

MORPHO-SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF THE BIRD'S HEAD LANGUAGES¹

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This paper presents an overview of various morpho-syntactic features of languages of the Bird's Head area, such as subject prefixation on verbs and nouns. Since Voorhoeve (1987) advanced the hypothesis that there might be a genetic connection between this area and the languages of the Torricelli Phylum (North-West of Papua New Guinea) a comparison is made between these linguistic groupings. There are no clear lexical correspondences between the West-Papuan and Torricelli phyla. While typologically, there is indeed a striking similarity, the same observations can be made with respect to the Non-Austronesian Bird's Head and the Austronesian languages of the Cenderawasih Bay.

1 Introduction

In the Bird's Head peninsula of Irian Jaya a number of diverse languages are spoken, most of which have been classified as members of the West Papuan Phylum.²

Cowan (1953) sketched some features of a number of these languages, indicating that they should be separated from Austronesian languages. Much earlier, Van der Veen (1915) had already established that the North-Halmahera languages cannot be classified as Austronesian. More recently, preliminary classifications have been proposed by Voorhoeve (1975, 1987a and b) and Berry and Berry (1987).

The West Papuan Phylum comprises (Voorhoeve 1987a:717):

1. The North Moluccan Stock (North-Halmahera family with Pagu, Galela, Tobelo, etc; Sahu; and Ternate-Tidore);
2. West Makian Family isolate;
3. the West Bird's Head Stock with the WBH Family (Seget, Moi, Tehit, and Moraid), Maybrat, and Karon Pantai (= Abun);
4. the East Bird's Head Stock-level Family (Meyah and Manikion (= Sougb));
5. the Stock-level isolate Kebar (= Mpur).
6. Hatam is a Phylum-level isolate.

Since the data on which these classifications have been established were rather limited (small wordlists; some grammatical information), the status of these languages is not at all clear. For some of the Halmahera languages reasonable descriptions exist, but the Bird's Head languages "have not been so lucky". The lexical similarities between the languages of North Halmahera and the West Bird's Head Stock allow some firm genetic grouping.

¹ Research for this paper was conducted in the framework of the NWO (Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research) priority programme "The Irian Jaya Studies: a Programme for Interdisciplinary Research" (ISIR), financed by WOTRO (Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research).

² On the north coast of the Maccluer Gulf we find languages of the South Bird's Head Stock, which are classified as a subgroup of the Trans New Guinea Phylum. I will disregard these for the present paper.

Voorhoeve (1987b:90) is much more hesitant with regard to the languages of the East Bird's Head. Meyah, Moskona and Sougb clearly form one family. Another language of the Bird's Head defies all classification so far. Voorhoeve (1987:725) lists Hatam as a phylum-level isolate. This language, spoken to the south of Manokwari is also known by other names (cf. Silzer & Heikkinen 1991:50). Some of these are names of Hatam dialects: Tinam, Uran, Adihup; and Miriei (Griffiths 1994). Typologically it appears similar to other WPP languages, lexically it shares but a 5% cognate percentage with Meyah and 8% with Sougb (also known as Manikion, a derogatory name used by Wandamen speakers) and not more than 3% with the rest of the WPP (Voorhoeve 1987b:91).

Nevertheless, on the basis of some striking typological features in the West and East Bird's Head Families, Voorhoeve (1987a) suggests a possible relationship between the WPP with the Torricelli Phylum (= languages spoken in the North-west of Papua New Guinea).

One of the aims of this paper is to find some (dis)confirming data for this hypothesis. A first cursory comparison of wordlists of the Torricelli languages (available from archives of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Ukarumpa) with the available WPP data, however, yielded rather disappointing results: no lexical material gave any indication of possible cognates. But also within the phyla there is a wide variation of the basic vocabulary. With regard to the Torricelli Phylum, Laycock (1975:768) comments: "...no other languages in the New Guinea area appear to be even distantly related. Internally, however, the relationships are fairly close; the amount of lexical sharing may drop as low as 4-5% from one end of the phylum to the other... but the commoner pattern is the occurrence of extensive chains of languages, with percentages lying between 30% and 60%." It would seem then, that internally there is as much diversity within the Torricelli Phylum as there is within the West-Papuan Phylum (including Hatam as phylum-isolate). A definite confirmation or denial of a genetic relationship would have to be based upon more lexical as well as structural data.

A similarly preliminary comparison of data from Austronesian languages of the Cenderawasih Bay, such as Biak (Steinhauer 1985), Waropen, Wandamen and Ambai (Silzer 1983) yielded some possible similarities with WPP languages. At least some can be accounted for by recent borrowings from Biak. For example, in almost all of the BH languages we find *sansun* for 'clothes' and *pas* for 'rice'. Whether there are more (older) Austronesian reflexes in WPP languages is possible but this requires further comparative work.

In spite of the absence of lexical correspondences between the Bird's Head and the Torricelli languages, as well as the generally poor showing of cognates within these groupings, it may be helpful to have an idea what these languages look like. Although the term 'Papuan' does not suggest a genetic grouping like 'Austronesian', the languages of these two phyla share some striking similarities in contrast to most other 'Papuan' languages. Therefore, I will compare some morphological and syntactic features of WPP languages with Torricelli languages. I will include the same kind of data from Austronesian languages from the Cenderawasih Bay.

2 Pronominal system: Subject prefixation

All languages of the WPP have prefixes cross-referencing subject on the verb and

possessor on (inalienable) nouns. These sets include a gender differentiation for third person singular (in the WBH Stock and Mpur only) and the opposition inclusive-exclusive for first person plural (except Maybrat, and Mpur), as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Subject prefixes of West-Papuan Phylum³

TID	MOI	TEH	BRT	MPU	MEA	SOU	HAT	
to-	t-	t-	t-	n-	di-	d-	d-	1s
no-	n-	n-	n-	an-	bi-	b-	a-	2s
wo-	w-	w-	y-	a-	e-	e-	∅	3sM ⁴
mo-	m-	m-	m-	n-				3sF
fo-	waw-	f-	p-	e-	mi-	ma-	ig-	1pIN
mo-	mam-	m-	p-	e-	me-	em-	n-	1pEX
no-	nan-	n-	n-	n-	i-	y-	j-	2p
yo-	y-	y-	m-	de-	ri-	l-	ig-	3p

An attempt to relate these pronominal forms to Wurm's Proto-Papuan pronoun sets yielded little success, mainly because these proto-sets are rather uninformative (in that just about all consonants can be reflexes of one proto-sound, cf. Voorhoeve 1987a:711). Yet there are some striking similarities between Meyah and Sougb on the one hand and representatives of the Torricelli Phylum (Seti, Seta and One, forming the West Wapei Stock-level family) on the other, as Voorhoeve (1987a:725) showed. What this signifies is not clear, however.

Whereas Meyah and Sougb (as well as Hatam) appear not to distinguish gender, in contrast to other WPP languages, most Torricelli languages do, generally with *n*, *r*, *l* for 3s masculine, and *w-* for feminine (Laycock 1975:768). This could be a similar switch (WPP *w-* for masculine, *m-* for feminine) as Voorhoeve suggested for second person singular to plural. However, apparently some switching may have occurred within that phylum as well, when we find *l-* = masc. and *n/m-* = fem. in Olo (= Wapei family) for example (McGregor and McGregor 1982:26), or when one considers the instances of /*k*/ for first (Wapei, Marienberg), or second (Palei), or third (Au of Wapei) person. Likewise, some "person-hopping" seems to have affected /*p*/ between plural first and second persons.

To appreciate the complexity of the Torricelli Phylum languages with regard to their pronoun sets, consider the summaries of pronominal prefixes in various families (the free pronouns show more diversity), in table 2:

³ BRT = Maybrat; HAT = Hatam; MEA = Meyah; MOI = Moi; MPU = Mpur (Kebur); SOU = Sougb (Manikion); TEH = Tehit; TID = Tidore. Tidore data are from Voorhoeve 1987c. Moi is from Menick 1995; Tehit from Flassy 1991; Maybrat from Dol 1995; Mpur from Cecilia Odé (p.c). The Meyah set is based upon Ajamiseba (to appear). Data on Hatam and Sougb are from personal fieldwork.

⁴ Sougb and Hatam have a different prefix for inalienable possession: *me-* and *ni-* respectively.

Table 2. Subject prefixes in the Torricelli Phylum⁵

	W.Wapei	Wapei	Palei/ Urat	Kombio	Marienberg
1s	k/kw-	k-	m-/Ø-	i-	k-/Ø
2s	y-/Ø-	i-/Ø-	k-/Ø-	ny-	w-
3sM	w-	l/k/n/r-	n-	n-	n-
3sF	w-	n/w/p-	w-	w-	w-
1pIN/EX	m-	m-	p/m-	m-	p-
2p	p/f-	y/f-	y-	p-	w-
3pM	p-	p/n/l-	p/y-	h-	m-
3pF				w-	r-
1d	f-	w/kw-	p/m/w-	w-	?

This table lends support to Laycock's generalized set for the Torricelli Phylum (Laycock 1975:768):

1s k-Ø
 2s k-t-Ø; but notice palatals y/i/ny in three families
 3sM n-l-r; predominantly /n/
 3sF w

1p m-p
 2p y
 3p n-l-p; with gender distinction in two families

1d p-w; in contrast to plural, Olo and Au distinguish gender in 3 dual:/t-/ is masculine, /n,m-/ is feminine, neutral

If similarities in pronominal prefix systems are adduced to suggest some genetic relationship, there are other candidates as well. There are at least some similarities between WPP subject prefixes and those of the Austronesian languages from the Cenderawasih Bay. Consider Table 3 with the subject prefixes in Austronesian languages of the Cenderawasih Bay. Especially, the second person singular may have found its way into Sougb and Meyah.

⁵ Data on West Wapei (a rather homogeneous family consisting of Oni, Seta and Seti) and Palei/Urat/Maimai families are from Laycock (1968:40). The Wapei family is represented by data from Olo (McGregor 1982:35 and 57) and Au. The data for Au and the other languages (Bukiyip for the Kombio stock; Kamasau for the Marienberg family) are from SIL wordlists.

Table 3. Subject prefixes in Austronesian Cenderawasih Bay⁶

	AMB	WDM	WAR	BIA
1s	i/y(e)-	y/i-	y(a)-	y(a)-
2s	b(u)/w(o)-	b(u)/-u-	a-	u(a)-
3s	d(i)/-i-	-i-	∅	(d)i-
1pIN	tat-	ta(N)-	k(i)-	?o-
1pEX	amet-	ama(N)-	an-	n?o-
2p	met-	me(N)-	n- (?)	m?o-
3p	e(t)-	se-	ki-	s(i)- =animate n(a)- =inanimate

Whereas the inclusive-exclusive distinction is absent in the Torricelli Phylum, it is clear in North Halmahera and West Bird's Head Stock. Although it is questioned by Cowan (1953:11) for Manikion (i.e. Sougb), the distinction is attested also for the East Bird's Head languages Meyah, Sougb and Hatam. The languages more in the center of the peninsula, Maybrat and Mpur, lack this feature. If the inclusive-exclusive distinction is borrowed from adjacent Austronesian, and if WPP languages should be genetically related to the Torricelli Phylum, the bilabial plosive and nasal (as attested in Torricelli) may have been split into borrowed Austronesian functions, with the nasal conveniently corresponding to the Austronesian form. Whereas Voorhoeve noted a singular-plural shift for 2sg between Meyah/Sougb (Manikion) and Torricelli, one could also point to the correspondence between these WPP languages and Wandamen/Ambai.

On the other hand, the striking reverse in the "pragmatic" use of gender between Moi/Tehit (masc. = small; fem. = large) and Torricelli (fem. = small; masc. large) has no parallel in Austronesian. But then, this use of gender is also found in languages of the genetically different group of Sepik-Ramu languages. Bruce reports for Alamblak (1984:97) that masculine and feminine on human nouns and higher animals (e.g. dog, pig) follows natural gender. For lower animals and inanimates, masculine is used for tall, long slender, and narrow objects; feminine for short, squat or wide objects. Foley (1986:81) mentions a reversal in Mianmin: masculine denotes singularity or small size, while feminine is used for plurality and large sized objects.

Thus, while there are some tantalizing bits of similarity between WPP and Torricelli, if some of these features are also attested in other, presumably unrelated languages, they are not strong evidence for a relationship between these phyla. It would be rather premature to advance one hypothesis as more likely than the other.

⁶ AMB = Ambai (Silzer 1983); WDM = Wandamen (data from my own field notes); WAR = Waropen (data from P. van Velzen); BIA = Biak (Steinhauer 1985).

3 Verb sequences

All languages of the WPP allow sequences of verbs under one clause contour. Especially the languages of the WBH Stock express "prepositional notions" by verbal means, as illustrated in (1) and (2) for Tehit, and (3) for Moi (Menick, this volume).

TEH

- (1) *Nggroan n-amon w-deyi sirot m-ana⁷ yit*
 yesterday 2s-OB 3sM-send letter 3sF-to them
 'Yesterday your older brother sent them a letter'

- (2) *T-ali t-amon w-aq*
 1s-go 1s-OB 3sM-at
 'I go to my older brother (where he is at)'

MOI

- (3) *wi-sik o p-osu wi-gik p-ana lun*
 3sM-take banana 3sNH-to 3sM-mouth 3sNH-go inside
 'He put a banana in his mouth'

When direction is to a person, as in (2), Flassy claims (1991:48) that the verb *-aq* 'be at' [plural = *-eq*] should follow the proper noun with the prefix cross-referencing for gender and number. This is similar to Moi *-ai* [plural = *-ei*]:

- (4) *wo-towo n-osu wi-bi w-ai se*
 3sM-bring 3pNH-to 3sM-friend 3sM-at PERF
 'He had already brought them to his friend (he is at)'

Maybrat shows similar subject prefixation on sequences of verbs:

BRT

- (5) *Y-o y-fau m-ai plastik m-nan*
 3sM-fetch 3sM-put.in 3sU-at plastic.bag 3sU-enough
 'After he had gotten (camera) and put into a plastic bag...' (Dol, 1995:47)

Mpur and Hatam allow verb sequences, but have uninflected prepositions:

HAT

- (6) *Yoni i-gwam ei ig ne-te hi*
 they 3p-sit at house 3s-side other
 'They are sitting beside the house'

⁷ Tehit, as Moi, has a number of verbs with vowel change indicating number. *-ana* is the singular stem, for plural it is *-ine*.

Now, compare the WPP examples with some Torricelli representatives:

AU

- (7) *Hir n-ewis-im m-au si*
 they 3p-put-3p 3p-on fire
 'They placed them on the fire' (Scorza 1985:247)

- (8) *Hine k-ai k-inatin k-ekre hei*
 knife 3sM-my 3sM-fall 3sm-into hole
 'My knife fell into the hole' (Scorza p.249)

OLO

- (9) *Ki k-ërë-m me m-ra-tei*
 I 1s-with-3pF they 1p-sit-very
 'I with them (two women) (we) sit down together' (McGregor 1982:78)⁸

Olo seems to contrast with Au in that it does not have verb-like prepositions. There is a multifunctional postpositional clitic on verbs <-f>, which can transitivize verbs such as *aule* 'come' and *ompetei* 'run': *k-ompetei* 'I run' > *k-ompete-f-ene* 'I run to her' (McGregor pp.34-37). Both languages, however, show subject prefix and object suffix on the verbs. Foley (1986:105) suggests that this order of A-V-U (Actor-Verb-Undergoer) "seems to be diagnostic of their [i.e. Torricelli Phylum languages G.R.] genetic grouping, as it is not attested elsewhere".

Bukiyip or Mountain Arapesh (Kombio stock) prefixes the verb to cross-reference some 18 different noun classes as subject. Although the comitative is inflected as any other verb, no other "prepositional" notions appear to be inflected:

- (10) *N-a-kli n-a-dúk-anú tamiyok Lowenem*
 3sM-R-say 3sM-R-kill-3sM(OBJ) axe L
 'He wanted to kill Lowenem with an axe' (Conrad 1991:86)

Conrad (1991:27) gives different verb classes on the basis of affixation. Interestingly, some classes diverge from the A-V-U order given in (10): Class 1 has obligatory object prefixes, following the subject prefix and a mood (realis versus irrealis) prefix, in which case the nominal object is optional, for example:

- (11) *N-a-bal-ah (abal)*
 3sM-R-cl5PL-drink (water)
 'He drank water' (Bukiyip; Conrad 1991:27)

The A-U-V order as illustrated in (11) is reminiscent of a number of North Halmahera languages, which, besides this morphological order, also have SOV as clause word order (Voorhoeve 1988:191).

⁸ I identify *-tei* as the suffix <-tei> given on p. 54 and 57 as expressing 'very' on adjectives or reflexivity on pronouns.

Kamasau, the only SOV language of my Torricelli sample, shows verbal affixation, including gender marking and the verb concatenation that resembles "verb serialization":

- (12) *Nge gos k-ua- ' w-ughe*
 I sago 1s-put-3sF 3sF-descend
 'I put the sago down'

- (13) *Nge pensil k-ow-i n-ase*
 I pencil 1s-put-3sM 3sM-lie
 'I put the pencil down' (Sanders, pc in 1978 questionnaire)

The shared feature of subject prefixing is one reason why Voorhoeve (1987a) advanced the hypothesis that these groups may be related. Flassy's claim that Tehit allows object suffixation was not confirmed by my own fieldnotes from Tehit speakers in Sorong (September 1994).

While the verbal affixation of Torricelli, which is so unusual for Papuan languages, as pointed out by Foley, finds a partial ally in the West Papuan Phylum, this is not enough of a case for genetic relationship. Similar subject prefixation is also found in Austronesian languages from the Cenderawasih Bay. These languages agree with most of the WPP in that they do not cross-reference the object, neither pre-, nor post-verbal. Typical for these Austronesian languages is that second and third person singular are expressed by infixes (-*u*- 2nd; -*i*- 3rd) on certain verbs (e.g. those with initial continuants).

WDM

- (14) *I-ne sinia pai r-i-a so pasar di-o*
 1s-POS mother the 3s-go to market 3s-want
w-i-ori dia pesi
 3s-buy fish one
 'My mother went to the market in order to buy some fish'

They agree with the Central and East Bird's Head languages in that prepositions are not prefixed like verbs, as *so* 'to' in (14) shows for Wandamen. Compare also Ambai:

- (15) *Tomi di-okon(>dokon) rando boru we Isaki*
 Tom 3s-give banana two to Isak
 'Tom gave two bananas to Isak' (Silzer 1983:66)

4 Noun phrase

4.1 Order

All the languages of the West-Papuan Phylum and almost all of the Torricelli languages, as well as the Austronesian languages of the Cenderawasih Bay have as general order:

Noun-Adjective-(Classifier)-Numeral-Determiner

For example:

TEH

- (16) *na w-aa hnyo mres-w w-aqo-w*
 man 3sM-REL good one-3sM 3sM-that[mentioned]-3sM
 'That one good man already mentioned'

Flassy (1991:75) mentions with regard to (16) that Tehit requires a relative clause-like construction to express attributive adjectives. It is possible to have "adjectives", as well as (in)transitive verbs - which have to be in the plural form, which in certain verbs requires a vowel change $a > e$ or $a > o$ - immediately following the noun they modify, see (17) and (18).

- (17) *wet hnyo-m*
 child nice-3sM 'the nice girl'

- (18) *nandla ein sfa-m*
 man go/from mountain-3sF
 'The mountain climbing men'

Although Flassy (1991:46 & 75) claims that this gives a more restricted, idiomatic meaning, with respect to (19) he allows absence of (*m-aa*).

- (19) *wet-m (m-aa) hnyo-m m-efe nandla-w*
 child-3sF (3sF-REL) good-3sF 3sF-POS man-3sM
 'The man of the nice girl'

This suggests a difference as between Indonesian *gadis cantik* and *gadis yang cantik*. In other words, Tehit does not require a Relative Clause-like construction for attributive modifiers. The relativization is employed when the speaker specifies a 'particular element' as opposed to other possible referents. The same distinction can be made in other WPP languages, as in Hatam:

HAT

- (20)a *wou cun pima*
 snake short that 'that short snake'

- (20)b *wou di-cun pima*
 snake REL-short that 'that snake that is short'

The use of a numeral in the NP requires a classifier between the head noun and the numeral in Tehit as well as in Maybrat:

TEH

- (21) *mqan qayn tolik-y y-ii fle y-eqe-y*
 dog CLASS three-3p 3p-REL big 3p-DEM(anaphor)-3p
 'Those three big dogs which were already mentioned' (Flassy 1991:74)

BRT

- (22) *Raa m-abo trion tuuf m-jin tet abyo*
 men 3p-human CLASS three 3p-sleep cave above
 'Three men slept at the mouth of a cave' (Brown p.56)

Other languages also have classifiers. Mpur has a large number of classifiers, of which at least the classifier with animate nouns is obligatory, while Hatam has just a few, none which seems to be obligatory.

Other examples from Brown (1990:46 & 50) suggest that in Maybrat adjectival notions receive prefixes just as verbs:

- (23) *Raa y-abi Ø-sait y-amiot tohmi*
 man 3s-old 3s-one 3s-teach initiation rites
 'One elderly man taught initiation rites'

- (24) *Fai m-abi re-f-o me-sait m-hau bau*
 woman 3sF-old sg-near-F 3sF-one 3sF-stay alone

m-akus

3sF-remain

'This elderly woman herself she lived alone'

The Mpur, Meyah, Sougb and Hatam NPs agree with the general structure, but in these languages the adjective is not inflected.

HAT

- (25) *ig kei bibor di-ni*
 house good very REL-this 'this very good house'

- (26) *nab ndig gom*
 pig big one
 'one big pig'

In some Torricelli Phylum languages we find the same order of constituents in the NP. Here too, the adjective is inflected, at least in Olo:

- (27) *pusi kömpu n-afo-(tei) fiu n-a*
 cat little 3sF-fat-(very) white 3sF-die
 'the white very fat little cat died' (McGregor 1982:53)

In Olo, the demonstratives also take a subject pronominal prefix (McGregor 1982:55). Other Torricelli languages, however, do not mark the attributive adjective with a subject prefix, but with a suffix agreeing with the head noun in gender (or class, in the case of Bukiyip), similar to Tehit (17) and (18).

AU

- (28) *paap noki-k enu-k*
 stick long-3sNeut(=Masc) bad-3sM
 'a very long stick' (Scorza 1985:232)

Bukiyip allows both pre- and post-nominal positions for determiner and adjective, both of which show agreement in class with the head noun (Conrad 1991:57):

- (29) *égú-dak nebe-gali trag*
 cl8s-this big-cl8s truck
 'this big truck'

In Austronesian Wandamen and Ambai we find the same order in the NP as in the WPP languages, Noun + Adjective + Determiner:

WDM

- (30) *i-sajo aya d-i-ete pesi*
 1s-see bird 3s-beautiful one
 'I see/saw a beautiful bird'

Here the adjective is affixed (second and third person singular subject are infixes) just as verbs are (cf. above (14)). Silzer (1983:68-69) mentions that Ambai has a small, closed class of adjectives (five dimension words) that do not inflect as verbs; all other adjectival notions are expressed by verbs.

4.2 Possession

Tehit allows both pre- and post-nominal possessive pronouns, with no difference in meaning, according to Flassy (p.13). The forms with *-efe* normally precede the head noun:

TEH

- (31) *(tet) t-efe mbol* ' (I) my house'
(nen) n-efe mbyele ' (you) your garden'
(maam) m-efe wet-m ' (we) our (excl) children'

If no other modifiers are present, they may not follow the possessed noun. This contrasts with the *-a* 'sg' / *-i* 'pl' forms, given in (32), which may either precede or follow.

- (32)a *w-ali mbyele ted-a(ra)* / *ted-a mbyele(ra)*
 3s-go garden I- POS(DEM) / I-POS garden(DEM)
 'he goes to my garden there'

- (32)b *w-ali mbyele la-maam-i(ra)*
 3s-go garden two-1p:EXCL-POS(DEM)
 'He goes to our[dual] garden there'

Similar freedom for pronominal possessor appears to exist in Hatam, with no clear difference in meaning:

- (33)a *noni krau [minsien ni-de] ba com*
 he grab dog 3s-POS and throw
 'He grabbed his dogs and threw them'

- (33)b *noni krau [nide minsien] ba com*

For Moi, Tehit, Maybrat and Hatam it can be stated that inalienably possessed nouns, i.e. body parts and kinship terms, may be preceded by a free pronoun for emphasis:

BRT

- (34) *ait y-atem ana m-atem*
 3sM 3sM-hand 3p 3p-hand
 'his hand' 'their hands'

Compare these WPP noun phrases with those of Austronesian languages from the Cenderawasih Bay:

WDM

- (35) *Korano nie wa pimasa sandu wana*
 chief 3s-POS canoe big two those
su-nana rubua dere pai
 3s-place beach edge that
 'Those two big canoes of the chief's are lying on the edge of the beach'

These languages exhibit the "Papuan" order Genitive + Noun, as Van der Veen (1915) and Cowan (1953) have pointed out. Compare the Windesi dialect (Cowan 1955:47): *Indoki nie anio-pai* 'Indoki's house'. The Wandamen possessive pronoun *n-i-e* seems to be of a verbal nature, i.e. with 3s *-i-* as infix; first person singular is prefix *i-*; second person singular is infix *-u-*:

- (36) *i-ne romi* 'my garden' *j-o* 'I want'
n-u-e romi 'your garden' *bu-o* 'you want'
n-i-e romi 'his garden' *di-o* 's/he wants'

AMB

- (37) *ne-ku munu* 'POS-1s house'
ne-mu munu 'POS-2s house'
ne-Ø munu 'POS-3s house'

Inalienable nouns in these Austronesian languages, however, are suffixed:

- Ambai: *nu-ku* 'head-1s' = my head
 Wandamen: *ru-ku* 'head-1s' = my head

The Torricelli languages have predominantly prenominal possessive (pro)nouns, but the Wapei family seem to prefer (Olo) or require (Au) postnominal possession:

OLO

(38) *tef* *l-ei-ki*
land 3sM-POS-1s 'my (large) land'

(39) *tef* *n-ei-ki*
land 3sF-POS-1s 'my (small) land' (McGregor 1982:60-61)

The prenominal position can only be occupied by an uninflected subject pronoun (p.59): *le pele l-ompetei* 'his dog 3sM-runs'; *ki moto n-a* 'my wife dies'.

In Au I have not seen this possibility of bare subject pronouns functioning as possessives, while in Kamasau I have not seen inflected possessive pronouns. Bukiyip inflects prenominal possessive pronouns in agreement with the class of the head noun.

4.3 N + N compounds

In nominal compounds, all languages of WPP, TP, and Austronesian agree to "N¹ modifies N²", as illustrated by (Austronesian) Wandamen:

(40) *anio* *rature*
house door
'house door' cf. Indonesian *pintu rumah* 'door house'

jawara na romi pai
fence of garden that
'the garden fence'

As Van der Veen (1915:92ff) established the Non-Austronesian nature of the North-Halmahera languages and as Cowan pointed out for both NAN and AN languages of this area (Cowan 1953:8-18), they follow the Papuan order for the genitive construction G + N, as opposed to (Western) Austronesian N + G. This order is present in all languages of the Bird's Head:

(41)

HAT	<i>hwab</i>	<i>nsi</i>	'nostril'	<i>huig</i>	<i>ngkeg</i>	'lip'
	nose	hole		mouth	skin	
TEH	<i>da</i>	<i>dal</i>		<i>gye(T)</i>	<i>falaq</i>	
	nose	hole		mouth	skin	
MOI	<i>laba</i>	<i>kali</i>		<i>gik</i>	<i>kesik</i>	
	nose	hole		mouth	skin	

MPU *eyanfek* 'eyelid' [< *e-am* our-'eye' + *fek* 'skin'; according to Cecilia Odé, p.c.]

5 Clause

All WPP languages (except Northeast Halmahera), the Austronesian languages of the Cenderawasih Bay, as well as the Torricelli languages, with the exception of the Marienberg Stock (Kamasau) have as their basic clause pattern:

Time/Topic, (S) s-V O Oblique (=Preposition/[s-V] + NP/Cl)

In other words, a basic SVO order, with a clause-initial position for temporals or topic constituents. A nominal subject is often absent. This is obligatorily marked by the verbal prefix anyway. The Obliques are peripheral constituents, expressing recipients, locatives and so on. As already mentioned, the WBH stock, as exemplified by Moi, Tehit, and to some extent by Maybrat, and Au of the Wapei family appear to have verbal "prepositions", which I would like to consider as full verbs. The other languages all have uninflected prepositions.

6 Negation

All WPP languages have at least two negative elements occurring sentence-finally. In Moi and Tehit, at least, this position is not obligatory. In these languages the negative may immediately follow the predicate:

HAT

(42) *a-pim aw*
2s-cry not 'Don't cry'

(43) *dani di-nggwen bi*
I 1s-sick not
'I am not sick'

TEH

(44) *y-eeese nggait y-eq qo*
3p-sleep not 3p-at(PL) here
'They did not stay here'

(45) *n-aqa amot*
2s-come not
'Do not come'

Among the Torricelli languages there are some with pre-verbal and others with clause-final negative elements. In Bukiyip I have only seen pre-verbal negatives. Olo shows a contrast between preverbal as vetative, and clause-final negation as denial:

OLO

(46) *ki k-ewasi woflu olwelës kolo*
I 1s-give fowl food not

'I didn't give the fowl food' (McGregor 1982:69)

- (47) *pe na p-ëngkë-tei*
 they not 3p-hear-very
 'They didn't hear (because they may not)' (McGregor 1982:70)

Wandamen and Ambai also have clause-final negatives, which simply deny. Pre-verbal *mojar* in Wandamen conveys vetative.

WDM

- (48) *k-i-or ai-ramuan be-matu ba*
 3s-take wood-? REL-dead not
 'She did not take dead wood' (Cowan 1955/56:58)

AMB

- (49) *y-okon dian we Yani kata*
 1s-give fish to Yani not
 'I didn't give any fish to Yani' (Silzer 1983:215)

7 Conclusion

By way of a summary I will present the morphosyntactic features discussed in this paper in two tables. The first one includes languages of the WPP along with data for Austronesian Wandamen (WDM). The second one gives the same information for those Torricelli languages on which I could obtain data. In the columns, 'no' indicates that a language does not have this feature; a question mark means that information is lacking.

Features of the West Papuan Phylum⁹

	WBH	MPU	BRT	MEA/ SOU	HAT	WDM
3sM	w=small	a	y	no	no	no
3sF	m=large	n	m			
1pIN	w/f-	no	no	mi/ma	i-	ta(t)

⁹ 3sM/3sF indicates whether a language distinguishes gender for third person singular; 1pIN/1pEX refers to the distinction of inclusive and exclusive first person plural; Prep as V = whether prepositional notions are expressed similar to verbs; SubPx = subject prefix on the verb; SPx on Consec verbs refers to the feature of sequences of verbs that are marked for subject; noTAM = absence of morphological marking of tense, aspect and mood; SVO = word order in the clause; Infl.A = whether adjectives are subject-prefixed in attributive position.; inal N = whether a language has a category of inalienably possessed nouns, mostly body parts and kinship terms; PosP+N and N+PosP = refer to the order of possessive pronoun and possessed noun; N¹+N²=N² = in nominal compounds the first noun modifies the second noun; N-A-Det = order of constituents within the noun phrase; final NEG refers to the clausal position of the negator.

1pEX	m-			me/em	ni-	ame(t)
Prep as V	+	no	no	no	no	no
SubPx	+	+	+	+	+	+
Spx on consec verbs	+	+	+	+	+	+
noTAM	+	+	+	+	+	+
SVO	+	+	+	+	+	+
Infl.A	+	no	+	no	no	+
inal.N	+	+	+	+	+	+
PosP+N	+	+	no	+	+	+
N+PosP	+	+	+	?	+	no
N ¹ +N ² = N ²	+	+	+	+	+	+
N-A-Det	+	+	+	+	+	+
final NEG	(+)	+	+	+	+	+

Features in the Torricelli Phylum¹⁰

	Olo	Au	Palei/ Urat	Kombio =Bukiyip	Marien- berg: Kamasau
3sM	le=small	k-	no	n-	n-
3sF	ne=large	w-		kw- Neutral: <18 classes>	w- Neutral: k-
1pIN 1pEX	no	no	no	no	no
Prep as V	no	+	?	no	no

¹⁰ Olo and Au are both members of the Wapei family (Laycock 1973); the data are from McGregor and McGregor (1982) for Olo and Scorza (1985) for Au. The Palei/Urat column represents a few other families of the Wapei-Palei stock, for which no descriptions are available. Bukiyip (Conrad and Wogiga 1991) represents the Kombio stock. And Kamasau (Sanders 1978) the Marienberg stock.

SubPx	+	+	+	+	+
Spx on Consec verbs	+	+	?	+	+
noTAM	Realis/ Irrealis	Realis/ Irrealis	?	R/Irr	?
SVO	+	+	?	+	SOV
Infl.A	+	with Sx	?	with Sx	no
Inal.N	no	no	?	no	+ (kinship)
PosP+N	+	no	?	+	+
N+PosP	+	+	?	no	no
N ¹ +N ² =N ²	+	+	?	no	+
N-A-Det	+	+	?	no	+
final NEG	-	-	?	no	+

As Laycock, Foley and Scorza have pointed out, the languages of the Torricelli Phylum are significantly different from other Papuan languages. The West-Papuan Phylum is equally divergent. And, of course, when two groups of languages are so different from the bulk of the languages on the island of New Guinea, while sharing some striking similarities, it is tempting to hypothesize a commonality between these two. In both phyla we find predominantly a SVO order. There is hardly or no tense-aspect-mood marking. In both groupings we find subject prefixation on the verb, with a gender distinction for third person (singular) in some member-languages. The behavior of "prepositional" and "adjectival" notions in some member-languages looks also suspiciously similar. And so we could go on for awhile. But what does all this amount to, when at the lexical level it is virtually impossible to find any correspondence? Nothing much, it seems to me. As a preliminary conclusion I would like to rule out a genetic relationship between the West-Papuan and Torricelli phyla.

This preliminary comparison actually raises the question whether we can maintain these phyla as internally genetic groupings. As Laycock (1975) expresses some doubts regarding the Torricelli Phylum, so does Voorhoeve (1987b:90) with regard to the West Papuan Phylum: "...Kebur, Tinam, Meax, and Manikion, are very distantly related - if at all - to the West Bird Head's Stock languages...".

Now that it has become clear that Mpur (Kebur) has five lexical tones (Odé 1995), and the extensive wordlist has not shown substantial cognates with other languages, it may well be considered as much an isolate as Hatam is. For Meyah, Gravelle (p.c.) claims a phonemic pitch-accent system, which it may share with Sougb and Moskona (virtually a dialect of Meyah). Hatam does not seem to have tonal features, but may have a rhythmic iamb system.

As far as the West Bird's Head Family is concerned, it is still questionable whether Abun (= Karon Pantai) and Maybrat should be considered as bonafide members. The cognate percentages of 19% with Maybrat and about 15% with other members that

Voorhoeve (1987b:84) gives do not represent a strong case. Moreover, Abun seems to be tonal with at least two contrastive tones, in contrast to both Maybrat and Moi. Whereas Moi and Maybrat exhibit gender distinction for third person, Abun lacks this feature. Neither does it have the inclusive-exclusive contrast for first person plural.

In other words, the picture for the Bird's Head seems to be that there are basically seven unrelated linguistic groups: 1. West-Bird's Head Stock: Tehit, Moi (and Seget) together with North-Halmahera languages; 2. Abun (= Karon Pantai); 3. Maybrat; 4. Mpur; 5. Hatam; 6. East-Bird's Head Family (Sougb, Meyah and Moskona); 7. South-Bird's Head Family (Inanwatan, etc.), which appears to have wider connections with Non-Austronesian languages towards the East and West (Alor and Pantar).

To what extent the WPP languages are Austronesian or Papuan, in other words, whether these languages form a genetic grouping with the Austronesian languages of the Cenderawasih Bay or with (some) languages of Irian remains to be seen.

There is at least some evidence for borrowing from Biak, either directly or via Wandamen, by Hatam, Sougb and Meyah in the East. The anthropological facts of migrations and intermarriage within the Bird's Head (e.g. Pouwer 1958, Pans 1960, Miedema 1984) suggest extensive language contact. This may be responsible for the "Sprachbund" phenomenon of shared morpho-syntactic features in absence of clear cognate lexicons. The SVO order in almost all WPP languages, except for some North Halmahera members, could well be due to Austronesian influence, as Voorhoeve surmises (Voorhoeve 1987b:84). Similarly, the inclusive-exclusive distinction, which is clearly an Austronesian feature in this area, is present in languages located along the rim of the Bird's Head. Its absence in Abun, Maybrat and Mpur would suggest, then, that these languages were more inland originally. The order of possessive pronoun and possessed noun is curiously unstable in languages in the extreme western and eastern areas: Tehit and Hatam. It is rather obvious, from the lack of cognates with other Papuan languages (by which I mean here the bulk of languages of the island) and considering the totally different morphological and syntactic configurations that the Bird's Head languages belong to a different grouping. They may well represent a few independent linguistic groupings, presumably as a result from various (ancient) migrations, which may have influenced each other to a great extent. Unexplained in such a scenario remains the (near) absence of lexical correspondences. Clearly, more research is needed before we can make definite statements regarding the origin and relationships of these linguistic groups.

Abbreviations

A-U-V	Actor-undergoer-verb
CLASS	classifier
d	dual
DEM	demonstrative
EX	exclusive
F	feminine
IN	inclusive
M	masculine
NH	non-human
NP	noun phrase
O	object

p(l)	plural
PERF	perfective
POS	possessive
R	realis
REL	relative marker
s(g)	singular
SOV	subject-object-verb
U	unmarked
WBH	West Bird's Head
WPP	West Papuan Phylum

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