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SIX KALAM STORIES ABOUT BIRDS.
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IAN SAEM MAJNEP
and RALPH BULMEP
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SIX KALAM STORIES ABOUT BIRDS

By Simon Peter Ci
Ian Saem Majnep
and Ralph Buimer

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INTRODUCTION

The texts of these stories are taken from the draft of a book by
Ian Saem Majnep and Ralph Bulmer entitled "Birds of My Kalam Country".
They are here presented separately and in advance of the book, partly
because they may have some interest in their own right, especially for
readers in Papua New Guinea; partly so that they can be referred to in
classes in anthropology at the University of Auckland, and the editor
may perhaps benefit from comments of students and colleagues before he
completes the final draft of the book.

The stories were originally each tape-recorded, in Kalam and also
in Pidgin, by Councillor Simon Peter Gi of Kaironk Ward, Simbai L.G.C.,
Madang District, Papua New Guinea, or by Ian Saem Majnep, who also comes
from Kaironk and is now employed in the Prehistory Laboratory of the
Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Papua New
Guinea. They were translated into English by Ralph Bulmer, and the
English translations were checked and approved by Ian Saem Majnep. The
translations do not pretend to be closely literal, but it is hoped that
they are nevertheless accurate restatements of the narratives. In a few
cases Saem suggested additions or corrections to the final text so that
these modified his own, or Gi's, originally recorded versions. Where
these are of any substance, they are noted in the commentary, which,
like this introductory statement, is by Ralph Bulmer.

A few remarks may set the stories in the context of the book in which
they will eventually appear. This has three main parts, in all of which
the basic text, in English, is a freely translated and edited version of
statements originally made in Kalam, Pidgin or English by Ian Saem Majnep, accompanied by substantial sections of commentary of Ralph Bulner. The first part consists of three chapters describing the history and traditional way of life of the Kalam people of the Upper Kaironk Valley, the ecology of their region, and their traditional methods of hunting birds. The second part consists of eighteen chapters devoted to the different groups of birds, including bats, which Kalam regard as a subdivision of their primary taxon *yakt* (*"flying birds and bats"*), and cassowaries, which in many contexts they do not regard as a kind of *yakt*. In these chapters Saem talks about the appearance and behaviour of the different kinds that he recognises, about hunting methods applied to them and their dietary and technological uses, and, in many cases, about their mystical significance. The third part includes the six stories presented in this Working Paper. A preface provides some information on the authors, and on the ways in which the book was conceived and written. Appendices include a formal faunal list of the birds of the Kaironk region, and a list of some of the very many plants which Kalam identify as significant when they discuss bird ecology and behaviour.

The present Working Paper does not include any attempt at structural or other formal analyses of these six stories, and provides no references to possibly related stories which have been recorded in other parts of New Guinea. The extent to which these tasks will be attempted in the final version of *Birds of My Kalam Country* will depend in part on response to the circulation of the stories in their present form.

In the existing draft of the book, Saem also refers briefly to all these stories in the chapters in which the species concerned are discussed. A brief indication of the relevance he attaches to each story is here included in each case, either in Saem's own version of the text, or in the commentary which precedes it.
All these stories are what Kalam call sosm, a category they apply to any kind of traditional narrative about events which occurred outside the experience of known persons, living or dead. Sosm thus include what anthropologists, using almost any definition, might regard as "myths", but also tales which on certain criteria might be excluded from this category - for example "just-so" stories to which tellers and hearers attach no deep significance, but which they find amusing.

Three of the anthropologists and linguists who have worked in the Upper Kaironk Valley (A.K. Pawley, I. Riebe and R. Bulmer) have between them recorded at least thirty or forty sosm, some in several versions. Unfortunately only a minority of these has been transcribed, and fewer still translated into English. Those here presented are, so far as Bulmer is aware, the only ones in this corpus in which birds figure as actors. In others, as in the bird stories, actors are in most cases human or human-like (witches, goblins, ogres) though some concern mammals (dog, terrestrial cuscus, striped possum, rat), reptiles (giant python, common snake) and plants (the pandans), and in one the two local rivers, the Kaironk and the Tient, behave as if they were men.

However seriously or otherwise they are taken by Kalam, all the sosm that we have recorded are told for entertainment, and all are to at least some extent explanatory or didactic. They variously explain basic features of the human condition (e.g. how death came into the world as a consequence of an argument between rat and snake - the local version of an extremely widely distributed myth -; and how women obtained their reproductive organs - see Story 3 in the present collection), the origin of Kalam customs (e.g. Stories 1, 4 and 6 below), features of local topography, and the characteristics of different kinds of animals and plants (see Stories 1, 2 and 5). Many also contain obvious morals of the "dreadful warning" type - what happens to kin or spouses who do not behave appropriately
towards each other, and to families whose members behave in unfamilial ways. Stories 1, 4, 5 and 6 in this collection all contain such elements. There are also some *soam*, not represented in the present collection, which lack simple just-so explanatory features and where the didactic message is not so much a directly moral injunctive as a warning to expect threats from certain quarters, and use your wits to circumvent these, even if you are in no way personally responsible for your troubles. Examples are tales of the tribulations of men who find that their cross-cousins are cannibal witches.

The more obvious explanatory and didactic features of *soam* are quite explicitly recognised by Kalam commentators. They also regard certain *soam* as embodying very important truths, and as being, in Malinowski's terms, "charters" for important institutions or institutionalised forms of behaviour. Examples which Saem gives in this collection are the relationship between the first story and male beauty ritual, and between the last story, the myth of the cassowary-sister, and the ritual prohibitions involved in cassowary hunting and in the cooking and consumption of this creature.

However, above all, the *soam* that we have recorded are told for entertainment, mainly by older people of both sexes, grandparents and others, to the young; though children also tell these stories to each other.

While some people are much more accomplished narrators than others, there appears to be no special role of "story-teller" among the Kalam. It is also striking that if a narrator falters, others present will almost always prompt and correct him. Bulmer made no systematic enquiries into Kalam evaluations of narrators' performance. The few spontaneous comments that he noted related only to the accuracy or authenticy of versions presented. None of the texts here presented
was in fact recorded in a spontaneous 'natural' context. Gi's versions were told in the anthropologists' house at Kaironk, with other people present for part of the time, but not with a full audience. Saem's versions were recorded in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Auckland.

One final introductory comment relates to the question of the extent to which some sosms, or episodes in certain sosm, may be esoteric and not conveyed freely, regardless of the composition of the audience, in the context of entertainment. That there is at least an element of this is indicated by Saem's comment that Gi had left out one section of the first story, that of the lory and the Shefflera plant, because he had not been prepared to sing or describe the male beauty magic in the anthropologist's house, which was open to all comers, or put this on tape so that it might inadvertently be played in the presence of women. It may well be that there are other sosm that the anthropologists have not recorded at all, or only in a truncated form, for similar reasons.

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A note on the narrators

Councillor Simon Peter Gi was born at Skow in 1945 or early in 1946. As a small boy he witnessed the fighting which precipitated the imposition of Australian Administration control on the Upper Kaironk Valley in 1956. He attended Kaironk Village School for about two years, when it was newly set up in 1961. From 1963 onwards he has acted as a principal assistant to the several linguists and anthropologists from Auckland, Sydney and the University of Papua New Guinea who have worked in his home area, and in 1965 he spent six months in New Zealand and in 1966 six months on Unea Island in the Bismarck Archipelago, with their sponsorship.
He has been prominent in local politics, and has represented Kaironk Ward since the Simbai Local Government Council was established in 1970. In 1972 he ran unsuccessfully as a candidate for the Middle Ramu electorate in the House of Assembly elections. He has travelled widely in the Madang and Western Highlands Districts, accompanying Government Patrols, and as a Councillor and election candidate. He is very fluent, and literate, in Pidgin, and has a fair knowledge of conversational English.

Ian Saem Majnep was born at Gobnem, probably in 1948. He attended primary school at Simbai and at Kaironk, and completed Standard 2. From 1963 onwards he also has acted as a principal assistant to the anthropologists and linguists. In 1966 he spend six months on Unea Island, as Gi did, with Inge Riebe. Since 1968 he has lived in Port Moresby, but made frequent visits home. From 1969 he has worked as a laboratory and field assistant in the Prehistory Laboratory of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Papua New Guinea. Through the generosity of the University of Papua New Guinea, which granted him leave with pay, and the Research Committee of the University of Auckland, which provided funds for fares and incidental expenses, he was able to spend three months in Auckland, New Zealand, from November 1974 to February 1975. It was at that time that "Birds of My Kalam Country" was drafted. Saem is fluent in both Pidgin and conversational English, and is in fact considerably more fluent in English than the editor is in Kalam.

Acknowledgements

Bulmer's fieldwork in 1973, when Gi's texts were recorded, was supported by the University of Papua New Guinea. As noted above, Saem's visit to Auckland was supported by the University of Papua New Guinea, and by the University of Auckland Research Committee. To
both of these bodies we express our gratitude.

Bulmer must also thank Dr. Judith Huntsman for commenting helpfully on the draft of this paper.
STORY 1: KOB and TBWAM. The Papuan Lory and the Schefflera plant

As told by Simon Peter Gi, at Kaironk, on 26 October 1973, and emended (pages 6-8 as marked) by Ian Saem Majnep, at Auckland, on 20 December 1974.

*Kob* or *tabal* is the Papuan Lory or Polymorphic Lory, *Charmosyna papou*, a long-tailed and often brilliantly coloured parrot, about as big as a Rosella. It is the largest of several species of lories (or lorikeets) which feed on the nectar of flowering plants, and on fruit, in the New Guinea mountain forests. Its skin is valued as a dance ornament almost everywhere in the New Guinea Highlands. For Kalam, skins of this lory are an essential item in the headdresses of boys emerging from initiation ceremonies, when they have had their nasal septa pierced. They are also worn by adult men, and occasionally by women in the period of the initiation ceremonies when female cognates of the initiands dress up in male regalia and dance.

Kalam identify this and other smaller lory species with males, and regard the green and red of their plumage as particularly appropriate colours for men to wear. When men sleep, their souls are supposed to leave their bodies and change into these birds, and fly about feeding in the blossoming and fruiting trees high in the mountain forest. To dream of these birds is to dream of men; whereas to dream of the long-tailed birds of paradise (Sicklebills and Stephanies) is to dream of women.

Although they are not uncommon, skill and patience is required to hunt Papuan Lories. Generally they are shot, with bow and arrow, from blinds constructed in the flowering trees to which they come to feed.

The *tbwam* is a Schefflera species. Schefflera is a genus of shrubs with very distinctive foliage, flowers and fruit, and the flowers and fruit of different species attract many kinds of birds. The *tbwam* grows often, but not always, as an epiphyte, on the branches of large forest trees, and its blossom is particularly attractive to *kob* and certain of the other lories.
This story, of a girl who wanted to marry her reluctant brother, a conflict which was partially resolved by him changing into a lory and her into the favorite foodplant of that bird, is explicitly the charter for male beauty magic, which is performed by men, in isolation from women, as they prepare themselves for dancing (and attracting women). In this magic the names of the different kinds of lories, and of the high forest trees at which they feed, are chanted, as also the names of certain cool and luxuriant green plants of the streamsides and forest floor.

As indicated in the Introduction, Gi omitted from his version of this story the crucial passages in which the girl sang the magic chants and the brother thus learned them—which is why they are now a male secret. In deference to Saem's wishes, the texts of the chants are not here presented, and only brief references to their content are included.

Given that incestuous marriage is so patently a theme in this myth, it may be remarked that the problem of how close a relative it is proper to marry is a very real one to Kalam. Kalam lack exogamous descent groups. The preferred marriage partner is a distant cognate. All female cognates of a man's own generation are placed in the same terminological class as his full sister (ay). Full and half sisters are certainly regarded as totally unmarriable, but first cousins (cross and parallel, maternal and paternal) are sometimes married. Generally such unions are disapproved, particularly if the couple have lived in the same domestic group and the 'brother' has made gardens for his 'sister'; or if, following on the exchange marriages and bridewealth transactions in his parents' generation, the 'brother' would be a rightful recipient of bridewealth for his 'sister'. Thus second cousins are normally the nearest relatives who can freely marry, and even in the case of these, domestic propinquity or rights to bridewealth may make such marriages inappropriate. However some first cousins do marry; and it is said that provided the parents on both sides can be persuaded not to feel angry about this, these marriages are acceptable. However continuing parental disapproval and anger is expected to bring ill-luck and misfortune to the couple and their children.

There was a man who had one wife, and they had an only child, a girl, who was four or five years old. Each day the man went down to the river below their house and defecated there, at the edge of the water. But he did not defecate
normally, for each time he produced his excrement, it changed into a frog. And each day the man picked up the frog, and carried it home to his wife, for her to cook and eat.

One day the wife thought to herself, "this frog isn't a real frog, it doesn't smell and taste good. The meat of a real frog is very sweet and delicious, but these frogs he brings me every day are not sweet. Tomorrow I shall go and find out where he gets them. When he goes off in the morning to relieve himself, I must see where he goes".

So on the next morning she went out very early and hid and watched. She watched and the man went to the river-side and defecated, and the excrement fell down and changed into a frog, the kind they call akok. The man killed the frog, and returned home ahead of his wife, and gave the frog to his daughter. She was holding it when her mother came home a little later, and said, "Father has given me a frog". The woman said, "When your father goes off to work in the gardens, you and I will cook and eat it".

The two waited till the man had gone off to his gardens. Then the woman told her daughter, "These aren't true frogs we are eating every day, they are your father's excrement. He is deceiving us, and bringing them to us. We won't eat it, we will throw it away".

They threw it away and they went to the base of a kyaw tree (Ficus wassa). They sat under the tree, and the two of them talked. After a while the woman said, "Now daughter, I'm going to take off part of my under-skirt - I've had an idea". She took off part of her under-skirt and put it up in the tree. Then they went home, and that night they slept.

In the morning the man said, "I was looking at that kyaw tree of mine, and it had new shoots (the young shoots of Ficus wassa are used as a green vegetable). I wonder if they are big enough yet to eat? Will you go and see?". The woman said, "No, you go yourself, I've got work
to do fetching food from the gardens". So the woman and the girl went off
to gather food, and the man went to inspect the tree. The new shoots were
plentiful, but when he went to climb the tree he found a *kñam* snake
asleep in it. This *kñam* was not a true snake, it was the underskirt of
the woman which had changed into this.

The man took the *kñam* and carried it home. He also took with him
*kyaw* shoots and leaves, but he left these outside the house, and took the
snake inside, and cooked it on hot stones in a small oven in the house; and
he ate it. Later the woman and her daughter returned, and went to make up
the big stone-oven for cooking, and they took the shoots and leaves of the
*kyaw* and cooked and ate them; and they slept.

During the night the man said, "Whatever is happening to my stomach?"
He tossed and turned, and could not sleep, right till dawn. In the
morning he went off to try to defecate, but instead of faeces, he produced
an egg. He picked up the egg and said to himself, "This egg, I wonder
what it will later turn into? A bird? Or what kind of creature?" So he
carried it away, to look after it. He took it to a secret place in the
forest, where the woman did not go, and he hid it there. He gathered
dry fallen leaves, and made a big heap of these, and put the egg in this.
Then he went home again.

In the morning he wondered what had happened to the egg, so he went
to have a look. The egg had grown in size. He was puzzled by this, and
wondered again what it could be. He went home again, and slept. On the
following morning he went to look again, and the egg had broken open,
and a little baby boy had come out of it, and was sleeping. The man
picked up the little boy and carried him to a hidden sheltered place
at the base of a rocky cliff, and there he made a little house, and made
a fire in it. He made a bed for the child, and left him sleeping there.
Then he returned home.
In the morning he thought he would go and see his child again, and he found him sitting up. He fetched him bananas, both ripe eating ones and green ones for cooking, and other kinds of food, and firewood. And he fed the child with the ripe bananas. He told the child, "You mustn't cry or shout, you must keep very quiet; nor must you make big fires, lest my wife may see the smoke; you must be very quiet indeed". He said this, and he left and went home.

Very early next morning the man came to visit the child again, and found that he had grown into a big boy. He said to him, "Tomorrow I shall find some tree-bark for you, so that you can make a bark-cloth hat".

So the man went and cut the tree bark, and he cut a marita fruit (Pandanus conoideus), and he cooked the marita in an earth-oven and filled a bamboo container with the red marita oil. Then he stopped up the bamboo of oil and hid it, and he took the tree-bark and removed the bast and made it into bark-cloth, and hid this. Then he went home to sleep.

Early next morning his wife and daughter went off to the gardens, and the man went to see the boy. When he got there he found that the boy had grown into a young man, almost an adult, and he was sitting there. "Now", he said, "I shall make a hat for you". So he went and cut into an old tree (Ficus augusta), and removed some bark, and the sticky white sap ran out, and he put this on the boy's head. Then he put the marita oil on the boy's head, and then covered the boy's head with the bark-cloth he had made. He told him, "You must not make a fire: I shall bring food to you. My daughter is very strong, like a man. She musn't see you, for if she finds you, the two of you will fight. You mustn't come to our house, you must stay here". Then the man got up, and after he had said this to the boy, he gave him food. And each day he returned and did the same thing.
When he went to make gardens, he told the boy to come quietly and help him, but when they had finished work in the afternoons, the boy went back to his own place, and his father brought him food there, and afterwards went home. The boy obeyed his father, and thus they carried on, for quite a long time.

Then one day the man's wife and daughter decided to go and gather food in the region past where the man was making gardens and where the boy lived. It was as though, from here at Kaironk, they went down towards the Jimi (i.e. a considerable distance, almost half a day's walk). The man had said that he was going to clear a new garden in an area where he had already cut the undergrowth, so that he would now be chopping down the trees.

So very early in the morning the woman and the girl went down to the Jimi and collected food. As they walked back the daughter was ahead of her mother and first reached an open grassy place on the top of a hill, where there was a good view. She was astonished to see that her father had already cleared a huge area of bush, had chopped down the trees as far as from the Tient River to Kabadglem (about 400 m). She turned and called to her mother, "Come and look, Father is by himself and yet he has not just cut a few trees in one day, leaving some to cut the next and some to cut the day after that; it is as though he had a whole group of men to help him to clear the bush; mother, come and look!" The mother said, "True, I think he has had some men to come and help him. Let's hurry along quickly".

The two ran and ran until they got as close as Ymwoñæk is to here (at Kaironk - i.e. about 400 m distant, and 50 m lower down in altitude). (*) The girl then said, "Mother, you go on home by the direct path up

* From this point on, the text has been emended by Saem.
the hill, I will go along the streamside and will collect some leaves for the earth-oven”.

The girl followed the stream, until she came to a little pool of water. (This was the kind that our ancestors used as mirrors, before we got glass, when they wanted to shave, or to arrange their headdresses). The girl looked in the pool, and there appeared to be a man in it. She peered at him, and saw that he wore a full headdress, with wig and bird plumes. He had feathers of white cockatoo and hornbill, and the fur of a white cuscus in his headdress too. The girl watched the reflection, and then a breeze made the headdress ornaments flutter; and her heart was moved. She thought, "I know nothing of this man, and only now I see him. The face of my father is different. What sort of man is this? It looks like a real man. I wonder where he can be?" She searched about, but could not find him. Then she gathered leaves to take home, and put them in her bag, and after that she returned to the pool, and the man was still there. She collected more leaves, then looked again, and the man was still there. She fetched more and more leaves of many kinds, and worked at this for two or three hours, kept coming back and putting them by the pool, and the man was still there. And she wondered what she should do. Then she decided to empty the pool of water. She drained it all out; but when she did this the man disappeared, and there was only mud and stones in the bottom of the pool. So again she wondered what to do, and eventually decided to fill the pool up again, to see if the man came back. She did this, and there the man was. Thus she went on searching until well on in the afternoon, when the sun was beginning to go down.

Then she heard her mother call, so she went home. Her mother asked her, "Why did you take such a long time to come home?" The
girl said, "Oh mother, I went down to the stream and felt ill, that is why I walked home so slowly". The two of them cooked the food in the earth-oven, and as soon as they had done this, the girl again ran back to the pool, and again she saw the reflection of the young man sitting in the tree, and she looked at him and looked at him.

Then the girl began to sing. She sang that she would now forget her brothers and think only of a husband, that she had drained the pool and found only mud and stones, that she had filled it up again and the figure was there once more; and now she was determined that she would forsake her brothers and get married. What she was singing was that she would not think of the man as her brother, but that she would marry him; and he must not think of her as a sister. Now, this kwai (magical spell or chant) that the girl sang has ever since been something that the men make secretly, and women must not hear. When men prepare for dance festivals, they go to a secret place in the bush and sleep there and sing this magic chant as they decorate themselves.

Then she looked around and saw a single tree, a ymges (Elaeocarpus sp.), standing in the part of the clearing where her father was still working. She ran back home and asked her mother for sweet potato to take to her father. The mother gave her some, but the girl didn't take it to her father, and didn't come out into the open in the clearing, but just hid and watched. And there, not far above where her father was cutting the bush, she saw the boy sitting in the tree. She said, "Aha, now at last I've found you; I saw you in the water and searched for you until the sun began to go down, but now I've found you". And she took an axe and began to chop the tree down. As she chopped, again she chanted, and this chant also is now part of the male beatuy magic, which men perform secretly, and women must not hear. (*)

* The end of the passage which Saem emended.
After a while her father heard the noise, and wondered what had happened, and who the boy was talking to. Then he turned and saw his daughter; and he saw the two of them, the boy and the girl, fighting. The father ran over to them and said, "This is not the child of another man, this is my son. I bore you and I bore him - you two cannot behave like this". But the girl said, "No, I'm going to marry him". She spoke thus, and the young man also spoke angrily. Eventually the father took them both back to the house.

His wife said, "This man, where did you bring him from?" The man said, "He is my son, you don't understand". The girl said, "No, someone else brought him here, and you just say that he's your son; I'm going to marry this man". The father said, "No, he's my son, I bore you and I bore him". And the girl spoke strongly, and her father spoke strongly too. The father and his son took one side in the argument, and the girl and her mother took the other, and the mother said, "My daughter will marry this man!" But the father said, "No, he is not the son of another man, he is my child". Thus they argued into the night, and eventually they slept.

Then early in the morning, the man said to his wife, "You and I are going to work in the gardens; these two can stay here and quarrel in the house". So the parents went off to get food; and the girl started to cook a taro of the variety called *wâna* (5) which has blue flesh. She said to the boy, "Let's be married". The boy said, "No, I'm not another man, I'm the son of your father, you are my sister, I cannot marry you". He said this, but the girl said, "No, I'm going to marry you", and she took the *wâna* taro and hit him on the head with it. The boy said, "So you want to hit me. Alright, you can stay here by yourself, just see what I do, you watch". Then he changed into the bird we call *kob*, which has blue feathers on the crown, like the cooked flesh of the *wâna* taro, and he flew up and perched on a high
branch of a tree. The girl called out, from the base of the tree, "You wait, I shall hold you fast and only after that can you get up and fly off somewhere else, to the branch of another tree." She started to climb quickly up the tree, but she did not get far; she was held by one of the branches. She couldn't move, she was stuck absolutely still. And the same day the shoots of the *tabam* plant grew up out of her head, and the roots of it grew down through her body, right down through her crotch, and round the branch of the tree. She called out, "My shoots grow up, and later, wherever you fly about, these will flourish and you will have to come and eat of me".

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Saem adds the following note:

This magic, that the boy heard when the girl sang it at the pool and when she was chopping down the tree, is now known by nearly all Kalam men, and by a few Kopon. It originated with the ancestors of Kaynabey, the former Luluai of Momuk. I know it myself, but I must not put it in this book, for women should not know it. And if I put it in this book, men would be angry, and some of them might employ witches against me.

Notes

1. Accounts of this and other birds mentioned in these stories may be found in Rand and Gilliard (1967).

2. A very large frog found at lower altitudes in the Jimi and Asai Valleys (Bulmer and Tyler 1968: 369-70). Kaironk people have little first-hand knowledge of it, and their accounts are somewhat confused and perhaps exaggerated, but most agree that it is an aquatic and
terrestrial species (probably *Rana arfaki*), unlike the majority of frogs that Kalam eat, which are tree-frogs (*Ialidae*). Although the locally present large aquatic and terrestrial frog in the Upper Kaironk Valley, *Rana grisea*, is eaten, it is said that its flesh is nothing like as good as that of the best of the tree frogs. According to Saem, regardless of *akok’a* size, the supposition is that its flesh would not be particularly good to eat - though people in the Jimi and Asai Valleys are certainly said to hunt and eat it.

3. The Green Python, *Chondropython viridis*, an arboreal snake which grows to three or four feet in length. It is the only snake known to Upper Kaironk Kalam which they regard as innocuous and freely edible, other than to persons who avoid it on account of hereditary prohibitions. They are however not very familiar with it, as its upper altitudinal limit is approximately 1600 m, which is almost at the lower limit of Kalam settlement in the Kaironk Valley (see Bulmer n.d. (ii); Bulmer, Parker and Menzies, in litt).

4. This is the normal sequence of actions by which a young man first grows and dresses his hair and puts on a bark-cloth hat; but normally this is spread over several weeks, not compressed into a single day.

5. One of the most highly valued of the 40-odd taro varieties grown by Kalam in the Kaironk Valley.
STORY II : The Dance Festival of the Birds and Animals

As told by Ian Saem Majnep, at Auckland, 23 December 1974

The amy or 'Dance Festival' is the only major ceremonial performed by Kalam. It involves the initiation of boys; the killing and cooking of pigs to propitiate the spirits of the dead; the payment of pork, vegetables, shells and other valuables to affinal groups, including those who are the matrikin of boys undergoing initiation, to honour the wives of the sponsors of the ceremony and to reciprocate similar gifts made by these groups on previous occasions; and an all-night public dance to which individual men, invited to come as exchange partners, bring teams of followers and supporters. Sponsoring a amy requires much careful planning and hard work, the build-up of an adequate pig-herd, and success in cultivation of a large crop of tara. The amy occupies a very central position in Kalam social life and is a major focus of their interest, activity and enthusiasm.

This little story is of the classic "just-so" type, and it also embodies an elementary didactic message, "try not to provoke the envy and annoyance of powerful and important men". But unlike the previous tale, of the Papuan Lory and the Schefflera plant, it has no obvious function as a charter: it is just for entertainment.

Koñô, the Gardner Pauper Bird (Amblyornis magregoriae) is a very appropriate sponsor for the amy. This remarkable species constructs a circular dance-ground of tightly packed moss around a small sapling on the forest floor, and erects in the centre of this a tower of small sticks. Its display is noisy and spectacular, and Kalam assert that it invites (i.e. attracts) other species of birds, certain of the birds of paradise, to its dance ground: and that some of the rodents and marsupials also come and dance there at night.

Why amlamlnap, the black-breasted Flatbill Flycatcher (Machaerirhynchus nigricinctus) should have been the object of so much admiration is something of a puzzle. This odd little
bird, rather like a fantail in size and shape and in its active movements (though it does not spread its wagging tail), could be seen as a dancer; and is nicely plumed in yellow and black. Its name means "father of smleml", sml or smleml being "bright deep yellow". Possibly it is also because its curious shovel-shaped beak make it such a distinctive and curious species that it is selected.

There is no puzzle as to why the gulgul, the Greater Sicklebill Bird of Paradise (Enimachus fastosus), plays the role he does. He is one of the largest, most conspicuous, most valuable, and noisiest of the birds of the forest, with a truly terrifying machine-gun-like rattling call.

I want to tell the story about all the birds, how they first adorned themselves for dancing, then the gulgul (the Greater Sicklebill Bird of Paradise) called out, and they all fled, some up into the foliage of the trees, some to hiding places on the ground.

First the kowib (the Gardner Power Bird) made the smy (dance-festival) house and invited all the birds and animals to come. All the birds, the gulgul (Greater Sicklebill Bird of Paradise), the jbjel (Lesser Sicklebill), the galkmen (female and immature Sicklebills), all the tabal (Papuan Lories), and all the smaller birds, ko.iway (Black-throated Honeyeater), gasln (Mountain Lory); they all dressed up and came to dance. The same mammals, bald or ymdn (the big ringtail possum), atwak (Silky Cuscus), mosak (Rothschild's Giant Rat), larmpap (the water rats), swatgy (Native Cat), all the ngsy (Lone-tailed Bandicoots), they all came to dance too.

They put on their decorations and they came to dance. They all adorned themselves quite well, but the little smlemlnap (Black-breasted Flatbill Flycatcher) in his dance regalia exceeded them all, outshone all the other birds. All the birds gathered together and talked, and admired the smlemlnap, and shouted their acclaim; and they continued dancing and chanting. Then the gulgul (Greater Sicklebell)
got angry. He thought to himself, "Why do they all praise this little smleslnap, and pay no attention to me, a Big Man?" So he went just a little way away and suddenly cried out, very loudly, with his thundering call. He shouted, "Why do you all sit here and talk?" He shouted, and all the birds fled in fear. Some flew up and perched in the branches of trees; some dived into holes in trees, and under the trunks and roots. In doing so, some scraped the skin on their heads, and on their legs. Thus mælg (Mountain Pigeon), koot (White-fronted Fruit-Dove), and kwot (the cuckoo-doves), wæng (Tearful Lory), kamayge (Red-billed Mountain Lory) and gasæn (Yellow-billed Mountain Lory), tabal (Papuan Lories), all of them since then have had bare skin on their faces, or red skin on their legs or red on their beaks. Some kinds such as sep (Red-collared Myzomela) scraped themselves as they went into holes in trees, or dived under branches, and their plumage became red, stained with blood. And some birds went down and found hiding-places on the ground, like kæselog (Black False-Pitta), bleb (Roccari's Ground-Dove) and kanak (Chestnut Rail). Some animals also quaked with fear and dug down underneath the ground; some went into holes in trunks in trees; some twisted and bent their backs, as the wgh (Long-tailed Bandicoot) did for one. Madaw (Terrestrial Cuscus) went and hid under the roots of a tree. Ydn (the big ringtail), atvak (Silky Cuscus) and mosak (Rothschild's Giant Rat) went high up into the trees and stayed there.

All the birds with red on their beaks or legs or feathers, they became thus at this time, when the smleslnap won the dance-festival, and the gwlglw called out in anger, and they fled up into trees, or under the roots of trees, and their backs were injured or their heads or legs scraped on branches, and these became red.
STORY III: Pln and Pnepk make a woman.

A composite of versions told by
Simon Peter Gi at Kaironk on 24th

Pln, the Slatey Robin-Mistler (Penceothello cyanus), and
Pnepk, the Slatey-chinned Longbill (Toxorhamphus poliontorus)
are two small birds of the mid-mountain oak forest, neither of
which is very common in the Upper Kaironk. Pln is a sparrow-sized
bird, blue-grey in colour, which feeds on insects and other
invertebrates in the leaf-litter on the forest floor and in the
undergrowth. Saen says that it is regarded as a frequent
manifestation of witches, and that people are frightened of it.
It is elusive, calling in one place and then, before one sees it,
calling somewhere else. There is a settlement area high up on
the South side of the Kaironk Valley which is called Pln.
According to Gi, the people who lived there in the olden days
were likened to the bird, because they were so poor that the men
had to scratch around and dig up their own food and cook it, even
though they had womenfolk who were hard at work elsewhere.

Pnepk is a smaller bird than Pln, olive green and grey in
colour, with a yellow spot on its lower throat. It is a member
of the honey-eater family and has a long thin curved beak, and
it feeds on the blossom of wild ginger plants on the forest floor,
and also hunts for insects in the low vegetation. It is a very
active little bird, darting through the undergrowth of the forest.
Its name is glossed by some Kalam as "it strikes at the head",
or "it strikes on top", though Saen will not accept this
etymology.

Pln and Pnepk make a suitable pair of characters for a
story in that they share a common habitat, both are distinctive
little birds, and both are rapidly moving and somewhat elusive;
though Pln appears on the whole to be considerably shier of man
than Pnepk is.

This brief story appears to be well-known in the Upper
Kaironk, and Bulmer has been told it a number of times. He has
a slight suspicion that it may be only a fragment of a longer
creation myth, the rest of which either has been forgotten, or is esoteric. Gi commenced his version on 24th October 1973 with the statement, "Pi and Nepek originally planted all the trees and other plants, and then they made a woman, but she had no genitals", but he deleted this when he retold the story the following day; and Saeen said that he had never heard this before, and recommended that it be left out. Another young man who also told Pulmer the story in much its present form said that he had heard that it was part of a longer story about a woman who had created everything in the world, but he did not know the details.

Pi and Nepek made a woman, but the woman had no vulva. They considered this problem, that she had no hole there. Pi said, "Let's cut her. I think we should cut her from side to side, like this". Nepek said, "That would be no good, how would she wear an apron? I think we should cut her downwards, down to the crotch". They spoke thus, and the two of them argued. Then Nepek said to Pi, "Pi, you go and cut a bamboo knife, and then we will do it the way that you want". Pi went off to cut the bamboo, but Nepek tricked him, for he already had a bamboo knife which he had hidden, and he slit the woman downwards. Pi returned and said, "You have already cut her?" "I've cut her", said Nepek. Pi said, "If you have already cut her downwards, I can't cut her across".
STORY IV: The story of the five brothers, or; the kaakae and the 
Dn (the woodswallows and the grass-finches)

As recorded by Simon Peter Gi, 
at Kaironk, 24th October 1973

The first part of this story, in which five brothers escape the vengeance of their father after one of them has unknowingly (?), eaten their dead mother's vulva, and acquire themselves five brides, appears to be well known, and has been recorded by A. E. Pawley as well as by P. Bulmer. The second part, in which four of the brothers are polluted by their wives' urine and in consequence all five, together with the one "good" wife, change into kaakae woodswallows (Artamus maximus), while the four remaining women change into Dn grass-finches (Lonchura spectabilis), is only known to Bulmer in the present version, though Saem says that he is familiar with this story. When Gi recorded this tale, he told it in these two separate instalments, though on the same day.

The woodswallows, handsome black and white birds about the size of a starling but more heavily built, are common throughout the zones of human settlement in the Highlands. They perch and nest high in tall lopped or ring-barked casuarinas and other dead trees, and take all the insects, on which they feed, on the wing. They are strong fliers and circle up to considerable heights, and range over considerable distances. However because they nest near to human settlements and in conspicuous, if inaccessible, places, their domestic life is very familiar to Kalam. According to Saem, they are regarded as good birds for two different reasons. Firstly, they are said to observe human strangers coming from afar, even if these are trying to approach secretly, and to fly up and call and give warning when they do. Thus they protect people from their enemies. Secondly, they epitomise domestic virtue. Families of five or six birds stay together, and the adults very conspicuously continue to feed their recently fledged young. A good woman who is always hospitable and assiduous in calling out to her family and to visitors to come for food may be described as like a kaakae. A ritual performed over a newly married couple involves the smoke of singeing kaakae feathers being wafted over them,
and the bride then retains in her string bag some of the plumage of the bird.

On, the Grass-Finches or Mannikins, Lonchura spectabilis, are also very common in the grasslands and garden areas of the Highlands. They are small black, brown and off-white birds, rather like miniature cock house-sparrows. Like the woodswallows they are gregarious, and old nests, which are in the tall grass, are used as roosts by up to six or eight birds. However, in polar contrast to the woodswallows, they always feed and fly about very close to the ground. Their food is mainly seed, but they also go to small stagnant pools and puddles where, according to Kalam, they feed on minute floating algae and other kinds of scum. Hence the appropriateness of their association with women, who do not climb trees, and, in this story, with urine. The appropriateness of the association of the woodswallows, which dwell in tall dead trees and fly high in the sky, with the brothers, who also dwell in tall dead tree and flew magically through the air, is clear.

Since the first part of this story hinges on a bizarre instance of mortuary cannibalism, and also refers to the relatives of the vengeful father as cannibals, it is necessary to note that Kalam are not cannibals, and have no tradition that cannibalism has ever been a practice of their ancestors. However they believe that witches practise cannibalism, feeding on the corpses of those whom they have killed; and also that some of the ethnically different peoples living to their North and North-West are cannibals.

I'm going to tell the story of a man who was making arrows down at a place called Koymaren. The man had five sons, and they were growing up. Their mother died, and they placed her in her grave, and then the boys went off to the gardens. The father then went and cut out the vulva of his dead wife, and he put it in a gourd and hung this up in the roof of the house, so that it was smoked by the fire. Then, when it had been there for some days, and was dry, he told his sons one morning to go out ahead of him, he would fasten
the door of the house and then follow them. In fact, when they had
gone, he went back inside the house and barred the door. He took down
the smoked vulva and sniffed it, then he put it back in the gourd and
left the house and closed the door. He did this on many occasions,
sending the boys out and then staying behind for this purpose.

One day the eldest son said, "Father always stays behind, he
never leaves it to us to bar the door, it's always he who does this.
What does he do inside? I shall trick him and hide in a dark corner
and see what he does. The rest of you must all go outside."

Very early next morning, when the father was still sleeping in
a different, inner room of the house, the boy hid. When the father
got up and told the other boys to go outside, he asked them where
their elder brother was. They told him that he had left already, for
the gardens. The father went out of the house until the boys had
gone away, and then he reopened the door, went back in, took down the
gourd, took out his wife's vulva, and he sniffed it. Then he put it
back and went outside, closed the door, and left. The son got up,
reopened the door, and followed him, but took another track and got
to the garden first. Then, while they were all working in the garden,
planting out crops, he told his younger brothers, "Now I know what
father does when he goes back in the house and closes the door, I've
seen it. Alright, tomorrow we shall trick him, we'll all go off to
the bush before he gets up."

So next day they said, "Father, we're off, we're going to the
bush". They deceived him thus. When the man went out and headed for
the garden, they watched from a vantage point, and then they ran back
to the house, and took down their mother's vulva. The eldest brother
sniffed it and said, "it has a good smell". The second smelled it,
and said, "It smells good". And the third said it smelled good, and
he gave it to the fourth, who said the same. The fifth said, "The smell is very good, why don't I taste it?" and he put it to his mouth, and he swallowed it whole.

The eldest brother said, "Why didn't you just smell it, like the rest of us; why did you have to swallow it? I fear our father will come and kill us all".

They discussed what they should do, and then they went and hid in a big hollow spy tree. The eldest brother went inside first, and the youngest brother last, and they climbed right up inside the hollow tree, as high as they could go, to where there was a hole in a dead branch, from which they could look out. They saw their father come running back to the house. He went in to look for his wife's vulva, and opened the gourd but he could not see it. He carried the gourd outside into the sunlight, but he still could not see the vulva. He said to himself, "the children must have eaten it".

He went away and summoned his relatives, who were witches. The brothers, watching from the tree, saw many of them come, so that the house was full of men; and the boys thought that now they were finished. But the youngest brother said, "Look, I know what we can do, we won't be killed, we shall escape elsewhere".

Their father went into his house, put on his wig and ornaments, and put his dance-bustle (a big bundle of dry folded cane-leaves, designed to wave up and down and make a loud rustling noise when the wearer dances) at his rear; and he went off down the track towards the garden where he thought the boys had gone. He jigged up and down (making dance movements) as he went, but his bustle did not shake, it remained quite still; and the feathers in his headdress did not wave, they stayed quite still too. Then he tried another path, and again his bustle did not shake and his plumes did
not wave. He tried a third path, and the same thing happened. Then he started off down the path towards the tree where the boys were hiding, and his plumes began to wave, and his bustle to shake, with great vigour. Then he called to his relatives, the Cdon-opynab ("the Cdon, i.e. Northern side of the Schraders, corpse-eaters"), the real witches, "they went down this track, come and follow them!"

The father, dancing up and down, went first, and all the witches followed him. They went a few hundred paces up hill, and they danced there, but the plumes did not wave; so they knew the boys had gone downhill. So they set off on the downhill track, and the plumes waved again. Then, when they got to the base of the big tree, the bustle shook and the plumes waved very strongly, so he said, "They have gone into this hollow tree". And they wondered how they would get up after them.

Instead, they started to chop the tree down. They chopped and chopped, and finally the tree fell. But the boys were in the dead branch high up at the top of the tree, and this fell down a great distance away, as far away from Kaironk as Hagen is.

It fell in a place where a group of women, five sisters, were making a garden. The sisters were working in the lower part of the garden, and the broken branch fell in the upper part. The youngest sister said, "I saw something fall down. I'm going to see what it is". She went up, and found it was a dead dry log, but she could not see what tree it could have fallen from. She called her sisters, and they all came to look at it. They wondered where it could have come from. Eventually they decided to carry it home to their house, to dry it out first, and then to use it for firewood, to keep them warm. So the youngest sister, at one end of the log, and the eldest sister, at the other, carried it up and placed it on the overhead firewood-rack
in their house. Then they heated stones and cooked their food in the earth-oven. They placed a portion of the food in the inner room, for themselves to eat later, and took a portion for their nigs, and carried this outside.

When the women went outside to do this, the boys in the log climbed out in ones and twos and took some of the cooked food the women had left in the inner room. They made a hole in the bottom of the log, to get out by, and closed it up again when they went back inside. They ate, and they slept.

In the morning the women went off to the gardens, and the boys again climbed down, and took some raw sweet-potato, and made a fire and cooked it and ate it. Then the five brothers talked, the eldest saying, "My wife is the one who sleeps here", and the second saying, "Mine is the one who sleeps here", and the third said, "My wife sleeps here", and the fourth, "My wife is the one that sleeps here", and the fifth, "My wife is the one that sleeps here". They had already taken the sweet potato that the women had carried home in the bags suspended from their heads. Now they took the string-bags themselves, and messed around with them, and knotted them up; and then they put them back. And they sat there cooking and eating the sweet potato.

When the women returned home, the men had climbed back into their log and hidden, and watched them from there. The women opened the door and came inside and looked for their sweet potato, but it had all gone. They went to look for their string-bags, but these were not tidy, as they had left them, they were all over the place. They said to each other, "Who can it be who has been here, I hope it's not a group of witches who have come!" And for a time they stayed inside the house, without daring to go out to look. Then they went outside the house and heated stones and cooked food. When it was ready, they took it out of the oven, and some they put inside the
house, and some they took down to the house where they kept their pigs. The five men climbed down, in ones and twos, and each took one or two cooked sweet potatoes, and they climbed back into the log and ate these.

The women came back into the house and said, "We counted these sweet potatoes, and now some have gone; who has come here and eaten them?" They talked about this for some time, but eventually they settled down to sleep.

Early in the morning the women got up and went outside, and walked just a little way away, just a couple of hundred paces. Then they talked. The eldest sister said, "I'm going to hide and watch the house, and see who comes; the rest of you must all go off to the gardens". So the other four went off, and the eldest returned to the house and hid just outside it. She heard noises inside the house as the men left the log, climbed down, and each took one or two of the sweet potatoes, and they made up the fire. Then one of them said, "I want to go outside to relieve myself". The others said that they all needed to go out for the same reason. So the five of them left the house. The woman watched them from her hiding place. They went off and relieved themselves, then they went back in the house again, and they lay down, each on the sleeping place of the sister he had chosen to marry; and they cooked food; and they played around with the women's net-bags; and they joked and laughed. Then one of the brothers said, "Be careful lest they come and find us, we shouldn't be playing around with all their things like this". But the others said, "So what if they come, what can they say? Why shouldn't we play around with their things?" Thus they talked inside the house.

The woman outside heard all this. Then she saw her sisters walking home, through a clearing, down below. One of the brothers came outside and also saw them. He ran back in and said, "Quickly,
we must all get back in the log, they are just down below, they musn't see us". But the woman who was hiding saw them get back into the log. She ran down to meet her sisters. "Now I've found them", she said, "What we have to do is chop open the log. Let's go and prepare the oven-stones, and then we shall get down the log and cut it open". Her sisters all asked her, "How many men are there?". She told them, "Five". They said, "That's enough for all of us."

So they went back to the house and looked inside, and everything was in disorder. The men had left everything in a mess. The women said, "Who is it who has done all this, first yesterday and then again today? All the sweet potato is finished". Then they said, "Alright, now we will chop up this log of ours, and heat the oven stones with it". And the eldest sister and the youngest sister climbed up and lifted down the log, and they said, "Let's chop it up carefully, bit by bit". So they split the bottom of it, and put in a wedge, to break it open the whole way up; and they found all the five men inside; and they laughed. They asked, "Which of you is the eldest?". And the first brother said, "I am". So they said, "You go to this woman". They said, "Which is the second?", and the second answered, "I am". "Right, you go to this woman. Which is the third?". "I am". They allocated him to the third sister. "Fourth?" And they gave him to the fourth sister. "Fifth?" And they gave him to the youngest sister. Then they heated the stones, cooked the food, and ate; and they showed the men the places in the house of each of the sisters. When it got dark, they made up the fire, and they slept. The eldest brother and the eldest sister slept at the top, the second couple below them, and so on around the fire.
Next morning they awoke and all went off to the gardens. When they got back, the men said that they were thirsty, and wanted water. The women then went off and cut bamboo containers, and took these down to the stream. Four of them urinated in the bottoms of their bamboo tubes, and just filled up the tops with water. Only the youngest did not do this, but filled up the whole of her tube with good clean water. Then they took the tubes of water back to their husbands.

The eldest brother took his tube first and drank from it, but the water did not taste good. The second drank of his, but the water in that was not good either, it smelled of urine. The third drank and it was the same, it smelled of urine. And it was the same with the fourth. But the fifth brother drank, and the water that he had was good. So they said to the women, "Why do you behave thus towards us? It was us who came to you; and now we are married, and we are living here. Why do you do this, and make trouble for us? Very well, we shall not remain here with you, we are going back to dwell in the tops of the trees". They spoke thus, and they got up, one by one. First the eldest brother rose, and changed into a *kaokac* (woodswallow), and flew off. His wife got up and tried to follow him, but couldn’t. Then the second, and the third, also did this, changed into *kaokac* and flew off and perched in a high dead branch of a tree, leaving their wives behind. The fourth did the same. But the fifth, when he got up and changed into a *kaokac* and flew up, his wife also changed into a *kaokac* and flew up with him.

The four women who were left behind all cried out, "Why do you leave us?" The brothers answered "You yourselves behaved badly towards us". And the youngest sister said, "I did not insult my husband, and when he got up and changed into a *kaokac*, so did I, and I am accompanying him". And they said "We shall leave you down there
on the ground”.

The four sisters said, "We shall change into \(\text{d\lowercase{n}}\) (Grass-finches)," and indeed they did so. Thus \(\text{d\lowercase{n}}\) fly about just above the ground, whereas the \(\text{k\lowercase{a}k\lowercase{a}}\) fly high in the air, and they are the group of brothers and the one sister who changed into this kind of bird.

**Notes**

1. In the first stage of the disposal of the dead Kalam formerly placed corpses in fenced open graves, on the ground surface or on a platform, near the homestead of the deceased.

2. *Albizia fulva*, a common fast-growing second-growth tree in grasslands, garden areas and bush-fallow, below about 1500 m. It can grow very large. There are only a few in the Upper Kaironk Valley, but all Kalam have some familiarity with this species from visits to settlements at lower altitudes.

3. Just as arrows are the foremost of male-associated artefacts and the most explicit of male symbols for the Kalam, the string bag is the foremost of female-associated artefacts, and a most explicit female symbol.
STORY V: The Owlet-Nightjar and the Dogs.

Recorded by Ian Saem Majnep, at Auckland, 4th December 1974.

This appears to be a well-known tale which Bulmer also recorded, in a slightly different version, from Wod of Gobnem, then a youth in his late teens, in 1963. In the present text, Saem glosses the tale himself, as he tells it, so little introductory commentary is required.

Kulep, the Mountain Owlet-Nightjar (Aegotheles albertisi), is a small, insectivorous, nocturnal bird of the forest, about the size of a starling. It has soft mottled plumage, a short and rather wide and flat bill, and, for its size, very big eyes. Like owls, to which they are not closely related, the owlet-nightjars sit relatively upright (in a human-like posture), and turn their heads to face whatever they are looking at, focussing both of their eyes on this, unlike most birds, which normally use lateral vision and peer at objects sideways. These features may help explain the importance and strange behaviour of the owlet-nightjar's severed head in the story.

As Saem says, the story is basically about the origin of dog. Kalam keep dogs, and those men who hunt value their dogs very highly (see Bulmer & Menzies 1972: 486; Bulmer n.d. (1)). Wild, or feral, dogs are also present, in very small numbers, in the area. Kalam do not eat dog, and in terms of the restrictions imposed on people who have killed dogs, or handled parturient bitches, this is the animal that Kalam relate more closely than any other to man (see also Rulmer 1967: 19).

Pairs of cross-cousins figure in several Kalam stories. A major theme of these stories is the tension between them, and typically one cousin is depicted as a 'good' or 'normal' man, the other as a cannibal witch. In real life a man's 'true' (generally, 'first') cross-cousins are extremely important to him. Cross-cousins should behave with respect and restraint towards each other, but should also be the closest of friends and prepared to render each other any kind of personal assistance. However if, as is not infrequently the case, the relationship
degenerates into animosity, this is a serious matter; and if in such circumstances a man gets sick or dies or suffers other grave misfortune, there will inevitably be suspicion that the hostile or aggrieved cross-cousin is in some way responsible (see Pulmer 1967: 16, 18; Piebe 1974: 29-30, 531-32).

This is the story of the origin of dog.

There were two cross-cousins who lived at Mobyn, below Gwlkm and Sgawgog. They went hunting and they were not killing much game. Then one day, when each had gone along a different track, one of them climbed a small tree which had a small epiphytic bird's nest fern\(^1\) in it, and in the fern he disturbed a kwlep (a Mountain Owlet-Nightjar).

The kwlep told the man which tracks to follow, if he wanted to kill many animals. He climbed down and went where the kwlep had told him to, and he killed many animals, two or three hundred of them. In those days the forests were full of animals. When the cousins came to cook the animals, and they wanted to make fire, they did not use firewood, they just burnt animals to make fire. They used them to make fires to heat the stones for their ovens.\(^2\) Thus they cooked meat and they ate and they slept. This was repeated for many days, the one cousin going to the kwlep and being told where the animals were, and then killing vast numbers of them.

Eventually the other man thought, "Why is it that my cousin always kills so many animals and I don't. What does he do?" So one morning, when the other went off first, he followed him secretly and watched what he did. He watched as his cousin went to the tree and tapped it, and the bird put its head out of the fern and talked to him, nodding its head in those directions that he should follow to find the animals.
When he had gone, the cousin who had been watching went himself and knocked on the tree with the fern in it. When the bird put its head out to see who it was, he took his bow and shot it, right through its neck, so that its head came off. The head and the body fell to the ground, and the man picked them up and carried them back to the house. When he got there, he put the remains of the bird beside the fire. Then he built the fire up, feeding it with more of the animals he was using for firewood, until it was really blazing; and he put the bird in the fire to roast. But the head flew up out of the fire, and fell down in a corner of the room. He put it back in the middle of the fire, and again it got up and flew out and landed in another corner. This happened a third time. So the man made a bigger fire, putting on more animals; but the same thing happened again. And this kept happening until well on in the afternoon, when the other cousin returned home.

He said to him, "Oh cousin, I killed this bird and I've been trying to roast it on the fire, but each time I do its head flies out and lands somewhere else in the house". The other said, "Oh my cousin, this is something very serious for us". He paused and worried about it, and then said, "It was this that told me where to find all the animals, and now, what have you done? You have shot the bird that helped us get all these animals". He considered carefully what they should do. Then he gathered together moss, and made a little pad of this near the edge of the fire, and he placed the bird's head on it. Then the two slept.

In the morning, when they awoke, they found that the head had laid two eggs. They wondered what the eggs would turn into. They waited for that day; and the night came, and they slept. On the following morning they found that the eggs had hatched into two
young dogs. Again they waited to see what would happen, and another night came, and they slept. On the following morning, the two dogs had grown big. The cousin who had saved the bird's head, wondered, "What can we do with these?"

Next day the two men took the two dogs and went to Gwglep, and they killed very many animals. Some were caught by the dogs, some the men themselves killed. They put some of the animals up in the branches of trees, some in the foliage of young nandans, and some they left on the ground. They moved on and on, hunting and depositing the game they took like this, until, starting from Gwglep, they came to Lmeokwayway, and then beyond that to a place which was covered with gd forn.

When they got to the gd, the dogs, who were ahead of the men, started yelping noisily from underneath the surface, and the men thought that they must have found an animal. The men tried to follow, and cut a hole, but the dogs had moved on up the hill and were yelping somewhere else. The men followed them and again cut their way down through the false ground-surface. But the dogs had once more moved on, and were calling somewhere else. Again the men followed them. And so it went on.

Then the men paused by where they had first cut a hole. One of the dogs was waiting and watching from underneath. The dog yelped, from quite close, deliberately to deceive them. The man who had killed the koilep thought it must be holding an animal down there. He said, "I think this is where it is", and he started to lower himself down into the hole, lees and buttocks first. When he did so, the dogs bit off his testicles, and he died.

The other man wondered what to do. He left the dead man in the hole, and covered him with moss. Then the two dogs came out.
They ran and fetched some of the animals they had killed; others they left. They fetched the ones that they had left in the branches of trees, and on the open ground, but left the ones that they had hidden, in the pandans and in other places.

They brought the animals to this place. The man and the dogs made an oven and they cooked the animals. Then the man took charcoal from the fire, and broke it up small, and marked the dogs' noses with this. This is how dogs first got black marks on their noses and faces.

Now today, when men want to make magic spells for a good hunting dog, they take charcoal from the fire and put it inside a piece of sweet potato, and give it to the dog to eat. Then, if the dog goes into the forest, it will catch many animals. An ordinary dog, which does not have this magic performed over it, may sometimes catch animals, but sometimes it will not. Also a good dog like this will, when there are animals out in the open country, catch many of these too. For a good dog people still always make this magic, putting charcoal from the fire inside their sweet potato.

Also, if men still now go hunting and they find a pow they know they won't get any animals, for this bird is the cross-cousin of game animals, and will fly off and warn them so that they go and hide. So if hunters meet this bird they just do a short tour and come home again.

Notes

1. In the final stage of the disposal of the dead, skulls and other bones are placed in the forks of trees, and in clumps of birds' nest fern and other epiphytes.
2. In Wod's version (see above) the cousin who had been unsuccessful in his hunting complained about the amount of work involved in preparing so many animals for earth-oven cooking, singeing them, gutting them, cutting firewood, heating stones and so forth. So the successful hunter told him first not to bother, but just to roast the animals on the open fire; then to use the surplus animals themselves as fuel.

3. According to Wod, he asked his cousin how he got so many animals, and was told, "I just climb trees and find them".

4. Gd fern grows in areas of "moss-forest" where fallen trees and branches swathed in moss and fern create a false surface to the ground. Many kinds of animals are said to move about and have their lairs underneath this treacherous surface, on which men have difficulty in moving about.

5. In Wod's version the cousin who had been befriended by the kolep sent the other off alone to hunt with the dogs, and told the dogs that they could kill him. After they had killed him, the dogs ran back to fetch their surviving master.

6. This was just because they had killed so many, and could afford to abandon some.

7. This is the mark of the successful homicide.

8. Pov is the wider taxon which includes the Large Owlet-Nightjar, Aegotheles insignis, a bigger bird found both in the forest and in trees and thickets in the garden areas, as well as the kolop, the Mountain Owlet-Nightjar, A. albertisi. Apart from the difference in size, the two species are very similar. Thus a kolop may be defined as a small pov.
The significance which Kalam attach to the cassowary has been discussed in a previous publication (Bulmer 1967) which includes a briefer and rather different version of the following myth. In "Birds of My Kalam Country" Saem devotes a substantial chapter to this remarkable creature, even though it is not in most contexts admitted to be a kind of yakt ("flying birds and bats"). He justifies its inclusion in the book so extensively that his chapter on it might appropriately be subtitled, "Why the Cassowary really is a Bird".

Saem provides his own commentary on this myth, at the end of the narrative. He makes it very clear that, far from merely being the charter for some ceremonies which a different ethnic group, the Kopon, and not the Kalam, perform, this story has for him a far wider explanatory significance; and that it is very positively related to the ritual avoidances associated with cassowary hunting and, by implication, with the separation between cassowary hunting and consumption on the one hand, and the most important garden activities on the other.

I'm going to tell the story of the woman who changed into a cassowary. It starts at Bayh-jy (at the head of the Simbai Valley, by the pass over into the Upper Kaironk). I don't know where the original pair came from, but the story begins with a brother and a sister. The two made a amy (dance festival) house; and they needed game animals to cook in the raised ovens with the pigs' heads. They made the platform stores for the taro and for all the vegetables and leaves they needed for cooking with the pigs. They chopped firewood and carried it up to the house and stacked it. Then the brother said, "Now I'll go and find some animals in the forest. When I'm gone you are not to leave newly exposed clay to dry around the house, where it
SKETCH-MAP TO ACCOMPANY STORY OF THE CASSOWARY SISTER

Brother's hunting route
Route of old man and his cannibal relatives
Route of brother and sister shooting arrows
Route of two sisters from Kapn, etc.

Place names not underlined:
Rivers underlined.
can be seen from afar; and if you weed the gardens, you are not to throw the weeds into the stream, you are just to leave them to dry on the fence".

Then the brother departed, and he went to Dānak (Mt. Kominjim), and Monok, and Mayw, and over to Gwlmj (in the Upper Aunjanp) and to Gwglek-pynek, and he caught game animals. He killed quite a lot. Some he placed up in pandans, some he put in the branches of trees, some he left in the open on the ground, some he hid. But while he was doing this, his sister did not obey him. She went and weeded the gardens, and threw the rubbish into the stream.

An old man down near Gaj (in the Lower Simbai) was sitting by the riverside grinding his axe-blades. He saw some rubbish floating down the river. He picked it out and sniffed it, and he thought, "It smells of the hands of men or women". He put the weeds on the top of a stone, and then he followed the river up until he came to the junction of the Pjaj with the Simbai. He saw that the rubbish wasn't floating down the Pjaj, it was coming down the Simbai. He followed the Simbai up till he came to the Mgoy stream; and he looked up the Mgoy, and saw that nothing was coming down from there, it was still floating down from the Simbai. Again he took some of the weeds and put them up on stones - this was a sign, so that if he did not come home, his children would know where he had gone, and be able to follow him. He followed the Simbai up, and each time he saw weeds floating down, he picked them out and put them up on rocks beside the river. Eventually he came to the mouth of the Mgoy stream, but the weeds were not coming down there, they were still coming down the Simbai. He came to the Kwhp stream, and still the weeds did not come from there, but from the Simbai. He came to the Mdlb, but they didn't come from there either, but from the Simbai, and he
continued to pick the rubbish out, and leave it lying on the stones. Eventually he came to the junction of the Yne and the Simbai; and the weeds were coming down the Yne and not the Simbai. So he marked this by laying some of them on a rock by the Yne. Then he followed the Yne to where it was joined by the Tbyan; and he saw that the rubbish wasn't coming down the Yne but the Tbyan. He followed the Tbyan to where a little brook called Ge joined it, and he saw that the rubbish wasn't coming down the Tbyan, but down the Ge. He followed the Ge, and he saw the woman. She was clearing bush above the stream and throwing rubbish down into it.

The man moved up very quietly towards her, following the garden fence. He got close to the woman, and watched her. When she left what she was doing and walked up to the top of the garden, he jumped out and seized her. The woman shouted, very loudly, "Leb leb, gow gow". (This is just a call, not translateable).

The brother heard his sister shout, as he was returning home from afar. Hurriedly, he picked up only those animals that he had left out in the open, not the ones he had hidden; those he had put in pandans in the open he gathered up, those he had put in pandans in hidden places he abandoned; those in tree-branches in open places he took, those in concealed places he left.

As he came close he saw his sister struggling with the man in the garden, and they had knocked over all the taro plants, all the green vegetables and cane shoots, and all the crons.

When he got to Bayb-jy he dropped the animals down at the house, and he ran down to where his sister was fighting with the old man. The sister saw her brother at the top fence of the garden, but the old man did not. The girl ran up beside the fence, and the old man thought she was trying to escape into the bush, so he ran up to the
top of the garden, to cut her off. The brother hid behind the fence, and as the old man got close and again tried to grab the girl, the brother shot him with his bow and killed him.

The brother said to his sister, "I gave you certain orders, but you did not obey me. You are responsible for this trouble". The two of them wondered what to do. Then they cooked the man in an earthoven by the stream, together with taro that they had scraped, and leaves. First they put his head in the bottom of the oven pit; then they put his legs and arms higher up; and his trunk they put in the upper part of the oven. When they had finished, the two went back to the house, and again they wondered what they should do.

The children of the old man waited for two days for him to come home, and then they went down to the river and saw the signs he had left, and began to follow these. The brother saw them coming in the distance, and he said to his sister, "You did not obey me, and you caused this trouble. Now I'll have to teach you a lesson". He strung a bow, and gave the bow and some arrows to the woman, and he said, "You see if you can shoot this pig". He tied the pig up, and the woman shot it, and the arrow went right through the animal, and it fell down dead. Then he took a big shield, and he stood it up a fair way off, and said, "Now see if you can shoot this shield". The sister drew the bow and hit the shield and smashed it, and the arrow went right on through it. The brother then said, "Now shoot that banana plant over there". The sister did, and the banana plant fell down. Then the brother set up a piece of tree-fern stem a long way off and told the sister to shoot that, and she hit that target and broke it up too. The brother said that he was satisfied.

As the kin of the old man approached along the Simbai River, they saw the signs leading on past the Piaj and the Mgooy, the Mgay,
the Kwbtp and the Mdib, and the signs led on and on up the Simbai, until they came to the junction of the Ynen and the Simbai. There they saw that the signs did not lead on up the Simbai, so they turned up the Ynen. They followed them up to the Thyan, and saw that the signs led them up there. Then they followed the Thyan until they came to the Gén brook, and saw that the signs led up there. And they followed until they came to the ovens by the bank of the stream. They began taking the food out of the oven and eating it. First they took the flesh of the trunk and of the limbs in the upper parts of the oven, and they went on until they got to the bottom of the oven and found the man's head there. Then they realised that it was their father's head, and that they had been eating their father.

They saw the brother and the sister up on the slope above the stream, and they began to fight. The fight went on until the brother and the sister had killed them all, except one man who escaped and ran off to get assistance.

The brother and the sister killed pigs and cooked them. The brother kept all the good joints for himself, and gave the poorer joints to his sister. And of the greensnail shells and stone axes, he kept the good ones for himself, and gave the inferior ones to his sister. And the same with the live pigs, he took the good ones for himself, and gave the sickly ones to his sister.

Then the allies came, the ones the man who had escaped had summoned, and the fighting started up again. The brother and the sister defeated them, but once more there were survivors, and these ran off again to fetch reinforcements. At this point the brother and the sister ran away. The brother said to the sister, "You caused all this trouble, I didn't. Now you find your own way".

The brother took his bow, and standing there at Rayb-jy, shot an arrow to As-kotp (the first ridge down the Kaironk Valley, from
the Simbani-Kairon Divide). The sister just waited. Then the brother ran to As-kotp, and shot the arrow to Sagay (the next spur running down from the North side of the Upper Kaironk Valley); and the sister then shot an arrow (from Payh-jy) to As-kotp. The brother came to Sagay and shot his arrow to Kwilkwn (near Alpan); and the sister came to As-kotp and shot her arrow to Sagay. The brother reached Kwilkwn, and shot his arrow to Basaben; the sister stood at Sagay and shot her arrow to Kwilkwn. The brother came to Basaben and shot his arrow to Klepen; and the sister reached Kwilkwn and shot her arrow to Basaben. The brother came to Klepen and shot his arrow to Wegn; the sister shot her arrow to Klepen. The brother came to Kaytog (the next spur from Wegn) and shot his arrow to Matpay; the sister shot her arrow to Wegn. The brother stood at Matpay and shot his arrow to Soblonjy; the sister came to Kaytog and shot her arrow to Matpay. The brother stood at Soblonjy and shot his arrow to Wanlek (the mid-point on the spur which the present main road follows when it turns South across the Kaironk Valley from Womk Rest House); the sister shot her arrow from Matpay to Soblonjy. The brother shot his arrow from Wanlek to Tatal-mwlk, down below; and the sister shot her arrow to Wanlek. The brother got to Tatal-mwlk and shot his arrow a very long way, up to Mopndey-jy (on the divide between the Kaironk and the head of the Sal); and the sister shot her arrow to Tatal-mwlk. Then the brother went down into the Sal Valley, and the sister shot her arrow up to Mopndey-jy.

The brother crossed the Sal River, and found a big pit, of the kind used to trap wild pig and wallaby. This was bigger than the pits they made in the Upper Kaironk, which were only for wallaby, because down there they also trapped wild
The brother took two branches and laid them over the pit, and covered these with leaves. The sister followed, and thought this was firm ground, stepped onto the leaves, and fell down into the pit. She couldn't get out again.

The brother waited a couple of days, and then wondered what had happened to his sister. He went back, and found that she had fallen into the pit-trap which he had covered over. He looked at her, and she had turned into a cassowary and laid two eggs. He thought, "She has turned all gege ("dull brown"), she is no longer something of men and of domestication (unleb maymm agak), she is of the wild (sob aymmey agak)".

He came back next day, and the eggs had hatched into two young, brown-plumaged, cassowaries, one male and one female. A little later, when they had grown strong, they walked about with their mother in the forest, finding food.

Thus the sister walked about and pecked up wild foods, and defecated by her nest. Her brother looked at this, and saw that from her droppings all kinds of food crops grew up. He thought, "I must make a garden", and he went to talk to his sister. He said, "When I have chopped the bush and burnt the trash, and cleaned up the ground, you are to come and defecate there". Then the man cut a large area of bush, and when the trash had dried out he burnt it, and cleaned it all up. Then the sister, who had eaten all kinds of wild food, came to the garden and left her droppings all over it.

Next morning the brother went to have a look, and everywhere in the garden, wherever the sister had left her excrement, there was taro, bananas, sugar-cane, pawpaws, sweet potatoes, Rungia and other green vegetables, and cucumbers; all these had come up, so that it was a really good, flourishing garden. Now the brother was very grateful to his sister, and how wondered how he was to make a sign, so that
she would always come to his house.

The cassowary children had now grown big. The brother took bamboo and made a gamoh xam ("tongue of a jew's harp", lit., "penis of jew's harp"), and hung it up in the top of a tree. Then both the brother and the cassowary sister, and her children, went off into the forest. The brother went in one direction, to hunt for game; and the sister and her children went in another direction and ate wild foods; for the sister's food was now forest food, while the brother's food was the cultivated crops in the garden. But the brother did not have to work hard to plant his garden, for the sister who had eaten the wild foods of the forest came and defecated there, and the crops just grew.

As the two walked about in the forest, they heard the jew's harp, sounding out from the top of the tree, and they always knew what direction they should take to return home. But one day, when the brother and the sister had gone off, each on their different path, two young unmarried women from Kapi (the Southern side of the Jimi Valley and beyond: often counted by Kalam today with "Kason"), from a place where the people had built a onyi (dance-festival) house, came alone, Catherine foliace to cook with the pigs. They heard the strange sound, coming from the jew's harp, and they wanted to find what it was. Eventually they came to the tree in which it hung, but they could not see it. They searched about, unsuccessfully, and then they realised that the sound was coming from the top of the tree, so they climbed up. But when they got up to the top of the tree, the sound stopped. They climbed down, and it started up again. They did this a third time. Then the two discussed what they should do. One suggested, "We might trick it if I stayed down here", and the other said, "Right, I'll climb up". The one who climbed up watched and saw what it was that made the noise. She said, "It's
nothing large, it's just a little thing," and then she took hold of it; but when she did so it broke, and blood flowed from it. The two women left and went to the nearby house, the house of the brother and the cassowary sister. They kept silent and waited.

The man out hunting realised that the jew's harp was no longer sounding, so he ran back home. He came to the house, and found the two women sitting there. He said, "What have you two done?" They said, "Nothing, we just heard a strange sound and tried to find it, and when we found what was making it, and took hold of it, it broke, and blood flowed. So we came and waited here". The man said, "Oh, you have done something terrible. I fear my sister will come and kill us all". Having said this, he ran away, taking the two women with him. The women said, "Let us all go to our place". So the man accompanied them there.

The cassowary, walking slowly and carefully in the forest, also realised that she could not hear the sound, and ran back, and found that the jew's harp was no longer calling out. She came to the tree and she sat down and mourned. Then she followed the scent of the women, back to her brother's house, and then on from there all the way to the other settlement, that of the women and their kin.

The people of that place said, "A cassowary has come; let's go and kill it". They chased the cassowary to one place, but it ran off to another. They followed it there, but it ran off somewhere else. At last they succeeded in killing it. The place where they killed it was close to where the brother and the sister had lived, down by the Jimi River. There they cooked the cassowary in an oven and they ate it.

But the brother did not see this.

This story explains how, down below in Konon, from Aynwn (the first Government Rest House after Womk, in the Middle Kaironk Valley) onwards,
they make something we call Kopon kotp, "Kopon house", and when women have born male children they take these to a special little house and pretend that they are going to pierce the nasal septa of the little boys. They put cassowary plume headdresses on the heads of the small boys. We call the people of that area, where they do this, b ydk (lit. "men" or "people of the salt": there are important salt springs and salt factories in the middle Kaironk Valley, below Womk).

If these events had happened up here, I think we would have followed Kopon custom, instead of being Kalam. Also those women of right down below, beyond Sagapy, they are like men, they hunt game animals and shoot wild pigs, and they are prepared to fight with bows and arrows. In our area the women do not do these things. But if you go down to the Myenk (people of the Wulamer Valley, to the West of the Kaironk) and you see someone coming, you may think it is a man, carrying bow and axe and spear, and it's not until you get close up that you see that it's a woman, from her breasts.

The things that happened in this story also explain why it is that women must not see cassowary traps, or go into the hunting huts where cassowary traps are prepared and cassowaries are cooked. For all these kinds of prohibitions on women from seeing things that men do, and on men from seeing things that women do, there are stories which account for them. These avoidances are not practised for no reason. The same is true of avoidances associated with the eagal op (Sooty Owl Spirit) or alp op (Flying Fox Spirit), and of the hereditary prohibitions which affect certain people, though in these cases there are two kinds of explanation. One is generally a soom (myth or folk-tale); the other is that some ancestor not
sick and thought that this was caused by his having killed some animal or eaten some animal or plant, so he placed a prohibition on killing or eating this, for himself and for his descendants.

In different places in our region some groups eat pig and some don't, some don't eat cassowary, some don't eat this kind or that kind of bird or animal. They all follow these kinds of custom, but never for no reason.

Another thing about the cassowary, and its association with women, is that if we see a really big one, with long hanging plumes at its rear and flanks, we call these bay or bay-it, the words that we use for women's back-skirts.

Notes

1. This is an exaggerated version of a boy's pastime and form of archery practice, called yakam juy dom ok, in which as they walk about arrows are lobbed at targets selected on the track ahead of them.

2. In Saem's initial version of the story, the male child of the cassowary sister was in some way transformed into the jew's harn. However he decided in editing the translation that this was not correct, and substituted the present statement.

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