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PART 2.14.

SMALL PHYLIC GROUPS

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2.14.1. SKO, KWOMTARI, AND LEFT MAY (ARAI) PHYLA

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2.14.1.1. SKO PHYLUM(-LEVEL STOCK)

2.14.1.1.1. GENERAL REMARKS

The Sko Phylum is a very small genetic grouping of the New Guinea area, consisting of only eight languages (on present knowledge; however, it seems unlikely that more members of the phylum will be found). Within the phylum, the languages are related at the stock level, which suggests a relatively short divergence time for the whole phylum; the phylum-level stock is divided into two families, with four languages in each. Two of the languages are in Irian Jaya, on the north coast of the island of New Guinea, just west of the Indonesian border, while the remaining six lie along the same coast to the eastward, in Papua New Guinea. Although some of the languages received some early attention, the grouping as a whole remained unknown till quite recently. The first statements on the group are those of Cowan, who first published (1952a) some grammatical notes on Sko, followed by a brief wordlist (1952b), and then (1953) a grouping of the languages Sko and Sangke (Sanke) with the 'Tami' languages further inland, just west (for the most part) of the border. However, in 1957, Cowan, with further data, separated the Sko and Sangke languages from the Tami languages, on lexical and grammatical grounds; later work, especially that of Voorhoeve (1971), has shown that the Tami languages (which Cowan united as the 'North Papuan Phylum') are member languages of the Trans-New Guinea Phylum. Sko and Sangke remained therefore as virtual isolates, until Capell (1954) recognised the relationship between Vanimo, Wutung (which he writes Wutong), and Sko, although he makes the relationship a little too close:

Vanimo and Wutong, the two varieties of speech found in the area, can be regarded with Sko as dialects of a single language. The three vary considerably in vocabulary, but structurally they are one.

In the 1962 revision of the above work, he follows Cowan's earlier view in placing Sko and Sangke with the Tami languages, but continues to re-print the above statement of the relationship of Vanimo and Wutung to Sko; this would logically entail the inclusion of these languages also in the Tami group, but Capell nowhere says so explicitly.

Sko, Wutung and Vanimo were also equated in the only article on the ethnography of the region (Thomas 1942):

The people of the village at Leitire appear to differ slightly in dialect from Manimo and Warimo, and there may be some slight change at Wutung and Seko, but the natives of the various villages converse freely with each other.

Thomas also recognises the relationship of Warapu to these languages, although once again the degree of relationship is considerably overstated:

It would appear that about eighty to ninety years ago the headland where Vanimo station now is was occupied by the people of Warapu during the lifetime of the parents of some of the older men now living. Owing to the intrusion by a woman into the men's house, it is said, these people migrated, to avoid divine retribution for the sacrilege. The majority of the people moved about two days' journey to the east, and set up the village of Warapu on the Sissano lagoon. Owing to intermarriage with local villages, their dialect now differs considerably from the Vanimo coastal villages.

This story is unconfirmed by any other source. Even if true, it cannot have been Vanimo speakers who moved to Warapu; although detailed lexicostatistical counting has not been undertaken, Warapu cognates with Vanimo are unlikely to exceed 40%, and may be considerably lower.

Friederici (1912:258) recognised the relationship between Wutung and Sko, and correctly states that they are not dialects of a single language: '...sicherlich ist es [Wutung] eine andere Sprache, nicht etwa ein Dialekt derselben Sprache [Sko]'. He gives a list of canoe terms in Sko, Wutung, and Vanimo.

Ray (1919), drawing mainly on Friederici (1912, 1913), lists Warapu ('Varopu, Warupu'), 'Nori', 'Leitere', 'Wanimo', 'Waromo', 'Yako', Wutung, and 'Seko' as forming part of the 'Valman' group of languages; however, the other languages listed in the 'Valman' group are for the most part Torricelli Phylum languages (see 2.12.), the former village of Nori spoke Fas (Kwomtari Phylum; see below 2.14.1.2.) or Warapu (discussion in Laycock (1973:43)), the villages of Leitire (now a mission station), Vanimo, Warimo, and Yako speak Vanimo, and the two last languages are Wutung and Sko. The only data provided are the numerals and a few vocabulary items in 'Leitere', 'Wanimo', 'Yako', 'Wutung', and 'Varopu', and one word (pale, bare pig) in Sko; the source is apparently Friederici.

Further Sko data was published by Voorhoeve (1971), drawing on both his own data and that of Cowan (1952a, 1952b, 1957), as well as short

wordlists by Galis (1955) in Sko, Sangke, and other languages of Irian Jaya. The grammatical statement of Sko (for which Voorhoeve gives also the alternative name 'Tumawo') covers seven pages, and the wordlist contains some forty items; this remains the major data on any Sko Phylum language to date, although a somewhat longer wordlist (185 items) in the Warapu language is given by Laycock (1974). The same paper gives a map of Sko Phylum (and other) languages, and brief information on Warapu structure.

2.14.1.1.2. COMPOSITION OF THE SKO PHYLUM-LEVEL STOCK

Laycock (1973), on the basis of fieldwork in the West Sepik District, determined the apparently complete membership of the phylum-level stock as follows (population figures as of January 1970):

SKO PHYLUM-LEVEL STOCK	6,570+
Vanimo Family	2,355+
Sko	350+
Sangke	200+
Wutung	410
Vanimo	1,395
Krisa Family	4,215
Krisa	347
Rawo	506
Puari	371
Warapu	2,991

2.14.1.1.3. STRUCTURAL FEATURES

The phylum as a whole is characterised phonologically by the presence of some semantic tone and complex consonant clusters; however, these features are most evident in the western (Vanimo Family) languages, as Puari and Warapu are only marginally tonal, and Krisa and Rawo may have two tones only. (Sko appears to have three, and this is probably the case for Wutung and Vanimo also, although for these languages there is the possibility of an analysis that recognises vowel-gemination, with either of two tones occurring on each vowel.) All of the languages conjugate verbs by means of subject-prefixes, in the manner of Torricelli Phylum languages - and, as in the Torricelli Phylum languages, distinctions are made between singular, dual, and plural, and (in the western group at least) between masculine and feminine in third person pronouns. (Laycock (1968) suggested the possibility of a link between Sko Phylum and Torricelli Phylum languages, but this is now known to lack justification.) All the languages of the phylum show extensive lexical

borrowing from Trans-New Guinea Phylum languages (especially those of the neighbouring Border Stock) but do not resemble Trans-New Guinea Phylum languages in any other way.

Something of the complexity of a typical language of the Vanimo family can be illustrated by a few remarks on the Vanimo language itself. There remain unsolved problems at all levels, and the data presented here is tentative. The phonemes appear to be /a e i o u ö ü p t k b d g m n ñ ŋ v s h l y/; voiced stops are prenasalised, although the prenasalisation is often weak or absent, or manifested only in the nasalisation of a preceding vowel. Phones [ɣ] and [zʷ] occur, but the former appears to be an allophone of /g/ intervocally, the latter an allophone of /y/ before /i/. All vowels may occur nasalised, but nasalisation is non-contrastive in some environments preceding nasal consonants (and prenasalised stops). The central vowels /ö/ and /ü/ are lax, and lower than their front or backed counterparts; they occur in fronted and backed allophones as well. Tone is phonemic, but is not marked in the examples which follow; vowel length is uncertain.

Sixteen different pronoun forms were recorded for Vanimo, but the majority of these are transparent compounds specifying the actors in a situation in great detail; these pronouns are *ne I*, *mi thou*, *hei he*, *bei she*, *emi thou and I*, *ehei he and I*, *ebei she and I*, *blehei thou and he*, *blebei thou and she*, *dchei they two (m. or mixed)*, *debei they two (f.)*, *ni we*, *ei you (all)*, *deho they (m.)*, *debu they (f.)*, *dei they (mixed)*. The system is set out in Table I (where identity of row and column means a singular pronoun, non-identity the relevant combination).

TABLE I: VANIMO PRONOUNS

	<i>I</i>	<i>thou</i>	<i>he₁</i>	<i>he₂</i>	<i>she₁</i>	<i>she₂</i>	<i>he+he</i>	<i>she+she</i>
<i>I</i>	ne	emi	chei		ebei		ni	
<i>thou</i>		mi	blehei		blebei		ei	
<i>he₁</i>			hei	dchei			deho	dei
<i>she₁</i>					bei	dɛbei	dei	debu

However, concordance in verbs recognises only seven forms: three persons, singular and non-singular numbers, and gender in third singular forms. The conjugation of verbs is complex, and no two verbs have been found which follow exactly the same paradigm; the differences are probably to be explained by different underlying verb stems. The complexities

are somewhat alleviated by the fact that the number of true verbs in the language seem limited, perhaps as few as twenty; other verbs are compounded from the basic verbs, so that *sleep* is *make sleeping*, and *talk* is *make talking* - a system familiar in other languages of New Guinea (e.g. Kalam - Pawley 1969). Verb stems are reduplicated in present tense, but the verb paradigms in Table II give the unreduplicated forms only. (The forms should be compared with those of Sko - Voorhoeve 1971.)

TABLE II: VANIMO VERB PARADIGMS

	Singular				Non-Singular		
	1	2	3m.	3f.	1	2	3
<i>eat</i>	ŋe	mɛ	hɛ	bɛ	ne	ɛ̃	dɛ
<i>go</i>	ŋa	ma	ha	va	na	ã	ya
<i>come</i>	lũ	blũ	lũ	lũ	dũ	lũ	lũ
<i>make</i>	lɛ	blɛ	hlɛ	hvi	dɛ	lɛ	di
<i>hear</i>	lõ	mlõ	hlõ	tõ	nõ	lõ	sõ
<i>hit(him)</i>	ga	ba	hya	pa	*	ga	ta
<i>hit(her)</i>	la	m̩la	h̩la	na	na	la	ña
<i>hit(them)</i>	yi	si	hyi	si	ni	yi	si
<i>sit</i>	hve ŋo	pe mo	hve mo	pe mo	hve no	hve õ	hve mo
<i>see</i>	ŋũ hve	mũ pe	hũ hve	mũ pe	nũ hve	ũ hve	ñũ hve
<i>stand</i>	ŋũ lõ	mũ blõ	hũ to	wũ tɛ	nũ dõ	ũ lõ	ñũ tõ

* not recorded

Data on other languages of the Sko Phylum is largely restricted to the unpublished wordlists obtained by Laycock in 1970-71, although a brief wordlist of Warapu appeared in the New Guinea Annual Reports for 1924-25, under the name of 'Nori', and an even briefer list had been given by Erdweg (1901).

2.14.1.2. KWOMTARI PHYLUM(-LEVEL STOCK)

An almost complete listing of the languages of the Kwomtari Phylum, together with the first use of the name, was given by Loving and Bass (1964). Laycock (1973) followed, essentially, the same sub-groupings, and was able to add the Pyu language, spoken just over the border of Irian Jaya on the Blake River. Laycock also established the area of the Fas language as extending well out of the Amanab Subdistrict, into the Aitape, Lumi and Vanimo Subdistricts. A further refinement on the mapping of the phylum was added by Conrad and Dye (1975), when an additional pocket

of Pyu speakers was found at Buriap village, on the Upper Sepik River (incorrectly listed in Laycock 1973 as Abau-speaking). The classification of this small phylum is then as follows:

KWOMTARI PHYLUM-LEVEL STOCK	3,246?
Kwomtari Family	2,421
Kwomtari	824
Fas	1,597
Baibai Family	725
Baibai	271
Biaka	454
Pyu Family	100?
Pyu	100?

Little is known about the languages of this phylum, almost the only data being survey wordlists collected by members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and by Laycock. Capell (1954, 1962) cites some Fas examples under the name 'Bembi'; but his other comments on 'Bembi' - that, for example, it has a bilabial trill - suggest that he is confusing the language with Pagi (Border Stock, Trans-New Guinea Phylum). The 'Nori' language, listed by Capell, is, on the basis of the wordlists in the New Guinea Annual Reports for 1924-25, Warapu-speaking; however, there is a village Onei, also known as Mori, in the same position as the 'Nori' shown on Capell's (1962) map, and this village is Fas-speaking. Perhaps the villagers are bilingual, or the village has changed its linguistic allegiance. A first wordlist of Pyu was given by Laycock (1972), and a more extensive list (about 110 items) is given by Conrad and Dye (1975).

The languages of the phylum are hard to characterise typologically. Fas, Kwomtari and Pyu appear to have no concordance in verbs with either subject or object, whereas subject is fully marked in the verbs of Baibai, and probably also of Biaka. Number systems tend to be binary, or 'body-parts'. Tense and aspect in verbs are shown by loosely attached particles. Number is distinguished in first person pronouns (singular, dual), but is not always apparent in the other pronouns. Lexically, the languages show a certain amount of influence from Trans-New Guinea Phylum languages; the question of whether the Kwomtari Phylum may in fact be a sub-phylum of the Trans-New Guinea Phylum remains open (see also 2.2.6.3. in this volume).

2.14.1.3. LEFT MAY PHYLUM(-LEVEL FAMILY)

The languages of the area between the Left May River and the Sepik River began to become known in the early 1960s, mainly from unpublished wordlists collected by R. Conrad, of the Summer Institute of Linguistics;

the name 'Left May Family' was first used by Healey (1964). Further wordlists were collected by a Sepik Expedition of the Museum für Völkerkunde, Basel, in the years 1965-67, and on the basis of both Summer Institute of Linguistics lists and Basel lists, as well as his own data, Laycock (1973) was able to publish a listing and preliminary classification of the phylum. Further information, with fairly extensive wordlists, has now become available (Conrad and Dye 1975); in this publication, the name 'Arai Family' is used. The listing of the languages below uses the older name for the phylum(-level family), but follows otherwise the Dye and Conrad language identification and population figures, with alternative names as given by Laycock (1973).

LEFT MAY PHYLUM-LEVEL FAMILY =	1,556+
= Arai (Left May) Family	1,556+
Rocky Peak (Yinibu)	275+
Iteri (Yinibu)	90+
Bo (Po)	175±
Ama (Waniabu)	381
Nimo (Nimo-Wasuai, Nakwi)	413
Owiniga (Bero)	222

Insufficient data is available on the typological features of the group, although Conrad and Dye give an outline of phonological features, as well as the cognate percentages within the phylum-level family, as well as wordlists. Conrad and Dye also mention that one language of the group, Rocky Peak, shares 8% cognates with Nomad (Samo and Kubo dialects) (Central and South New Guinea Stock, Trans-New Guinea Phylum, see 2.6.2.2.6.5.1. in this volume), and that other languages of the family share about 5% cognates with it; this is a potential wider relationship worth exploring (see 3.4.1. in this volume).

(For locations of all languages mentioned in this chapter 2.14.1., see the map of Sepik region languages in 2.11.1. in this volume.)

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