

Stephen A. Wurm and Shiro Hattori, *Language Atlas of the Pacific Area, Part I: New Guinea Area, Oceania, Australia*. Stuttgart, Germany: GeoCenter GmbH for the Australian Academy of the Humanities, 1981. Maps, text. DM 200.

This atlas is a worthy addition to the growing number of recent, high-quality publications that specifically relate to the areal and spatial aspects of the human geography of the Pacific. It is a much needed successor to Salzner's *Sprachenatlas des Indopazifischen Raumes*. The publication of *A Linguistic Survey of the South-Western Pacific* by A. Capell in 1962, the monumental effort by C. F. and F. M. Voegelin, *Classification Index of the World's Languages* in 1977, and the contributions in *Current Trends in Linguistics, Oceanic Linguistics*, and other related anthropological and linguistic journals have all served to hasten the obsolescence of

Salzner's work. This flourish of activity in Oceanic linguistics since the publication of Salzner's work over twenty years ago has made the *Language Atlas of the Pacific Area* (LAPA) a welcome addition to students and scholars of the region.

The LAPA is a beautiful work with twenty-four multicolored and highly informative maps that measure 500 x 360mm and lie flat in a sturdy folio container. The cartographic quality of each map is most impressive. The six to nine colors of each map, plus the dozens of geometrical symbols and shading overlays, give remarkable clarity and readability. The reverse side of each map contains detailed demographic and linguistic for each group or tribe identified (which can exceed five hundred groups on some of the maps of New Guinea). The languages are classified on the phylum, sub-phylum, family, and stock level, with a brief discussion of the rationale for the organization and grouping of the data. Also, there is an extensive bibliography attached to each map.

The overall effect of this atlas is to render a complex linguistic region more comprehensible. While realizing the heterogeneous nature of the distribution of languages in New Guinea, for example, it was none-the-less a personal revelation to discover the large geographical range of the Trans-New Guinea phylum which easily encompasses about three-fourths of the island. The Sepik-Ramu phylum of the northwestern portion of Papua New Guinea (the second largest Papuan phylum on the island) is much smaller than the Trans-New Guinea phylum, but the two phyla together easily include all but an approximated 10 percent of the island.

A phylum is a composite of distinct language families, and within a particular family a high degree of linguistic variation can exist. However, linguistic studies of New Guinea are too often burdened by their over-emphasis of linguistic isolates and distinctions between the languages. Such perceptions of the linguistic complexity of the island are considerably reduced by an inspection of the maps contained in this atlas. With the related structural and phonological features which often typify language groupings at the stock, family, and sometimes even the phylum level, the basic unity of many of the languages of the region emerges and may help to provide insight regarding the wide-spread usage of pidgins throughout Melanesia (see map 24). In similar fashion, the languages spoken in the Bismarck Archipelago and Solomon Islands region are reduced to a more comprehensible level by inspection of map 5. Two groups emerge: the East Papuan phylum and the Melanesian languages, belonging to the Oceanic branch of the Austronesian family. Finally, the wide-spread extent of the Pama-Nyungan family of Australia becomes readily

apparent. With the exception of the northern half of the Northern Territory, the Kimberly district of Western Australia, and the (now extinct) languages of Tasmania, one phylum encompasses the remainder of the entire continent.

It is my opinion that the editor could have used this atlas to help eliminate the confusing--and often misleading--practice of using the term "Papuan" to refer to the languages of Melanesia unconnected to the Austronesian family. The term Non-Austronesian (NAN) has been introduced by Arthur Capell to emphasize this lack of genetic unity and to accommodate languages in the Southwestern Pacific outside of New Guinea. To have used Capell's NAN designation would have been more desirable than a continuation of the "Papuan" designation.

The atlas is divided into four sections: maps 1-14 depict the New Guinea Mainland and adjacent islands; maps 15-19 depict the islands of the remainder of Melanesia plus one map each for Micronesia and Polynesia; maps 20-23 cover Australia and Tasmania and map 24 "Pidgin Languages, Trade Languages and *lingua franca* in Oceania and Australia" stands by itself in the final section. Somewhat disappointing is the heavy emphasis on Melanesia (maps 1-19). Micronesia and Polynesia are accurately but summarily portrayed. The map for Micronesia displays eight major groups of the Austronesian family (plus all of the attached subgroups) but contains a single bibliographic entry compared to the seventeen authors with their twenty-seven works cited in the bibliography for map 6, "Sepik Provinces." The editors of the LAPA do mention that "other scholars in and around the University of Hawaii who have worked on Micronesian languages . . . have supplied the compiler with verifications and recommendations through personal communication." Perhaps these "other scholars" should have been given some credit in the bibliography.

The limited sources cited for Micronesia and Polynesia may also be the cause of the few inconsistencies of the work. The relocated Kiribati (Gilbertese) communities in the Solomon Islands are clearly indicated on map 16, but no such indication is given for the Kiribati settlements on Rabi in Fiji or their settlements in the Phoenix Islands. Also, the atoll of Nui in Tuvalu is shown as a Polynesian-speaking instead of Kiribati-speaking area. Also, the tribal and dialectical diversity of New Zealand deserves more attention than was given.

A concluding critical note must be sounded. At DM 200, this work will discourage many potential buyers. It is unfortunate that the editors of the series did not foresee this problem and publish one general map each for Melanesia and Australia as they did for Micronesia and Polynesia. This

would have provided access to most of the information needed for all but the most critical areal specialist and would have made the information affordable to a much wider audience. It is hoped these problems will be rectified with the publication of revised maps as promised by the editors of the atlas.

With the exception of the minor criticisms mentioned above, this is an excellent atlas and is highly recommended to all libraries serving Pacific Island scholars--and to the scholars themselves who can afford it. One can only wait with hope and enthusiasm for Part II, maps 25-47 including sections dealing with Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines, Mainland South-East Asia, Insular South-East Asia, and the pidgin languages of the region.

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