wheel, "A lot of Suruí died in that contact, didn't they?" He looked straight ahead with a taut smile. "What did FUNAI do to stop that mortality?" He replied, ominously, "Be careful, young man." That was the end of that discussion, which was useful for showing who I was dealing with and how things worked at that time.

While in Brasília in January of 1977 I managed to get the telephone number of Apoena and went to his house. He was friendly but the conversation was unsettling. He mentioned a certain road from a ranch that was used to take cattle out to sell and that passed through Zoró land. One of my concerns was for the Wide Belts, who were entering into contact. Apoena said that the western Wide Belts would go out to the road and bring illnesses back in and mostly die. It would be like the case of the Suruí. The Aripuanã Park that had been set up would be dismembered and reduced to a few posts to handle the remaining survivors. I asked the obvious but unwelcome question, what was FUNAI going to do to prevent the mass death? He motioned to me to follow him into his office. There he took down a book by Robin Hanbury-Tenison and said that it said there that the indigenous peoples were doomed. "The problems of the Indians are the same as the problems of poor people. It is hard to resolve the problems of one without resolving the problems of the other." It was common in those days to blame things on the government and not expect anything useful to be done on the ground.

I considered going to the Wide Belts to investigate their situation at one point and had asked Half Red for advice. I told him that I didn't think that the Wide Belts would kill me if I could speak some of the language and told them that I was not looking for native women and could heal diseases and explain to them about the *Jalaay*. He replied, "The first time they ask you to go to a village don't do it. Make up any excuse. Likewise the second time. The third time, when you have friends there that you can trust, you can go in and come back safely." Because of my precarious health it was impossible to go, though it would have been interesting and maybe useful.

Linguistics continued

With the tone and length under control it was possible to do a quick investigation into basic syntax and morphology and then transcribe texts and start analyzing the grammar of the language of the Hawks. In those days linguists still used paper slip files and there were no personal computers. Since I had studied more anthropology than linguistics and my preparation had been hindered by disease the analysis gave me enough to do. I had taken some linguistic books along for guidance. Because of the tone and the prefix classes transcription of texts took a great amount of time, worsened by my poor clerical skills. My advisor had always emphasized the necessity to do analysis in the field and test hypotheses while there. Mostly I worked with Belly and His Instep, who did an excellent job. I would do almost anything to make work more attractive and retain their services. I provided free lunch, with always a bit more food than they could eat. It is also Hawk custom to provide food for workers. When consultants were not available I worked on analysis and slip filing. It soon became clear that the syntax was radically different from that of European languages, but very elegant and regular. The missionary linguist remarked one day to me, "My, but isn't this an elegant, elegant language?" The main complexities were the huge system of auxiliaries and the large number of sentence particles. Of transformations, then the object of much theoretical discussion, there were only perhaps two, moving constituents to the front under certain conditions. Items which translated as adverbs, such as 'easy' or 'today' had the same formal behavior as uninflected verbs. Many of these conclusions I resisted until the evidence was too strong to deny. One of my advisor's sayings recurred to me, "When you get the right analysis a little click will occur in your head." By January of 1978 I had enough data for a reasonable doctoral thesis. After two and a half years of very low-budget work among the Hawks I had to leave, though I was perfectly happy being in the village, except for my health problems, and not eager to go.

The return

On the final boat trip to the nearest town we stopped by someone's house on the river bank to get some food and visit. The boat with all my things was tied to a pole. Suddenly someone shouted and, weak and tired, I looked on in horror—the boat had pulled loose and was drifting to the rapids below. I had my things in plastic bags but couldn't imagine retrieving them from the current. While I stood there speechless Half Red raced along the bank, calculated the distance, dove into the water, mounted the boat, and started the motor a few meters before the rapids. I watched in slow motion and almost fainted.

In Brasilia I managed to hustle a place to stay for a few days to tie things up and say goodbye to friends, especially at the University of Brasilia and in FUNAI. On the flight to the United States I was a wreck from the disease and travel.

On my arrival in New York City in January it was eighteen degrees Fahrenheit and there was snow. My most valuable things, including the data, were in two cardboard boxes tied with cord. If I could just get those to a safe place everything would be OK. I put on two shirts and my Lee jacket, which was all I had, to minimize the cold. My loafers were split on the side and the snow came in. The people seemed very big and white, like they had been transfused with Crisco shortening. They were also unpleasant, in contrast to the polite and friendly Brazilians. A cab driver, crude and fat, drove me to the East Village where an old friend lived. But because of the snow he left me off on the corner, with my precious boxes. By that time I was too drained of strength to carry both boxes, but I was afraid to leave them any distance from me, since the neighborhood was a rather sketchy and I was a bit paranoid. So I carried one box ahead five meters and then quickly went back for the other one, which I carried or dragged five meters in front of the first. By successive leap-frogging I got to the building where my friend lived. I staggered up the stairs and rang the bell and then hurried back to my boxes. She appeared in a housecoat and beckoned for me to come up the stairs. At that point, looking at the stairs I realized that I was too weak to make it up there with a box. The cold wind whipped her housecoat and she was perplexed and I was ashamed and embarrassed.

- "Come on! What's the matter?"
- "Uhh, Could you...help me? I can't..."
- "Oh, my God."

Once inside the doors, out of the wind, I sat on a box and said, "Let me

rest a bit here and I can get the boxes up the stairs to your apartment. It's OK. Everything will be fine." She didn't believe me and the two of us dragged the boxes up the stairs. Inside the apartment I couldn't think of much to say, mostly just feeling relief and exhaustion. People looked at me strangely, me having reappeared after three years somewhere in Brazil. I had a deep feeling of having died and come back. For a couple of years whenever I heard Joan Baez sing "Diamonds and Rust" I felt a sharp pang at the line, "Well I'll be damned; here comes your ghost again."

Life among the *Jalaay* seemed like viewing a film that I had seen some years ago. Looking at it one recalls certain parts but others are different from what one remembers. It was hard at first to remember to speak English. Walking through Union Square Park a few days after my arrival I noticed that my gun wasn't on my shoulder. I thought I must have left it behind and turned around to go back for it. Then it hit me that I no longer carried a gun; I was in New York. It seemed odd but nice to be able to eat anything I wanted—just buy it and take it home and cook it. It was convenient not to have to shake out my boots in the morning to be sure no scorpions or spiders had crawled into them. Fads were new to me. There were people in strange shoes huffing and puffing in the streets—jogging had become popular. Museums seemed much more interesting than they had been. I felt like I could feel kinship with other times and cultures more after my experiences with the Hawks.

Problems loomed. My apartment had been lost when the person subletting it walked away. I had no job and would need to find work. My health was impaired and unpredictable. There was a mountain of work to do to analyze my data and write it up. I was in sporadic contact with the Hawks and tried to follow what was happening to the indigenous groups in the region who were at risk. A Norwegian anthropologist and his wife went to the Hawks and the Zoró in the beginning of the 1980s and that gave me occasional news. Later an Italian anthropologist went to the Zoró and sent back some news from time to time.

Developments in the region

One piece of news was that the whole Zoró tribe walked into the Hawk village in August of 1978. They had been attacked by a Suruí war party and some of them were carrying lead shot. The war party was probably led by the same Suruí who had been taken on the contact expedition. It is not clear if some died in the attack, nor whether the plan that the Hawks and I had schemed up to bring the Zoró over to the Hawks

was a factor in their decision to do just that. This was the chance to vaccinate the Zoró but instead FUNAI tried to send them back. I was firing off letters to the missionaries to do the vaccination and watch out for pneumonia complications of respiratory diseases. Some years later the German missionary told me that whooping cough had come in at one point. The Zoró children up to 8 years old were not affected since they were vaccinated by FUNAI. However, the Little Liar had followed the custom of vaccinating children and not adults, which is obviously not appropriate for newly contacted indigenous populations, whose adults have not been previously vaccinated. The children I had vaccinated were all protected. The missionary gave antibiotics if there were pneumonia symptoms and everyone survived. Later, when he was away, another missionary failed to cope with a surge in falciparum malaria. Some Zoró died and he lapsed into superstitious behavior and more died until a FUNAI nurse arrived. While the available population figures are not reliable, they appear to show that the usual severe depopulation was avoided. An estimated 185 Zoró arrived among the Hawks and a couple of years later there were 173, with the population rebounding. That is much better than the two-thirds or more that were being lost in other initial contacts. The same good results could have been obtained for the Wide Belts, but that was not to be. Of course, the missionaries took advantage of the coming of the naïve Zoró to baptize them all.

Another letter, from the Canadian missionary, recounted that Tree Frog had had another lung hemorrhage. The missionary had not paid attention to the corticosteroids I had left, with instructions. They had tried to take the boy out for treatment but he died in the boat on the way. My trigger finger was twitching and I wanted to go back and shotgun the Little Liar, but decided to direct that energy toward doing what I could to avoid further deaths, among the Hawks or among the neighboring groups, where there was more danger.

As it happened, the World Bank was involved in financing a large development project centered on asphaltting the highway, BR-364, which went through Rondônia, and pouring one and a half million migrants into the region. There were demands by watchdog organizations that protection for the indigenous groups be included in the project. When unsurfaced, that highway washed out frequently. My bus trips on it had been unpredictable. Sometimes it was not possible to go ahead and people had to sleep on the bus until the way was clear. The forest came up to the edge of the road and the Wide Belts were said to occasionally

amuse themselves flipping arrows toward traffic, once hitting a rural worker in the forehead. There was a chance of influencing events in the region by furnishing information and advice to the World Bank, though it was already committed to the project and had limited interest in pressuring the Brazilian government to take the necessary measures. They were also not sure what the necessary measures were and were dependent on FUNAI for information. (Oops.)

Apoena Meireles was the regional FUNAI delegate and would let his vision of the inevitable decimation of the Wide Belts play out. The Big Liar had been transferred to the Serra Morena post of the Wide Belts but never seemed to be there. A better FUNAI agent had died in an airplane crash with his wife. Meireles was to be the star of a film about a contact expedition to the Wide Belts. However, the target was changed, after criticism (some from me), to the Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau. That film was made, with Jesco as the Brazilian coproducer. That contact was another fiasco. The Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau speak a dialect of Kawahib and that fact could have been easily determined during the first encounters. Then speakers of another close dialect, such as the Tenharim, could have been brought in to explain vaccination and obtain cooperation. Instead, Suruí were taken and after two years there was still negligible communication. Hundreds of people died from the contact.

I managed to address people at the World Bank in June of 1981 and was careful to present relevant information on the groups of the region and the people who worked with them, as well as concrete suggestions for how to proceed. On the ground they were quite dependent on FUNAI for information and were accompanied on their short visits by FUNAI staff. So they could be manipulated by the shrewd locals and by some Brazilian colleagues who protected Meireles. Even several months after being advised of the road from the ranch that passed through Zoró land, no one could locate the road. Certainly all the Zoró knew where it was and could have explained if asked. Possibly the information and advice I offered had some effect. One fellow who considered himself the father of the Polonoroeste project expressed puzzlement. Why would Meireles (or other *sertanistas*) choose not to vaccinate indigenous people instead of keeping them alive? I explained that people mostly just follow norms, without being able to do an analysis of options and results. The norm was to not bother. Most people, including many anthropologists, saw no problem with this. If you shoot an indigenous person you will go to jail. But if you let 500 die from disease there will be no penalty. If you get 500

killed and give a nice speech blaming it on the Western World, capitalism, or whatever, you will be a hero. There are seldom mustachio-twirling villains involved in the contact disasters, just normal people doing the wrong things without thinking too well about what they are doing, trying to maximize their gains and minimize their investments. Relations between *Jalaay* are consistently considered more important than indigenous lives.

Some of the information I left with the World Bank was about medical matters, to combat the mystification of indigenous health. For example, there was a new pneumonia vaccine, already tested and on the market, which could reduce mortality with one injection. To get better norms for protecting indigenous health, I tried to disseminate some information among the anthropologists who work in the tropical lowlands. Many were interested, though some responses were on the level of the Big Liar's pronouncement about the importance of green vegetables. I was hopeful for some cooperation from a graduate student in medical anthropology. However, he told me that he had a different view. He had worked in Latin America in the Peace Corps and thought that keeping more people alive just added to problems of land, education, etc. I observed that if he were advocating differential mortality based on ethnic identity there was a word for that which started with the letter "g". He said he realized that, seeming blasé about being associated with genocide. He was fearful of antibiotics. I observed that the mortality from allergic reactions to penicillin was on the order of two per hundred thousand. He said that that was awful and I remarked that it was one tenth of the risk of mortality from riding in an automobile in the United States for one year. So perhaps he should not ride in automobiles? In recent years the treatment of recently contacted indigenous groups has improved greatly. The old carnival atmosphere with captive journalists praising the heroic *sertantista* is passé. Medical care for the most vulnerable is now much better.

Return to Brazil

After much delay from health issues, employment, activities on behalf of the indigenous people, and the challenges of analyzing the Hawk language, my thesis was approved in September of 1984. There was a possibility of a temporary job at Vassar College, but I had a bad dream about the place and realized I wanted to go back to Brazil, where things were more interesting and I could make a bigger contribution. In September of

1986 I arrived in Belém, a large tropical city near the mouth of the Amazon River, to take up a fellowship from the Brazilian government in the Museu Goeldi, a research institute that is part of the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation. I eventually got a permanent position there. I worked on developing scientific linguistics in Brazil, with initial emphasis on training selected Brazilian students in the field and finding them strong graduate programs, often abroad. The position was initially precarious, especially given the robustness of local institutional politics. Funding was very limited, and there was no infrastructure when I arrived. The 70-hour weeks and limited funding made it difficult to spend as much time as I wanted in Rondônia, which was now a state, not a territory.

One priority was to visit Wild Honey, who had been in a remarkable episode a few years earlier. He had disappeared from the state capital, Porto Velho. Some Hawks searched along the highway but could find no trace. After what was (I think) a few months, the shaman declared that Wild Honey's soul had gone to the sky and there was wailing in the village. At that point Wild Honey appeared, dressed in neat, clean clothes, with a bow and arrow of a type that no one knew, and with three nice fish. The first person who touched him received a shock like that of an electric eel. He explained where he had been — under the water with the *Goñaneey* spirits. The bow and arrow were from there. It was easy to get the three fish there — just reach out and grab them. He didn't sleep for a week and danced and sang in a language nobody understood. The Hawks locked him in the pharmacy. He had married the daughter of a *Goñat* spirit and was content down there under the water. The shaman said later that he realized it would be difficult to get Wild Honey to leave there. So he used strategy and invited him to the sky and from there brought him down.

His Instep and I went off to visit Wild Honey's village, which was now on the eastern edge of the reserve, away from the post. We passed through a ranch, staying for the night, and then went to a lumbermen's camp, heading on later on a road along the eastern border of the reserve. His Instep was annoyed with himself for missing the path in to the village, but we found it and got to the village as it was getting dark. We went to take a bath and I almost stepped on a poisonous snake, saved by His Instep, who spotted it as I was about to bring my foot down. After the bath, the residents of the village, friendly and amused, sat me down and asked me to give an account of what I had been doing. My fluency in the language was at its high point then, since I had worked through all the puzzles

and had the analysis fresh in my mind. So I started to explain, being a bit daunted when the Hawks responded in ceremonial dialog fashion.

– “First I left the Hawks and went to Brasília.”

– “You went to Brasília.”

– “From there I went by airplane to the big city, Nova Iorque.”

– “You went to the big city.”

When I mentioned that I had visited my sister’s sons, they said, “Ah, very good.” Mother’s brother is an important figure in Hawk culture. At the end there was a surprise question.

– “Are you lying to us?”

– “No, I don’t lie to you.”

– “No?”

– “No. Only to the *Jalaay*.”

(Much laughter)

I wanted to record Wild Honey recounting his remarkable episode, but the next day he disappeared. The second day too he seemed to always be elsewhere. It appeared he was avoiding me. On the third day he was planting peanuts and I went there and offered to help him plant. When we finished (and he owed me a favor) I asked if perhaps we could record. He agreed. It was interesting that Wild Honey had abandoned the church and returned to a traditional spiritual life, even moving away from the post where the church was. A couple of years later, Wild Honey disappeared again. This time he never reappeared, except once with a Hawk who lived far from the others. That Hawk said that it was really Wild Honey and not a ghost. He had inquired about people and what they were doing and then disappeared. Sometime in this period the main shaman died, I think from something treatable. So traditional culture suffered a setback.

The day after we recorded Wild Honey we undertook the long walk back to the other villages. That took about thirteen hours in an occasional light drizzle, with the Hawks scampering ahead quickly while I worked to keep up, with my backpack. His Instep sent his son up *cacao* trees and we had lots of *cacao* to eat as we walked along. We had some monkey meat and rice for lunch. His son and I amused ourselves insulting each other.

– “I hope a jaguar comes and bites your balls.”

– “I hope a vulture carries you away in the capacity of being a dead thing.”

When the Hawks shot a peccary they at least had a load to carry too,

and the pace was less rapid. The next day His Instep asked me what I thought of the walk out. I said it was very long. He said he knew it was long; he was asking me what I thought about it. I said it was just great. He looked thoughtful and said that it was interesting for him to hear that opinion.

A visit to the Wide Belts failed seriously. With two very smart Brazilian students I scraped together enough money to rent an airplane to go into one of the Wide Belt posts. It turned out that there were illegal miners there and we were expelled, having to land the airplane in the dark because I stood there and argued for too long. The feared depopulation had struck and many Wide Belts moved to the edges of their territory.

On and off I was able to get back to the Hawks, but not for any sustained period. A new problem appeared which made things still more difficult – illegal lumbering. The lumbering, often done with FUNAI secretly involved, produced loads of easy money that was hard to resist. In various areas of the world there are reports of cargo cults, in which native groups imagine that Western goods will come to them. The case of lumbering was like a cargo cult come true. Automobiles, liquor, women – anything was possible. The money was squandered on consumption and disappeared, leaving no one richer over time. Education and traditional activities were disrupted. The forest was damaged by the logging.

In the 1980s there was a proposal by the Brazilian government for the “emancipation” of the indigenous people, who would thereafter be treated like all other citizens. The objective of this proposal was, of course, to make it possible for logging, mining, and ranching interests to bribe and bamboozle indigenous groups into ceding their land, leading to their ultimate destitution. The proposal was stoutly opposed by anthropologists and others, on the basis that the government could not evade its responsibility for the fate of the indigenous people. The proposal was not put into effect but it did mark a new strategy in dealing with indigenous groups which was more sophisticated than the old simple subordination. This new strategy, adopted by lumbermen, missionaries, brothel owners, and others, was to stress the self-determination of indigenous groups and then take advantage of their ingenuousness and inexperience to convince them to support actions whose consequences they could not foresee.

When the logging craze wore itself out somewhat, I followed a Hawk request and put together a project to create income for the Hawks and

Macaws by collecting and selling *copaiba* oil. It was an initial success, but then the woman administering the project began to steal from it. Since I could not be present in Rondônia there was no way of monitoring the activities of the project. Though it failed it succeeded in showing the potential of small extractive industries as an economic alternative for indigenous groups. While health care and education have improved since the decade of the 1970s, alternative economic projects still have a 95% failure rate, due to continual underestimation of the various problems involved. It is essential to develop sustainable economic alternatives in order to eliminate the incentive for options which offer easy money but which are ultimately destructive. Of course, any project with money involved attracts undesirable types. Logging has returned in the last couple of years and continues to be a problem.

The situation with the Wide Belts is still worse. There were always people looking for diamonds on their land and there do appear to be large deposits of these, with the insanity that accompanies gold rushes or greed for other valuable minerals. Soon there were so many invaders, dreaming of a big strike, that the Wide Belts, apparently with the help of one faction of the miners, were led to kill a number of miners (something like 300 over a period of two years, according to one Hawk who spent time in the area).

The region as a whole is different than it was in the 1970s. The town of Vila de Rondônia, with 5.000-10.000 people, is now the city of Ji-Paraná, with between 150.000 and 200.000 people. The highway that used to wash out is now paved and busy with traffic. Among the Hawks there has been a population shift to the south of the reserve, near a road which cuts through the lower part of it. Electricity has come in to the southern part, along with television, running water, cement bathrooms, and other things that the *Jalaay* associate with progress. In recent years a shrewd missionary operation to take indigenous Christians to visit other tribes in the context of some sort of religious meeting has been successful in creating new converts. There are still holdouts for traditional culture among the Hawks, but all of the Zoró have been saved from Satan and the two Suruí shaman have retired since their work was considered "sin". Various amateur projects appear for cultural revitalization. These at least have had the effect of increasing, in principle, the respect given to traditional culture, even as native religion is being eliminated. Literacy in the native language is a goal that is often not being realized. Much of the work is being done by unqualified educators

or by linguists who do not invest time in studying the language but wish to occupy the orthographic space in order to compete with other linguists. Often they claim that “the Indian himself” devised the writing systems. In some places a whitened (more convenient for the *Jalaay*) version of the language, without the parts of the phonology (tone, etc) that don’t exist in European languages, is being written by these linguists. When tested most groups show different people writing differently, which troubles the indigenous people but not the *Jalaay* (who, however, would never accept such inconsistency in their own schools). Documentation by video is popular among the native groups. There are many young indigenous people who have obtained a certain education, use computers, and are interested in studying traditional culture. The boy with whom I traded insults on the way back from Wild Honey’s village is now a teacher in an indigenous school and is said to be very organized and effective.

Fortunately, the charm and competence of the Hawks and other groups in the region have been maintained, along with their languages, though this is not guaranteed to continue in the future. They were always afraid I would forget them and I was afraid that they would forget me, but we are still working together after all these years. The forest is mostly still standing, though impoverished in some areas. Now, with more time, money, knowhow, and instruments for documentation, it is time for me to return to the region and continue the work there.

To me there was never a difference between my personal life and fieldwork. Hawk friends are like my other friends, except that there are more of them. The personal curiosity to know a people who are much different from those I grew up with and, in certain respects, not far removed from the Neolithic, was satisfied. They are fine, clever people, not the savages or grunting cavemen of popular depiction. Everyone chooses how far he or she will go to protect their friends and solve general problems affecting the peoples that they deal with professionally. Some go much further than others and can see how to resolve problems. Some are useless and some are destructive. Hopefully, this account of the work with the Hawks brings this out in concrete historical detail.