"WHERE WILL YOU SLEEP TONIGHT?" THE SAMO LONGHOUSE, A METAPHOR OF SPATIAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

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The juxtaposition of physical space and social interaction among the precontact Samo people of Papua New Guinea's east Strickland Plain is analyzed through a rich cultural metaphor reflecting on where people habitually sleep. Where a person sleeps establishes individual status within the collectivity of a household, which is identified as both a dwelling and an interactive group of family-oriented people. A longhouse was typically built on a ridgetop amid gardens, sago-lined swamp, and surrounding forest, together creating an economic environment that, in effect, fed the community. Similarly, social space was created through the reciprocal exchange of female siblings that enabled men to establish alliances. Built space and social interaction, then, have significance that begins with where one sleeps—at the center of a spatial and social world. This cultural identification of persons with places is of interest to social anthropologists and those who study the interactivity between a people's social structure and its surroundings, including built space.

Tired and hungry we stumbled out of the forest and began to pick our way through a garden, a tangle of tree trunks and newly sprouting plantains. The men with me began whooping to send a signal that we came in peace and desired interaction with the community we were about to enter. The rain-slicked logs were treacherous and demanded constant attention just for us to stay in an upright position. A quick glance up revealed a large, newly constructed longhouse high above us on the crest of the ridge—Sagadobi. Our entrance was being carefully watched by two young warriors standing

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on the edge of the porch. From our perspective the house seemed bigger than life, a testimony to the architectural genius and constructive ability of the Samo. The house offered protection to its occupants and a haven for weary travelers, and we soon found solace in sharing a meal and a night with allies—I was glad I was with my brothers, men familiar with household and alliance structures that provided both shelter and camaraderie.

—Author's personal journal

"PLACE 'SURROUNDS' CHARACTERS, not only as an external environment, but also as part of a subjective reality that affects the actor's identity and motivation." With these words, Entrikin introduces the importance of the relationship between "place and point of view" in discussing an epistemology of the concept of place as a "setting for action, events, and objects in stories of human history" (1991:2). This emphasis transcends the physical phenomena of locality and allows analysis that emphasizes relationship between place and those who inhabit it. There is ongoing interaction between the structure that humans create for themselves and the behaviors that become associated with that created environment. It is this interaction between space and human intentionality, and the interrelationships of the people in their respective occupation of space, that drive this presentation of a Samo longhouse as a cultural microcosm defined by a metaphoric aphorism of where people sleep.[1] *"Lnon kali kiyala ba?"* (Where do you sleep?) is a frequent question asked equally of people on a forest path or house members contemplating their night's repose.[2] Sleeping mats are frequently moved to avoid the gaze of ever-watching bush spirits in search of weakness, night watchmen switch places with those who have been asleep, and children frequently adjust their sleeping arrangements to match their playmate interests. The place where individuals sleep provides valuable information about their status within a household and indicates the responsibility they are expected to carry as they seek to maximize relationship patterns within the community and beyond. In following Entrikin's lead, I seek to pursue the nature of interaction between spatial definition and social structure—a focus on the relationship between space and social interaction patterns, not on space use per se.

The Samo language draws attention to the conceptual juxtaposition of a house and its occupants by using the same word, *monsoon,* for both the building (a longhouse) and the people (a household). Kearney (1984), following Redfield's application of "cultural universals" (1952), argues that every society must deal with the concept of space at a fundamental level (what

Kearney calls "world view"). Each society constructs its own reality from the interconnection of these basic elements permuted in specific ways to demonstrate beliefs and values reflected in observable behavior. Thus, while every society varies in its manifestations, all people share human commonality vis-à-vis spatial issues, albeit in vastly diverse ways. In this study the elements of spatial concern, as reflected in the structure of a longhouse, are viewed in turn as central to the behavioral expressions of those who utilize the constructed space. Samo behavioral patterns reflect spatial significance as manifest in the very structure of a longhouse. In Turner's terms (1967), a Samo longhouse stands as a "symbol" of organized space in which the occupants actualize their behavior. Their activity in the context of that space demonstrates values necessary to both develop the space as well as interact within it in ways that reflect an understanding of both the physical and social identities necessary to establish a community. Exploration of spatial understanding should lead to a better appreciation of what, to paraphrase Goodenough (1956:167), Samo need to know in order to behave correctly within the context of a longhouse.

Though house styles have changed during the forty years of continuous contact (Shaw 2001),[3] and the purpose of a longhouse has been drastically altered to suit the needs and interests of its inhabitants (Shaw 1997), the juxtaposition of spatial elements and those who occupy them is still critical to utilization.

Seven-hundred Samo (1990 census) occupy the four-hundred-square miles of near-virgin rain forest surrounded by the Cecilia River to the north, the Strickland River to the west, and the Nomad River angling from its headwaters in the Karius Range southwest to the Strickland River (see Figure 1). They share the Strickland Plain (first "discovered" by Jack Hides in 1936) with speakers of four other dialects, among whom the Samo now intermarry and engage in considerable social discourse including initiation and death ceremonies (Shaw 1986).[4] I will begin by discussing the structure of a longhouse and then put that built space into the larger context of the surrounding forest. Similarly, I will juxtapose the occupants of the house with their respective relationships and activities within that space as well as to allied households in the surrounding forest within river boundaries. I maintain that the very structure of a longhouse and the activities within it are reflective of the social identity and relational interaction of those who use it. As conceptualized by the Samo, a longhouse is both a created space and a social unit that serves to organize both the space and the people who interact within it. I will attempt to "construct" the presentation to mirror this dual interface of spatial and social connectivity epitomized by Samo metaphor.

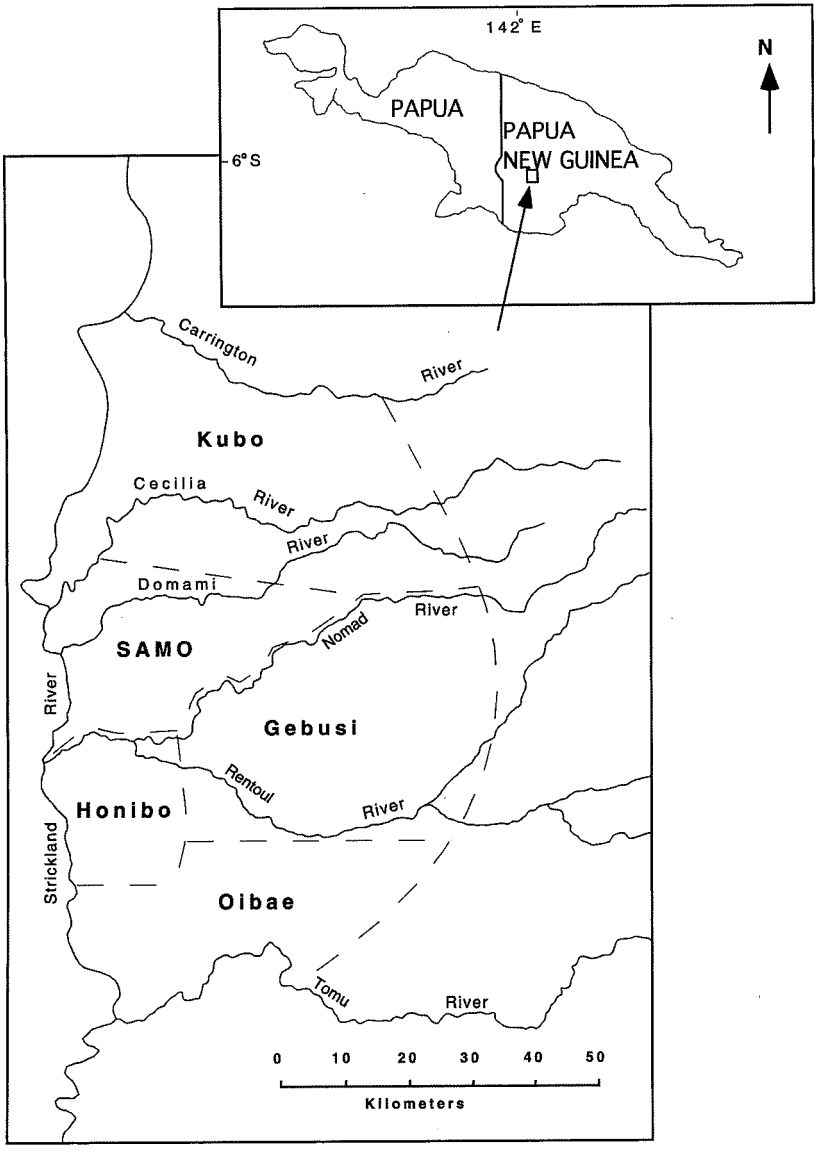

FIGURE 1. **A regional map of the peoples of the eastern Strickland Plain.** (Alan Howard's cartographic skills gratefully acknowledged)

The Longhouse Structure: Physically Constructed Space

Every Samo community is built on a ridgetop, indicated by the suffix "*-bi*" in its name. From this promontory occupants command a view of the surrounding gardens and forest beyond.[5] A Samo longhouse site provides for its occupants' needs: protection, food, human care. Its primary purpose is to situate communal activity while providing respite from the continual danger of surrounding spiritual and physical enemies. Constructed space, then, is crucial to the ability of household members to engage in activity appropriate to that space. The house itself is the community's physical and social focal point and is specifically constructed to reflect this multifaceted existence. Construction of a longhouse demonstrates the communal nature of the building process and the cooperation necessary to bring one into being.

Longhouse Construction

Building a longhouse is an arduous task requiring up to a year of preparation and labor: months of seeking out the ironwood posts, light but strong wood for the superstructure and ridgepole, countless sago-palm leaves for the roof, and miles of rattan and vine to bind the entire structure together.[6] Once materials are gathered at the site it takes considerable effort and cooperation to construct the structure. Sago lining the stream at the base of the ridge provides a ready food supply for women to process while men are occupied in construction. Accumulating sago leaves for the roof is a natural by-product of cutting and processing the sago palm for food. During construction the adjacent hillside can be cleared and plantains planted so they begin to fruit and provide food soon after the house is completed (see Shaw 1990:31–48 for a discussion of the relationship between land use and a longhouse).

To commence building, shallow holes are dug into the red clay about twelve feet apart extending down the slope of the ridge. Ironwood posts are placed in these holes and a horizontal framework, at floor level, lashed to these poles. Additional posts are arranged to support the floor, which extends ten to fifteen feet beyond the poles, and more supporting posts are added to secure the structure.[7] Black-palm trees are split and flattened for flooring material, which is then placed over the entire platform. In the center of the porch area a long pole is placed in a hole, with a companion pole at the opposite end of the house forming the extent of the span for a long, light but strong ridgepole. Once the ridgepole is lashed into place, the entire structure becomes rigid and takes on the appearance of a house.

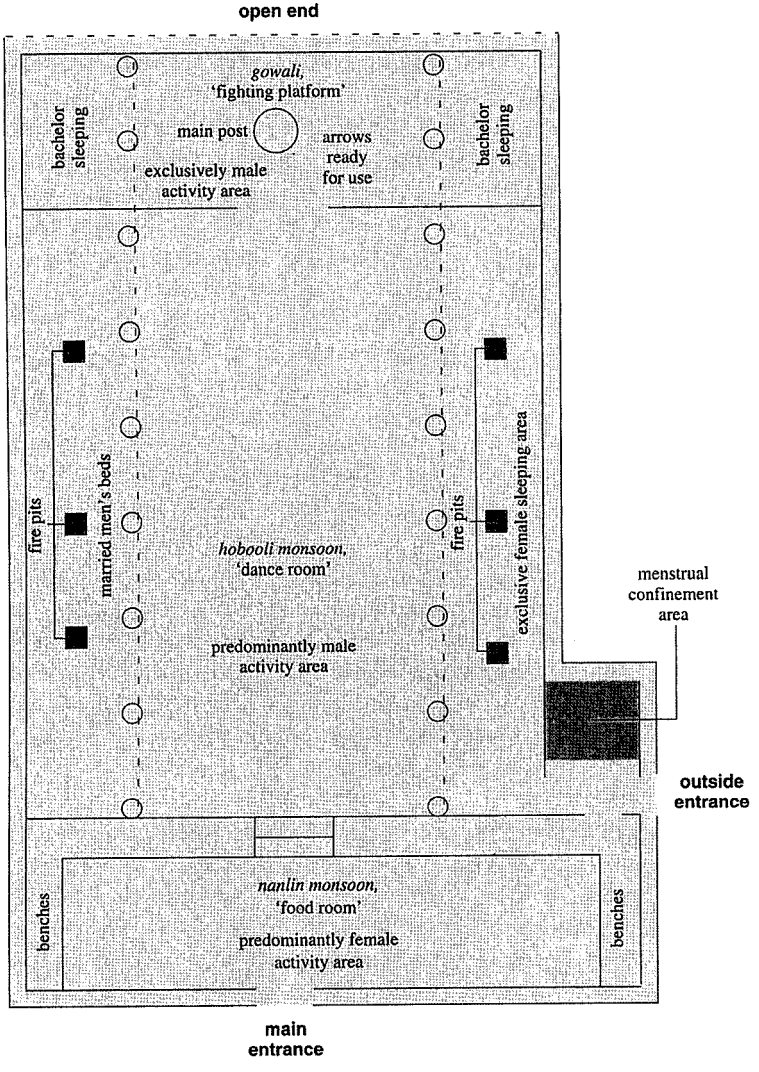

FIGURE 2. **Floor plan of a longhouse.** (From *From Longhouse to Village: Samo Social Change*, by R. Daniel Shaw, 1st edition. © 1996. This and following figures reprinted with permission of Wadsworth, a division of Thomson Learning)

The remainder of the building process consists of filling in the superstructure as necessary: rafters, wall studs, and braces for structural rigidity to support the extensive sago-leaf roof. The roof descends nearly to floor

level, meeting the ground where the platform meets the dug-out kitchen area. This provides a considerable overhang, which protects the house from the strong winds of September to January and the torrential rains of February to June. A Samo proverb demonstrating strength and unity states, "Wise men bind a roof on tight." The superstructure of the roof is extended over the dug-out area to enclose the kitchen and make it an integral part of the house. The front wall is covered with sago-palm ribs lashed to studwork that extends from the ground to the rafters. Similarly, on the platform level of the house, sago-palm ribs tied to the studwork of the house sides fill in the space between the floor and the roof to provide what side walls are necessary to ensure a "lockable" house. In contrast the porch end of the house, high above the sloping ground beneath, is open, providing an expansive view of the surrounding region and a clear space for shooting arrows at attackers.

Prior to contact, endemic raiding and subsequent cannibalism provided a rationale for the very structure of a longhouse: it served as a fortress against attack. The main doorway forces anyone entering to step over several stacked logs. Above the open space are more logs held in place by specially designed wooden pins or tied vines. In case of a threat and always at night, the pins were pulled (or vines cut), allowing the logs to obstruct the doorway—a "lockable" door. The side entrance to the women's area provided the only other entryway, one few men were willing to risk since it directly accessed the menstrual confinement area.

Figure 2 shows the floor plan of a longhouse with its various divisions based on activity areas and sleeping quarters.

The Juxtaposition of Spatial Elements as Metaphor for Human Interaction

The physical space of a longhouse is divided into three primary areas: the porch, which houses the stockpile of weapons necessary to protect the community and serves as the bachelors' quarters; the central portion of the house, comprising the dance floor surrounded by sleeping areas; and the kitchen, in which food is stored and prepared and which serves as the primary female activity area.

The juxtaposition of the built space on both the longitudinal axis (three major sections of the house) and horizontal axis (sleeping sections of the house) are characterized by Samo metaphor. *Kiali oosoo*, "a person who sleeps in a place," is identified with the locations of both a ridgetop (the house site) and the sleeping quarters within the house (the women and children's section, bachelors, or married men).[8] Where one habitually sleeps

thus provides critical information for identity: a person is associated with a particular community (a general identity) as well as social status and expected behavior patterns (a specific identity) within a community. I will discuss these elements below.

A further metaphor of interactive importance is characterized by the aphorism "Men protect while women produce." Now the focus is on protecting or producing, which reflects a gender-based division of labor. Again with respect to house axes, activity is specified. The longitudinal axis is characterized by the open, male-dominated porch with its battery of weapons (focusing on warfare) in contrast to the closed-in, female-focused kitchen (with its provision of food) at the opposite end of the house. Similarly, the horizontal axis separates ceremonially proficient married males watching over the "dance floor" from women (who produce and care for children) confined to a relatively small sleeping area behind a wall.

Together, these metaphors of sleeping place and gender-specific roles serve to define the spatial elements of the house as well as the activities of those who occupy the space. What follows deconstructs the spatial elements reflected by the metaphors.

The Porch. With its view of the surrounding forest the porch is traditionally a fighting platform. Unmarried males, the most virile members of the community, sleep there and set a nightly watch for the protection of others. From a male viewpoint the porch is the nerve center of the community, an exclusively male domain where raids were once planned, alliances strategized, visitors welcomed, trade goods displayed, and stories told long into the night. Much of this nocturnal activity is bathed by the glow of resin burning on a special concave stone. On both sides of the porch, in the space outside the foundation posts, are bed platforms where bachelors sleep. Along the wall separating the porch from the midsection of the house, bundles of arrows and accompanying bows stand ready for use in case of a raid.[9]

Facing the length of the house from the porch, one notes a doorway topped by an open latticework on which hang pig mandibles, fish skeletons, snake vertebrae, and other trophies of past hunting exploits and noisy meals. Pointing to each quickly evokes a story of the hunt and male prowess in supplying meat. In the past human bones were part of this display, evidence of success in raids and the cannibal feasts that followed (see Shaw 2001 for a discussion of the Samo response to the cessation of cannibalism with the advent of a colonial government). Supporting the ridgepole in the center of the porch is the main house post, around which most male activity revolves. Tied to this ironwood post, out of reach of plundering rats, carefully wrapped bundles of barkcloth protect ceremonial finery.

The Central Portion of the House. Proceeding through the doorway into the darkness of the central room, one's eyes need time to adjust to the semidarkness. A six- to eight-foot-high wall on the left separates the women's sleeping quarters from the main room while on the right the married men's *kiali monsoon,* "sleeping platform," overlooks the room, elevated on logs wedged between the house posts over which split-palm flooring has been laid. Between each "bed" is a small fire pit where a man can warm a meal or dry tobacco. The rafters and thatched roof come down nearly to floor level, providing an ideal repository for freshly cut tobacco, cassowary-bone daggers that serve innumerable purposes, and an occasional arrow that doubles as a hanger for small string bags that contain most of a man's personal possessions.

The vaulted roof extends high above the *hobooli,* "dance floor,"[10] where much of the household activity takes place: communal meals served and eaten, visitors entertained, and all-night dances and séances held, from which the room takes its name. Four-foot-long drums with fluted mouths and lizard-skin heads stand in one corner waiting to be tuned. In another corner palm-sheath drinking troughs await the next occasion for making kava, and bamboo tubes hold a supply of drinking water. The floor is littered with charred scraps of food, and a thin layer of soot covers everything. Cobwebs lace the rafters and each open house post is sticky from countless hands being wiped on it.

On the other side of the wall, the women's section of the house is arranged much like the married men's sleeping platform, with beds punctuated by small fire pits. Adolescent girls tend to bunch together for sleeping, while smaller children sleep with their mothers or in playmate cohort groups. This section is entered through the menstrual confinement area, accessible either from the kitchen or directly from the exterior, which allows women to avoid the cooking area during their menses. Except for the front door this side entry to the menstrual area is the only other entrance to the house, thus forcing potential raiders to pollute themselves if they use it.

The Food Preparation/Storage Area. At the front of the house is the kitchen, presided over by females, whose primary activity is the production and preparation of food. A notched log provides access from the platform portion of the house to the kitchen floor, dug out to level the ridgetop. Surrounding the periphery of this area are low platforms that serve as both food storage areas and convenient benches on which women can relax and enjoy each other's company during food preparation. Two large fire pits are prominent and remain perpetually lit, ready for cooking. Hanging from the rafters above these fire pits is a large latticework of saplings to store wet sago, butchered pork, and anything else that must be kept in a dry place out of reach of

pigs, dogs, and children. Alive with cockroaches and spiders and littered with charred plantain peels, firewood, coconut shells, and other debris of food preparation, this area is often filled with smoke forcing its way through the smoke-blackened, insect-free thatch.

Together these spatial elements constitute a "place" that unites both the building and the family members who are its habitual inhabitants. Horizontally, the house is divided into three sections designed for protection, sleeping and household activity, and food care. The center section is divided longitudinally between the women's area and a large activity room lined with married men's beds. A longhouse, then, is a combination of gender-specific activity areas denoting those who occupy that portion of the house—protecting warriors, ceremonially equipped and sexually active adult males, and producing women. Where people sleep in the house reflects their primary responsibility and anticipates relationships with other household members.

The area under the house is frequented by dogs and pigs. An eventual buildup of food scraps mixed with the waste of human habitation enriches the ground. When a house becomes unusable, after approximately five years, a new site is established. The ironwood posts are salvaged for future building projects and the entire termite-infested rubble is burned. A few days later men return to the old site, fence in the area, and plant tobacco, which thrives in the enriched soil.

The Juxtaposition of a Longhouse and Its Surrounding Spatial Elements

A longhouse stands at the summit of a ridge and connects its occupants with the surrounding area both spatially and socially. In spatial terms, from this vantage point everything is considered *mun*, "down," that is, one must always descend from a longhouse to go anywhere.[11] A house, in turn, sits in spatial juxtaposition to the denuded ridgetop, vegetable gardens near the ridgetop, large-scale plantain and pitpit gardens extending down the slope of the ridge, the sago-lined stream at the base of the ridge, and the virgin forest beyond (Figure 3).

The Cleared Ridgetop. The ground immediately surrounding a longhouse is denuded of all vegetation and serves as an extension of the enclosed living area. The ridgetop immediately in front of the house serves as an extension of the kitchen and is the site for preparing feasts to feed large numbers of people, often in a ceremonial setting. Interestingly, once outside the confines of a house there is a gender-role switch, as men become the primary food handlers and punctuate their activity with much whooping, bantering, and a prevailing atmosphere of conviviality.

This area in front of a house also serves as the local graveyard. Before contact the Samo, like most peoples in the region, practiced open-platform burial, allowing the body to decay near the house. Once all death payments had been made the bones were ceremoniously buried in a shallow grave enclosed to keep animals out. The modern enclosure is an expansion of this "bone grave" but now, by government decree, the body must be buried within twenty-four hours.

Fenced-In Garden Plots. Beyond the ridgetop's periphery, small gardens for vegetables and other short-term crops are planted and fenced in to protect against animals. Increasingly, introduced vegetables—pumpkin, corn, peanuts, and chilies—have been added to the more traditional crops of gin-

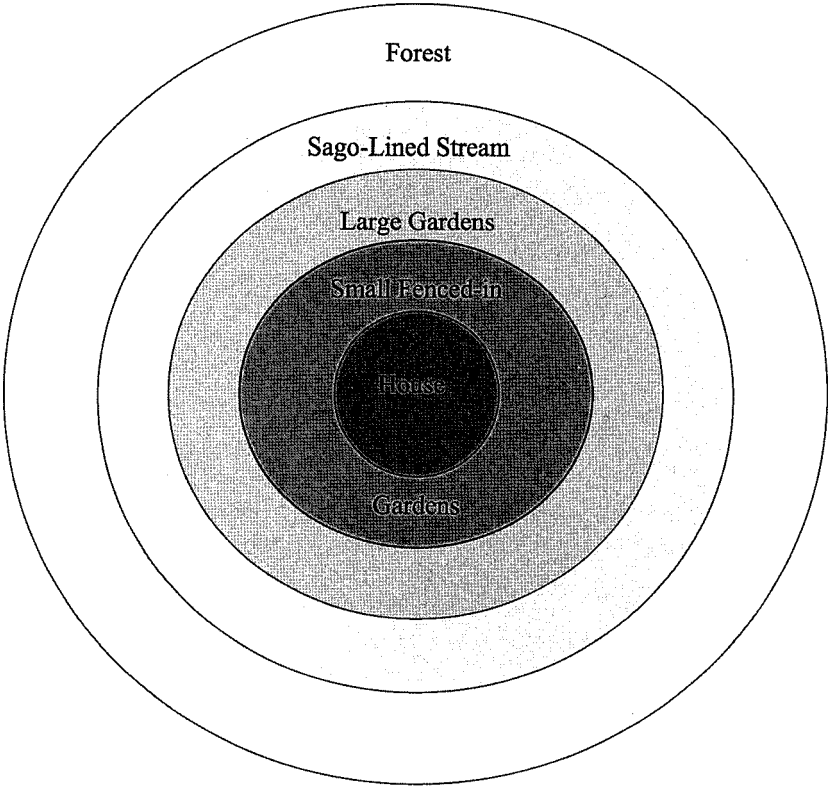

FIGURE 3. **The physical juxtaposition of a longhouse with its surrounding environment.** (© 1996, reprinted with permission from Shaw 1996)

ger, sugarcane, taro, and greens (see Shaw 1996:84ff. for a detailed discussion of government attempts to improve the Samo diet).

Large-Scale Gardens. On the slope below the small-garden fences, extending to the bottom of the ridge, the Samo plant plantain and pitpit gardens that, together with a dependable supply of sago, provide the bulk of their daily diet. The extendibility of the garden along the ridge together with the availability of sago at its base serve as criteria for maximum longevity of a habitation site. Toward the bottom of a garden ridge, secondary crops of pandanus, breadfruit, and galip nut are planted to insure that men regularly return to abandoned longhouse sites to harvest the valuable produce in season. Women, in contrast, harvest plantains and pitpit on the occupied ridgeside.

An extensive garden area also provides a buffer zone between the virgin forest beyond and the house at the center. The Samo believe the forest is inhabited by *hogai,* "disembodied forest beings" who are inherently evil, seek to destroy human life, and habitually wreak havoc on all human activity. The open garden space inhibits their coming into the ridgetop habitation and impacting its inhabitants. Similarly, a tangle of cut forest trees felled after the plantains take root creates a labyrinth that must be crossed by outsiders. Persons familiar with the site quickly learn the pattern of the tree fall and know how to traverse it, but those who do not will stumble and fall, thereby sending an alarm to wary inhabitants. On a very practical note this timber provides a ready source of firewood for household occupants.

Sago-Lined Stream. Sago palm is the staple of the Samo diet and economy. Without a sago swamp there can be no house site. In fact, the twenty-five-year maturation cycle of a sago stand necessitates a lengthy fallow period to allow secondary growth to mature and the forest to naturally replenish the thin topsoil before the next habitation.[12] The stream and swampy area in a habitation site's vicinity serves as both a water supply for the household and a ready source of water for sago processing. As noted above, the sago palm also provides thatch for the longhouse roof and siding for both external and internal walls, as well as being a primary food source to sustain inhabitants through the entire building process.

Surrounding Virgin Forest. The forest beyond the habitation site further contributes to its viability. Hunting parties make the most of the abundant flora and fauna of the region. This abundance led Jack Hides, on first seeing the region in 1935, to observe in his journal, "There is probably no part of Papua so full of game as this forested area, and it is this fact, I think, that accounts for these nomads and the way in which they live" (1973:36). Although

FIGURE 4. **A Samo habitation site: a traditional Samo longhouse stands in the middle of a garden that provides a three-to-five-year food supply. The house is built on a named ridgetop for protection against enemy raids. The porch affords an excellent view of the surrounding area.** (Photo by R. D. Shaw, 1970. © 1996, reprinted with permission from Shaw 1996)

somewhat overstated, without a doubt the Samo and their neighbors utilize the forest environment by hunting and gathering to enhance their diet. Skill in the art of camouflage enables them to slip unnoticed through the forest, and their hunting dogs are well trained to corner a wild boar or cassowary, allowing the hunter to approach close enough to insure that a single arrow shot through the heart will bring down his prey.

Such a habitation site (Figure 4) necessitates considerable labor beyond house construction: cutting down sago palm for food and building materials, felling forest trees to create garden space, and the work of planting, maintaining, and harvesting food during the life of the site. The forest further contributes to the welfare of household members. In short, the area surrounding a longhouse provides for the occupants' physical needs. The house is seen as protection and sleeping space. The extended site projects the metaphors and serves to protect occupants—those who habitually sleep there—against both spiritual and human enemies by providing a buffer between the forest and the house with its consignment of human frailty. The gardens, sago, and pe-

rennial crops provide a ready food source that continues long after habitation ceases and a new site has been developed. Finally, the sago maturation cycle eventually draws people back to occupy the site after a lengthy fallow.

This spatial dynamic on the ground resembles the social dynamic of an initiation cycle as each, in its turn, seeks to establish its place in a space and time structure that links the Samo to the commonality of human identity with the land. As Casey notes:

> A place is renervative and regenerative on its own schedule. From it experiences are born and to it human beings (and other organisms) return for empowerment, much like Antaeus touching the earth for renewed strength. Place is the generatrix for the collection, as well as the recollection, of all that occurs in the lives of sentient beings, and even for the trajectories of inanimate things. Its power consists in gathering these lives and things, each with its own space and time, into one arena of common engagement. (1996:26)

The ebb and flow of cyclical patterns now forces us to shift interest from a longhouse's spatial orientation to the social interaction of the household members who interrelate within that space. A longhouse is no mere space, but a household of people who connect with each other respective of their social position as reflected by where they sleep. The metaphor not only identifies a place but also the respective relationships of those who occupy the space—a household of human connectivity.

Social Structure: Socially Constructed Space

Samo social organization, based on the primacy of identity with a longhouse site, reflects the interaction of community members and their relationships with those beyond the site. As the spatial elements of a house reflect the roles of those who occupy them through cultural metaphor, so a household is connected to others through an extension of these locational and relational metaphors.

The Elements of Social Structure

A Samo household provides both a domicile and a community, a fact reinforced by using the same word for both. A community is composed of elderly males and their wives living together with their sons and daughters-in-law and their children. This basic social unit, numbering from twenty-five to sixty people, is considered the smallest viable unit in the social system. The co-

hesiveness of common residence and daily interaction patterns necessitates collective, family-type terminology for all who sleep at the same location. Should individuals take up residence in a different community (as would be necessary following a raid or the exchange of female siblings between communities), terminology reflecting interaction patterns within the new household are adopted and any previous relationships adjusted.[13] Such terminological realignment is relatively common in New Guinea and has been well documented by others (Watson 1970; Cook 1970). The Samo rationale, however, is unique and reflects their interaction within the physical space of a longhouse.

In the course of community life there is little distinction among nuclear families. Each household provides a totality of relationships. Thus, despite individual nuclear-family variation, "sisters" are always available for exchange to obtain a wife for a "younger brother," for example. The primary criteria for interaction within a household pertain to initiation, gender, age, and alliance. As with the spatial elements of the house, I will briefly note the nature of these key elements of relationship within the social structure and the resultant interaction of behavior patterns.

Initiation. Initiation provides the key to understanding kin-term designations within the society (Shaw 1990). An initiation cycle serves to organize the bulk of married individuals within a single group that largely provides for the protection and survival of people in the previous cycle as well as the one to follow. A cycle group includes all household members initiated after one's parents' initiation but before the birth of individuals' designated "children" (see Figure 5). Hence housemates considered younger siblings by parental-cycle initiates are at the same time older siblings of one's own cycle group.

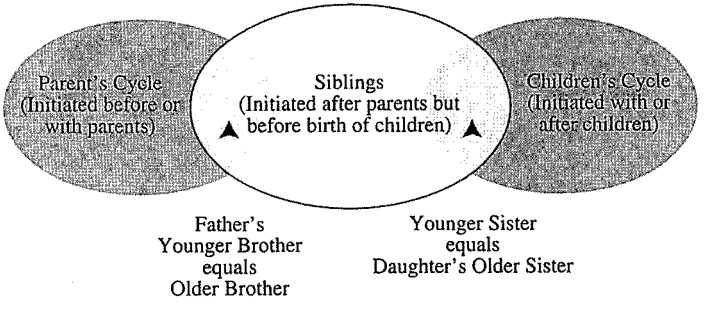

FIGURE 5. **The Samo initiation cycle.** (© 1996, reprinted with permission from Shaw 1996)

The reference point is a particular initiation associated with a particular house site. Co-initiates thereafter reference each other as *somon* and relate as a cohort group with relationships expressed through siblingship, which includes the importance of authority based on relative age. The co-siblingship of household members binds them into cooperative roles commensurate with protection and production based on gender. Within a longhouse community, then, a large percentage of individuals fall into the same initiation cycle group. The concept somewhat parallels the English term *generation* but is much broader in scope.

Age. Relative age of individuals structures the relationships within an initiation cycle group and establishes the authority structure between siblings. Older siblings (particularly same-gender individuals) take a dominant role in the enculturation process, particularly evident in preparing males and females for initiation. Older male siblings exercise authority when strategizing about the exchange of younger female siblings. The reciprocal exchange of women, as I will discuss below, is the focus of interhousehold alliances. These gender-oriented behavior distinctions, while significant, reinforce a common theme of authority exercised by older male siblings who, by cultural definition, are also younger siblings of individuals initiated during the previous cycle. Terminologically, age is crucial to designations of older siblings, distinctly male and female, while younger individuals are lumped together by a single term with no consideration of gender. This structure holds for those initiated in the previous cycle as well, who are distinguished on the basis of gender, while those in the following cycle are not (Figure 6).

INITIATION CYCLE		GENDER	
		Male	Female
Parent's Cycle		*ade*	*uyo*
Own Cycle (siblings)	Older	*onyon*	*owo*
	Co-Initiate	*somon*	
	Younger	*manla*	
Children's Cycle		*hooon*	

FIGURE 6. **The social criteria for establishing kinship terminology.** (© 1996, reprinted with permission from Shaw 1996)

Gender. The longitudinal wall dividing the center section of the longhouse is far more than a privacy screen. It divides the household into male and female sections and characterizes major activity and role distinctions. Common sleeping quarters engender the close interaction manifest in same-gender relationships while a distinct division characterizes cross-gender interaction. Seven-year-old males move to sleeping quarters on the porch after their noses are pierced. This move signals a significant moment in their socialization: they have begun the long road to becoming initiated warriors who guard the household. Females, in contrast, remain within the confines of their section and inform younger siblings about subsistence activities, personal responsibility especially with respect to menstruation, and relationships within the house and beyond. For females a developing bond is disrupted by exchange, which always produces a degree of trauma. Exchanged females, in turn, maintain close ties with their natal household, returning for ceremonies, food, and solace—patterns established during the formative years of growing up in a particular house. Women depend on males of their natal house to protect them in their new relationship with a husband, who becomes their brothers' ally.

Alliance. Activity with other communities depends upon the nature of alliance between them. Alliances are established as men of the respective communities solicit a direct female-sibling exchange resulting in the marriage of a younger male sibling to an appropriate female. Such exchanges establish an alliance between the reciprocating males that entails responsibilities of mutual protection against common enemies. As Godelier points out (1998), female exchange initiates a lengthy association that reflects obligations and counterobligations between the respective partners. Allies in large measure extend same-gender relationships within a household to the interaction of individuals living in communities with whom they exchange women—males extend hospitality to each other on the porch and plan for mutual protection (often protecting against or initiating a raid) while females join the women's section and engage in activities that enhance productivity. All who are allied to allies set up a buffer zone between a particular household and its enemies who, by definition, are not allied in any way.

Alliances often reflect exchanges by men in the previous initiation cycle as relationships are reinforced by exchanges with the same community though locations have changed—the place changes but the people remain the same. When deciding where a woman should be exchanged, men assess their alliance structure and determine the best strategy for ongoing protection—that is, they exercise their male responsibility as protectors of the community while at the same time ensuring, through exchange, future production both

economically and biologically by enabling the next initiation cycle.[14] This reflects but extends Mauss's contention that gifts of women between groups are essential to the reproduction of the society as a whole (1954).

The Juxtaposition of Social Responsibility

Primary role responsibilities for household members are characterized by where in the house people normally sleep: bachelors protecting from the porch, married men serving as ceremonial specialists watching over the "dance floor," and women and children hidden from view in their secluded section. The "where people sleep" metaphor also reflects broader relationships across an alliance structure that connects people in a variety of localities to responsibilities reflective of their position within the social structure.

Bachelors on the Porch. Three subgroups of unmarried males sleep on the porch: *hoon boobooli*, "boys with newly pierced noses" who are recently separated from their mothers; *kooin*, pubescent pre-initiates; and *kandiman oosoo*, "unmarried initiates." Their primary responsibility is to ensure the protection of a house. From the open end of the porch they can view the surrounding gardens and the forest beyond. Traditionally a guard was set each night to watch for any activity that might indicate an enemy raid. Should an enemy launch an attack the porch provided an ideal platform from which to rain arrows down upon those climbing up the ridge. Pre-initiate training for males includes considerable experience with bows and arrows. To this day men rarely leave the house without carrying weapons that they keep close by no matter what the activity. A significant moment in the initiation ceremony is when male initiates receive a set of newly crafted arrows.

Married Men Guard the Ceremonial Center. The platform adjacent to the dance floor and open activity area provides an ideal overview of all activity in the central corridor of the house. Here *hun oosoo*, "married men," establish sleeping quarters and are joined by warriors from the porch as they marry. Although bachelors' protective role shifts when they leave the porch, they still spend considerable time protecting household members, particularly their wives and subsequent children.[15] The primary responsibility of married men, however, is overseeing ceremonial activity for the entire household. Only initiated adults may enter into ceremonies and the proximity of married-male sleeping quarters to ceremonial hall is significant. All-night healing and protection dances, initiation ceremonies, and shaman-led séances all take place under their watchful eyes. Thus the married men extend their

protective role to spiritual oversight and demonstrate a caring concern for all community members.[16]

Women and Children Sleep in Seclusion. Four groups occupy the secluded portion of a house: *hooon fenyanfon,* "pre–nose-pierced boys and girls" under the care of their mothers; *manbi,* "uninitiated girls," who are responsible to their older sisters; *kandiman sobo,* "initiated women" yet to be exchanged in marriage; and *hun sobo,* "married women." This portion of the house is hidden by a partitioning wall that symbolically divides male and female responsibilities and shields women from the gaze of men. Protecting themselves from female pollution is a constant male concern and all due precautions are taken. The wall of seclusion reduces the chances of a male looking at a baby girl, while confinement in the menstruation room reduces female contact with food or male activity that could be adversely affected. Conversely, seclusion represents the physical and ceremonial protection necessary for productivity and household maintenance that women symbolize.

Social Identity. A change in household status is always reflected in a change of sleeping quarters as well as lexical identification. Young boys with freshly pierced noses move from the women's section to begin life on the porch, where they receive their primary enculturation. Bachelors who have been presented with a wife shift their sleeping mat from the porch to the married men's sleeping platform and join their older brothers and fathers. There they no longer set a nightly watch but rather contribute to ceremonial protection as well as the economic and biological well-being of the community by building a family. (Sexual relations between married adults are not considered a household activity but relegated to the privacy of the forest.) Women, on the other hand, remain within the confines of the women's section until they are exchanged out of the household and their position is replaced by an incoming woman who becomes a wife to a household male. Hence the "where sleep" metaphor reflects social status and well-being within the household. Terminological adjustments trace individual life cycles and reflect sleeping arrangements.

The Juxtaposition of a Household with Surrounding Social Units

As a longhouse sits in the center of a created space within the forest, so the family unit—a household—serves as the center of a social structure largely of its own making. Four groups interact to provide a network of social responsibility: a household, allies, those who speak the same dialect, and enemies.

Monsoon, "Household." As spokes of a wheel emanate from the hub, so a Samo alliance network extends from a single household at the center of its self-made structure. The exchange of women establishes alliances with similar units scattered throughout the forest. Before the government established villages, each community moved about its own designated land area as size, available resources, and needs dictated.[17] This movement also brought the community into contact with neighbors, precipitating a need for closer relationships. The exchange of female siblings served as the means to establish alliances that further protected the respective households. As communities moved on following the sago, they came into relationship with yet others, and so the reciprocity of relationship ebbed and flowed as communities exploited their physical and human resources to the best of their ability.

Oosoo Buoman, "Allies." While alliance focuses on strategic relationships between the exchanging males, marriage is the by-product that enables households to maintain their viability and insure the warmth of family interaction. Protection against common nonallied enemies was the primary rationale for alliance, and the resultant relationships between communities established an elaborate social interaction including the provision of food and a place for travelers to sleep. *Doogooli*, "allies of allies," are considered friends by virtue of their mutual affinity to common allies. As men share relationship through the exchange of women to the same locality, strong levels of trust result. If they can trust their allies, certainly they can also build relationships with men their allies trust. In the postcontact, postcannibal era this logic has led to alliances being extended beyond traditional lines across increasing distances, including beyond dialect boundaries (see Shaw 1996:69–75. for a discussion of the linguistic ramifications of extended alliances).

Ton, "Dialect/Language Group." The network of alliances is often strengthened by common speech patterns. People who can easily communicate have a better chance of interacting and building relationships. The region's geography influences social and linguistic distinctions. A riverine topography of large streams with their tributaries flowing from east to west to join the Strickland River establishes spatial deixis terminology that reflects the need for major canoe crossings when traveling north or south. Ease of travel increases interaction among people on the same side of the river while reducing relationships with those who are *helofoo*, "on the other side," a term often used metaphorically for "enemy." This riverine topography, then, correlates with trust and aboriginal adversity that reflect the physical and social environ-

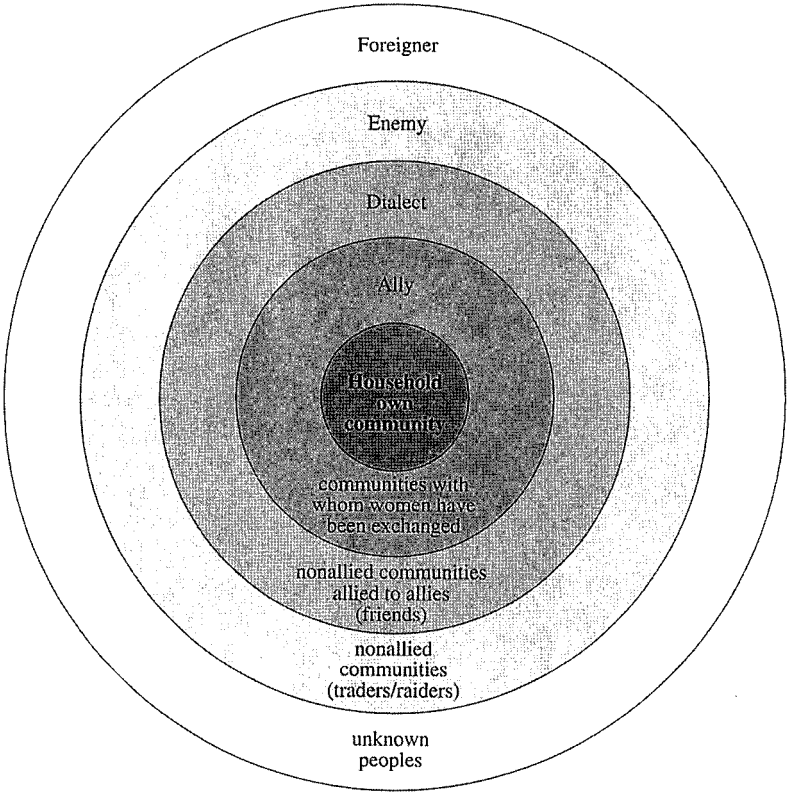

FIGURE 7. **The social juxtaposition of a household to the alliance structure.** (© 1996, reprinted with permission from Shaw 1996)

ment in which the five dialects on the Strickland Plain coexist (Shaw 1986). Dialect are a product of boundaries set by rivers, which produce chaining whereby people progressively understand each other less as distance and number of river crossings increase. This pattern fits well with documentation from other parts of the island of New Guinea (McElhanon and Voorhoeve 1970; Voorhoeve 1975; Rapport 1968).

Hatooman, "Enemies." Trading and raiding characterize the primary activities between "those who kill," that is, enemies. Geographically, speakers of each dialect inhabit a slightly different ecological zone, resulting in access to goods not available in other areas: limestone, ochre, bird feathers, small animal pelts, shell necklaces, and tobacco. All these items are traded among

the groups on the eastern Strickland Plain. Trading parties used to be organized to procure goods not otherwise available in one's own region. Such expeditions took people into enemy territory, thereby increasing personal danger. Trading, however, also afforded an opportunity to investigate house locations, the nature of the surrounding area, and how things are arranged inside a longhouse, all valuable information in a raid against that community. Trading, then, provided opportunity for reconnaissance, and householders and visitors alike were always alert for any sign of unfriendly behavior. In the last twenty years, trading has become a prominent activity between government patrol carriers and the villagers they visit.

These crucial units of the social structure, with a household in the center of a created social network (Figure 7), closely resemble a house in the center of a built living site in the forest (cf. Figure 3). The juxtaposition of spatial units closely reflected by the interrelationship of social units together establishes the nature of communal activity within created space. Created habitation sites, then, reflect both the social structure of inhabitants and the topography of the entire region south of the Karius Range and east of the Strickland River. This region is featured in Samo mythology and is reflected in tales of raids and counterraids, which in turn necessitate close alliances with people who can be trusted. In short, the two parts of this essay mirror each other and delineate physical and social interaction of people identified by where they habitually sleep.

Conclusion

The Samo consider a household to be the smallest survivable unit and thus have no word for nuclear family or even a unit of brothers. Groups of individuals associated within a household interact to provide the protection and productivity necessary for the survival of that unit in their world. That group, in turn, interacts with similar units to construct a web of protection against the unwanted attention of enemies. These built and socially constructed networks represent a constant negotiation of spatial and social constructs that can be manipulated for the protection and productivity of a primary household unit, a *monsoon.* The constructed space has as its focus a longhouse serving as the center of human activity at a particular time. The relationships and social responsibilities, reflected by life-cycle changes, dictate where in the longhouse people sleep and the nature of relationships an individual has with others in the household.

A longhouse is a "place" that incorporates the very essence of Samo metaphor, which, in turn, provides people with an identity and a structure integral to understanding their own reality and enabling them to interact with all

who habitually sleep there. A longhouse symbolizes a people's identity with a place to sleep as well as defining with whom they sleep. This dual social identity reflects an idiom for protection and productivity within the forest environment. It gives "voice" to the people who both build their space in the form of a longhouse and engineer their alliances to ensure compatibility and mutuality with those who share the built space with them. These household associations, in turn, are extended to all whom they count as allies, friends, or enemies. Where will you sleep tonight?

NOTES

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1. This is a descriptive presentation reflective of habitation sites in the early postcontact period, circa 1970. Elsewhere I have traced the impact of contact upon the Samo (Shaw 1996, 2000) and discussed the importance of ceremony in the context of initiation as a rationale for social networking (Shaw 1990). Here the focus is simply on the interrelation between the physical structure of a longhouse and the social structure concomitant to the interplay the Samo place upon what and where things happen and who is involved. The theoretical interest is generated by structures, both physical and social, and appreciating the nature of relationships that now dominate in a society responding to twenty-first-century demands and pressures that encroach upon their rain forest world.

2. The sounds of the Samo language are pronounced much as corresponding sounds in English are, with a few notable exceptions. The sound symbolized by the letter /l/ can be either an [n] sound at the beginning of a word or when surrounded by nasalized vowels, or the usual sound for [l] when found in the middle of a word. Thus the word to eat, *nala,* is orthographically symbolized as *lanla.* This brings up discussion of Samo vowels. There are six phonemic vowels, *a, e, i, o, u,* and ⊃. For orthographic ease, ⊃ is represented by "o" and *o* by "oo." All vowels can be either oral or nasal (sound is forced through the nose). The nasalized vowels are symbolized using an "n" after the vowel. A sound comparison chart with English looks like this:

English: a b d e f g h i k l m o s t u

Samo: *a b d e f g h i k l m o oo s t u*

nasalized vowels: *an en in on oon un*

When spoken rapidly, the transition in diphthongs from high to low vowels, for example, *ia,* creates a [y] sound and from low to high vowels, for example, *ua,* a [w] sound. These sounds are a normal part of speech flow and are, therefore, not symbolized in the orthography. For a detailed phonological description and particulars on orthographic decisions based on psycholinguistic testing, see Shaw and Shaw (1977). The glosses of Samo words and phrases in this article are based on meaning rather than word-for-word translations.

3. Australian government officers established a permanent administrative presence in the Nomad River region by building an airstrip and government office at the confluence of the Nomad and Rentoul Rivers in 1963. Subsequent to independence in 1975, the Papua New Guinea government took over and in large measure carried out the colonial mandate of its Australian predecessors.

4. Cultural research in this region corroborates my own and emphasizes the importance of ritual and ceremony for people throughout the area (Knauft 1985, among the Gebusi; Sørum 1980, among the Bedamini; and Schieffelin 1976, among the Kaluli, to name only the closest groups).

5. My data were collected in the 1970s, during the transition from isolated longhouses to communal villages. This article, however, focuses on the longhouse structure evident in the precontact and immediate postcontact periods prior to village aggregation, and is written in an "ethnographic present" that reflects the late 1960s as defined by informants, patrol officers' reports, and my own observation of village houses built in the traditional style. My own house, built by the Samo for my family in 1970, followed the structural design typical at that time.

6. I use the present tense since building techniques have changed little and constructing a longhouse is every bit as time consuming and painstaking as in the past. In part this, together with a growing scarcity of building materials in the vicinity of established village sites, served as a rationale for abandoning longhouses and instead building smaller family houses (see Shaw 1997).

7. This extension of the floor beyond the house posts formed the "bedroom" area of the house.

8. Despite my twenty-year absence from Kwobi punctuated by occasional return visits, I am still known as a Kwobi *kiali oosoo,* "one who habitually sleeps at Kwobi."

9. While no longer necessary for protection, the porch remains a strategic element of built space in contemporary community centers. Though no longer necessary for warfare, weapons remain a conspicuous accoutrement of male activity. Bows and arrows remain a primary means of food procurement and a protection against spiritual entities that inhabit the forest.

10. This room is the locus of dances and séances, which I have described elsewhere for the Samo (see Shaw 1990). This region of Papua New Guinea is well known in the literature for the elaboration of and importance accorded longhouses and the dances associated with them. However, my focus here is not on what happens in longhouses but rather on the interaction between the space itself and those who use it for their benefit.

11. Geography largely dictates the use of directional lexemes in the Samo language. Streams in the area tend to flow from east to west, forcing people traversing the north-south axis to cross streams and traverse ridges, hence going *foda,* "up," and *munla,* "down." Traversing the east-west axis, in turn, requires going *tula,* "upstream," or *yala,* "downstream." These terms delineate Samo directionals, which are always defined by a point of reference, usually a longhouse site. To leave a house implies descending the ridge, that

is, going "down" to cross a stream and enter the forest. Conversely, people must ascend a ridge and go "up" to most houses (Shaw and Shaw 1973).

12. The Samo say they can plant on ground once utilized by their grandparents. Thus the sago maturation cycle brings people back to the site after skipping a "generation," or about once every twenty-five years.

13. During my research I actually documented a case of a biological brother and sister, separated after a raid, being eventually married because they had lived in allied communities between whom an exchange of women reunited brother and sister as a newly married couple.

14. Alliances between communities were often extended across initiation cycle groups by communities that exchanged women in a previous cycle continuing to do so. This reflects the trust established between the respective parties as well as the need to maintain close relations with those nearby to protect against enemies. Thus a young man may call a woman *uyo*, "mother," reflecting the fact that she lives in the community from whence his father's wife was exchanged. Inasmuch as an exchange of women classed as "mother's brother's daughter" is the preferred marriage, such a man may well end up marrying a woman he previously called "mother."

15. This continuation of the protective role is manifest in garden activity, where responsibilities are structured to allow optimum opportunity for men to provide protection for the entire work party. What may appear to be idle meandering around the periphery of a work space, relaxed smoking breaks, or aimless chatter and bantering is, in fact, only an external persona that belies an ever watchful concern for suspicious activity that might indicate unwanted visitors. For self-protection Samo men don grasses and leaves as camouflage and make considerable noise in the forest, whooping, whistling, and shouting both to announce their presence so others won't be surprised and shoot them, and to scare off harmful forest spirits.

16. These are just a few of the many activities that take place in the central hall of a Samo longhouse. Such activities have been discussed elsewhere (Shaw 1985, 1990, 1996) or have yet to be adequately described and theoretically analyzed. The objective here is to draw the correlation between the activities themselves and the space in which they take place. The presence of the married-male sleeping quarters juxtaposed to this activity area is spatially and socially significant.

17. It was this "nomadic" movement that frustrated Australian patrol officers and led them to name the Nomad River. The movement, however, was by no means random. Rather, it followed the maturation of the sago and replenishment of the soil from the natural regrowth and fertilization of the forest. Men speak of being able to plant on ground utilized by their grandfathers, and women process sago in the same swamps their grandmothers worked.

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