



# AIATSIS

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

## Manuscript Finding Aid

**MS 5332**

### Stephen A Wurm Papers

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MS 5332: Stephen A Wurm Papers

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## Collection Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Wurm, S. A. (Stephen Adolphe), 1922-2001
<b>Title:</b>	Stephen A Wurm Papers
<b>Collection no:</b>	MS 5332
<b>Reference code:</b>	MAR 14/058
<b>Date range:</b>	1961 – 1989
<b>Extent:</b>	0.61 linear metres (3 archival boxes + 1 index card box)
<b>Repository:</b>	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

## Cultural Sensitivity Statement

### Use of the material

When using this finding aid, and the collection described within it, clients are encouraged to be mindful and sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; particularly with regard to the use of this material. This includes:

### Language

This finding aid and collection may contain words and descriptions which may be culturally inappropriate and insensitive. The language used in this collection may not normally be used in certain public or community contexts. Clients may encounter terms and descriptions, which reflect the author's attitude or that of the period in which the manuscript was written, that may be considered inappropriate today.

### Deceased persons

Clients using this finding aid should be aware that in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, seeing images of deceased persons in photographs, film and books or hearing them in recordings etc. may cause sadness or distress; and in some cases offend strongly held cultural beliefs.

## **Access to the Collection**

### **Access conditions for this collection**

Open access reading. Open copying, closed quotation.

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### **Preferred citation**

Items from this collection should be cited as: Title or description of manuscript item, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS Number, Series Number, Subseries Number, Item or Folder Number.

For example:

Language and Culture, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 5332, Series 1, Folder 3.

## Collection Overview

### Scope and contents note

The Stephen A Wurm collection contains material mainly relating to his visit to the United States as a visiting professor in 1962, his research in Guwamu language (Austlang D33) and linguistics. The collection includes correspondence, lecture notes, published material, papers and journal articles, and language material such as finder lists and vocabulary index cards. The collection is divided into three series: (1) Papers 1961-1962, US, (2) Guwamu language, and (3) Other papers.

### Provenance

The collection was formally donated to AIATSIS in 2022 by the executor of the estate of Helen Groger-Wurm. Wurms deposited material in a variety of formats with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIAS, later AIATSIS) over the period of 40 years and the date of transfer of this collection is unknown. It is suggested these papers accompanied a deposit of an audio-visual collection.

### Material separated from the collection

No material was separated from the collection.

### Related material

MS 1502 (*Guwamu fieldnotes*) relates to Stephen Wurm's research on Guwamu language.

According to the deposit documentation, this collection relates to WURM\_S04 (*Translations into English from field notes of Galali and Guwamu languages*).

Australian National University Archives also holds 132 boxes of Stephen Wurm collection, the reference code is ANUA 233 (*Stephen Wurm papers*).

For a complete list of works by Stephen A Wurm held by the Library, and for other related material consult [Mura®](#), the AIATSIS catalogue.

For access to Audio / Visual material please go to the 'Contact us' page on the AIATSIS website at [aiatsis.gov.au](http://aiatsis.gov.au) or phone (02) 6246 1111

**Important:** Before clicking on the links to the catalogue entries please read our sensitivity message found on the 'Search the Collection' page on the AIATSIS website at [aiatsis.gov.au](http://aiatsis.gov.au)

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## Biographical history note

Stephen Adolphe Wurm was a Hungarian-born Australian linguist. He was both an outstanding field worker and a leader of research in this field and shaped the direction of linguistic research in the Pacific in the decades after the Second World War. He is best known professionally for three main achievements: his contribution to the study of non-Austronesian (Papuan languages); the development of Pacific Linguistics; and his series of colourful and detailed atlases.

Wurm was born in Budapest, Hungary on 19 August 1922 and grew up speaking German and Hungarian as his mother tongues. In later life, he claimed to have a working knowledge of approximately fifty languages, including most of the major languages of the world and some Australian Aboriginal and Pacific languages.

Wurm completed his PhD in 1944 at the Oriental Institute of the University of Vienna in Turkic Languages and Anthropology with a thesis entitled 'Der özbekische Dialekt von Andidschan' (The Ozbek dialect of Andijan). He became a lecturer in Altaic linguistics at the University of Vienna until 1951 then accepted a position in London to help establish the Central Asian Research Institute. With Arthur Capell's help, he accepted a research fellowship in Oceanic Linguistics in the Anthropology Department of Sydney University in 1954. He travelled extensively on fieldwork in New South Wales and Queensland to study Australian Aboriginal languages in 1955 and 1956, and to a lesser extent in the 1960s.

In 1957, Wurm was appointed as the first Research Fellow in Linguistics in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the Research School of Pacific Studies (then the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies) within the Institute of Advanced Studies of the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. He conducted a nine-month survey of the Highlands of Australian New Guinea, gathering extensive data on over fifty different languages. Between 1959 and 1965, Wurm summarised his linguistic findings of Highlands languages in a series of papers, including the discovery by him and his team of the large language family known as the Trans-New Guinea phylum.

In 1961, Wurm was a foundation member of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIAS) Between 1966 and 1972 he held roles as the Chairman of the Linguistics Committee and as a member of the Executive Council of the AIAS. His commitment to the preservation of linguistic research into Australian Aboriginal languages was pivotal to the establishment of the Recorded Sound Archive at the AIAS.

In the early 1960s, he set up a publishing company (known from 1966 as *Pacific Linguistics*) specialising in monographs and symposia on Indigenous languages of Australia, the Pacific Islands and Southeast Asia, with himself as general editor. In 1967 he was the first elected president of the Linguistic Society of Australia and the Australian representative on the UNESCO Comité International Permanent de Linguistes. When the new Department of Linguistics (ANU) was established at the Research School of Pacific

Studies in 1968, Wurm was appointed its first Professor and Head of Department. He also assisted with the establishment of independent teaching departments of Linguistics in different Australian universities from 1965 to 1975.

Wurm began working on linguistic atlases in about 1976, including: *Language Atlas Pacific Area* (1983), *Language Atlas of China* (1987-90), *Atlas of Languages of Intercultural Communication in the Pacific, Asia and the Americas* (1996), and *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing* (1996, revised in 2001).

Following his retirement in 1987, Wurm was appointed Emeritus Professor of Linguistics, ANU Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. In 1987, he was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for his services to linguistics, and he remained actively involved in the field of linguistics as a researcher, writer and commentator on the languages and language issues of the Pacific region. He continued to work on academic papers and participate in international meetings right up until his death on 24 October 2001 in Calvary Hospital, Canberra.

## References

Australian National University Archive 2021. Series 233 - Stephen Wurm papers. <https://archivescollection.anu.edu.au/index.php/research-papers-relating-to-pacific-linguistics>.

PARADISEC 2008. Provenance: WURMP01 - Wurm, Stephen Adolphe. <https://www.paradisec.org.au/fieldnotes/SAW2/WURMP01.htm>.

Tom Dutton 2001. 'Stephen Adolphe Wurm (1922–2001)'. *Australian Academy of the Humanities, Proceedings* 26, 2001.

LA Hercus, Harold Koch and Michael Walsh 2001. 'Obituary Stephen Wurm (1922-2001)'. *Aboriginal History* 2001 vol. 25. (AIATSIS Collection S 99/2)

A Pawley 2002. 'Stephen Wurm, 1922-2001: Linguist Extraordinaire'. *Oceanic Linguistics*, vol. 41, no.1 (June 2002), pp. 1-14. (AIATSIS Collection S 40/15)

## Controlled Access Headings

Linguistics  
Language - Vocabulary - Word lists  
Guwamu language D33  
Queensland (Qld)

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## Archivists note

The title and numbering of the folders are transcribed from the information on the material. The arrangement of the folders and items follows the order in which the material was received by AIATSIS.

In Series 1, some folders include several smaller folders. These folders are described in this Finding Aid in bold font and without numbering. The folder '1962 Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (1)' includes 4 smaller folders, numbered as MS 5332/1/2 to MS 5332/1/5); folder '1962 Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (2)' includes 7 smaller folders (MS 5332/1/6 to MS 5332/1/12); folder '1962 Evanston Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (3)' includes 3 smaller folders (MS 5332/1/13 to MS 5332/1/15); folder '1962 Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (4)' includes 3 smaller folders (MS 5332/1/16 to MS 5332/1/18).

The title of the folder/item is in bold font and the descriptions of the material are in normal font.

## Series Description

### Series 1 Papers 1961-1962, US

In 1962, Wurm travelled to the United States of America, where he held the role of visiting professor in the Department of Anthropology, Northwestern University, Illinois for six months. He then spent two months working with Native American tribes in Arizona followed by his attendance at the ninth International Congress of Linguists in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This series includes correspondence, reports and lecture notes that Wurm collected and created during his stay in the US.

### Folder

MS 5332/1/1

#### **Miscellaneous (ANU and the US)**

Includes the Faculty Board of the Research School of Pacific Studies, Institute of Advanced Studies, ANU. Flyers of tape recorder, investment, mining in Southern Africa, and the prudential building in Illinois, USA. A call for paper letter from Central States Anthropological Society (Missouri).

#### **1962 Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (1)**

MS 5332/1/2

#### **Documents (carbon etc.) and important business paper**



MS 5332: Stephen A Wurm Papers

Correspondence with Arthur Capell, GR Cochrane, JC Anceaux, WM Rule, WEH Stanner, Eugene Ogan, H Leach, Helen Sheiles, Goran Malmqvist, DKR Hodgkin, JG Crawford, George W Grace, Louis G Heller, and O'Grady.

MS 5332/1/3

**Language and Culture**

Notes relating to the course Language and Culture.

MS 5332/1/4

**Correspondence and Notes of Tape 1-45**

Draft letter to the Universities in the US as official evidence of his accepted program for his stay. Correspondence with Hilda, the assistant at ANU, during his visit to the US. Notes of Tape 1-45 (9 January – 24 May 1962).

MS 5332/1/5

**Published material**

Includes *The Linguatrainer*; *The Linguistic Reporter* vol. 4 no. 3 June 1962 (Newsletter of the Center for Applied Linguistics of the Modern Language Association of America); *Phonetica* (International Journal of Phonetics) vol. 7 no. 4 1961; *Dictionaries and Books: Science technology general*, Catalog no. 1 1962, by Associated Technical Services Inc. (ATS); The MIT Press 1962 catalog; Visitor's guide of Boston; A visitor's guide to MIT; Ninth International Congress of Linguistics: list of registrants as of Aug 10 1962; ND Andreyev 'Linguistic aspects of translation'; supplement to the program: additions, changes and corrections in the program of the ninth International Congress of Linguists; Randolph Quirk et al 'Studies in the correspondence of prosodic to grammatical features in English' Survey of English usage, University College London in association with University of London Computer Unit.

**1962 Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (2)**

MS 5332/1/6

**Examination, notes and essay**

Includes final examination of the course C-61 (Unwritten Language, Spring Quarter 1962) and A-10 (Introduction to Anthropology, Spring 1962); linguistics notes (language unknown); Jon R Moris 'The humming of the wind's machinery, and where words come from: towards the physiological basis of language', Winter quarter 1962, Northwestern University.

MS 5332/1/7

**Reading list and index cards**

Reading list and index cards for reference.

MS 5332: Stephen A Wurm Papers

- MS 5332/1/8 International Committee on urgent anthropological research in New Guinea. Bulletin no. 1. Publication of Scientific American, W.H.Freeman and Company.
- MS 5332/1/9 List of students' names and the research topic. The sociology of Linguistics: a bibliography, including reference list.
- MS 5332/1/10 **People of the South Seas**  
Notes related to the course People of the South Seas.
- MS 5332/1/11 Practical Anthropology vol. 6 (1959), vol. 7 (1960), and vol. 8 (1961).
- MS 5332/1/12 **Correspondence and notes on Tape 49-52**  
Correspondence with A Richard Diebold Jr, WA MacLennan, Gyula Decsy, Dell H Hymes, Ken, Karl-Heinz Haase, JC Aucaux, G Grace, Denis Sinor, E Dosch, Helen Sheils. Notes on Tape 49 (31 May 1962 - 4 June 1962), 50(1 June - 9 June 1962), 51(5 - 11 June 1962), 52 (7-11 June 1962).

**1962 Evanston Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (3)**

- MS 5332/1/13 **Published material**  
'Research at Northwestern University'; 'World history made simple'.  
**John R Krueger papers**  
'A survey of present-day Turkic peoples', Central Asian collectanea, no. 7, 1961; 'Mongolian literature' 1960; 'An early instance of conditioning from the Chinese dynastic histories', Psychological Reports, 1961, 9, 117; 'The structure of discourse and poetry in the Mongolian chronicle of Sagang Sechen (1662)', Dissertation Abstracts, vol. XXI, no. 6, 1960; List of 'some structural studies of Altaic languages' 1961; Review of books in Journal of the American Oriental Society, 81.1 (1961); 'Vorwort' (in German); final examinations of Krueger's course in Indiana University, fall term, 1961; old Turkish - English glossary.
- MS 5332/1/14 **Permanent International Altaistic Conference (PIAC) 1962**  
Material related to PIAC 1962: Flyers introducing Indiana University; K Thomsen 'Zwei turkisch-mongolische Korrespondenzreihen'; 'Forms of cultural and musical expression: the Mongol "Conversation-song"; Pemtti Aalto 'Ausdrucksformen

in kalmuckischen Liedren' and 'The music of the Mongols: an introduction'; Masao Mori 'Trends in Postwar Japanese historical studies of Altaic Peoples'; Shiro Hattori 'Japanese studies of the Altaic and Korean languages'; 'Pritsak 'The system of the old Turkic Runic script'; Klaus Sagaster, Bonn 'Zum tibetisch-mongolischen Buch-und Bibliothekswesen'; Dorothy Libby 'Some reflections on the cultural relationships between Paleo-Asiatic and Uralic-Altaic peoples'; Schuyler Cammann 'Mongol Dwellings-with special reference to Inner Mongolia' and 'Mongol costume - historical and recent'; Gerard Clauson 'The diffusion of writing in the Altaic world'; Pr Annemarie V Gabain 'Dress and ornament'; Ulla Johansen 'Cradadle and fireplace as sources for the cultural history of Altaic peoples'. Final examination of the course C-61 Unwritten Languages (1962) is also included.

MS 5332/1/15 Selected reading list - Mexico and South America; Chart of phonetic symbols.

#### **1962 Mr Wurm lecture note etc. (4)**

MS 5332/1/16 **Book list**

Collet's bookshops German book list, March 1962. List of journals and series from Interart-Buchvensand Klaus Renner, Haar bei Munchen 1962. The linguistic reporter, vol. 3, no. 6.

#### **Journal articles**

Anthropos: International recoew of ethnology and linguistics: Joseph Henninger 'P Aquilin Engelbergers Wapogoro-Tagebuch' (vol. 49, 1954); Fritz Bornemann 'PW Schmidts Studiwn uber den Totemismus in Afrika' (vol. 53, 1958); Otto Mors 'Geschichte der Bahaya (Ostafrika)' (vol. 52, 1957); Hugo Huber 'P Schumachers Aufzeichnungen: A Ruanda, B Altagypten und Zentralafrika' (vol. 53, 1958); Hugo Huber 'F Ebdings Duala-Sprichworte' (vol. 54, 1959); Richard Mohr 'Totembrauch, Totenglaube und Totenkult um den oberen Nil und Victoria-See' (vol. 56, 1961); H Christoffels 'P Kirchners Aufzeichnungen in Lande der Ibibio' (vol. 56, 1961).  
Current Anthropology: A world journal of the sciences of man, Feb 1962, vol. 3, no. 1. Donald T Campbell and Robert A LeVine 'A proposal for cooperative cross-cultural research on ethnocentrism', The Journal of Conflict resolution, vol. 5, no. 1, March 1961, pp. 82-108.

C-60 Language and Culture final examination, winter quarter 1961-1962. C-30 People of the South Seas final examination.

MS 5332/1/17

**Published material**

'World spotlight is on African studies', *Today at Northwestern*, vol. V, no. 2, May 1961; Toledo visitor; Chicago "the City Beautiful"; *National Geographic*, vol. 121, no. 1, January 1962; *Science American*, April 1962; 'Preview the fun of your next vacation in New Mexico, the land of enchantment'; *Arizona highways*, April 1962; *Arizona highways*, February to March 1962.

MS 5332/1/18

**Papers relating to Africa and America**

Articles: Melville J Herskovits 'The role of culture-pattern in the African acculturative experience' (1960); Alan P Merriam 'Man and Music' (1961); Joseph H Greenberg 'Africa as a linguistic area' in *Continuity and change in African cultures*, pp. 15-26; Melville J Herskovits and Frances S Herskovits 'A footnote to the history of negro slaving', reprinted from *Opportunity*, vol. XI, pp. 178-181, June 1933; *Journal of American folklore*, vol. 64, no. 251, January-March 1951; Melville J Herskovits 'The humanism in anthropological science', presented to the VI international Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Paris, August 1960; William Bruce Cameron and Thomas C McCormick 'Concepts of security and insecurity', *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. LIX, no. 6, May 1954; Morris L Ernst 'The Kinsey Report and its contributions to related fields-the Kinsey Report and the Law', *The Scientific Monthly*, May 1950.

Maps: the distribution of native peoples in Uganda, Tanganyika, Belgian Congo, French West Africa, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the Province of French Sudan of French West Africa, culture areas of Africa, culture areas and political divisions of Africa, and linguistic families of Africa.

Reading list for the course 'The Negro in Africa', Northwestern University, 1953-54. Racial divisions of Africans. Word list. Questionnaires include situations questionnaire, world events and statements test. Selected reading list: Mexico and South America. The note of the course 'The prehistory of Africa'. Background reading in Anthropology for graduate students at Northwestern University. The reading list about 'The American Indian: the Southwest'. Program of African Studies, Northwestern University, Interdepartmental Seminar on Africa, October 6, 1952. Reading list for Anthropology A-10, Northwestern University.

Final examination of the course C-61 Unwritten Languages and A-10 Introduction to anthropology (spring 1962).

MS 5332/1/19      **Student reports in the course 'Peoples of the South Seas' and 'Anthropology' (1962)**

Richard E Norton 'Burial Practices of New Guinea'; Stanley W Porteus 'Psychology of Primitive People' (Handwritten); James L Beug 'Review of the article "A Solomon Island Society" by Douglas L Oliver, 1955'; ME Opler 'An application of the Theory of themes in Culture' (Handwritten); Linton C Freeman and Robert F Winch 'Scale analysis: a mathematical model for cross cultural research'; Linton Freeman 'Some methodological considerations concerning a scientific definition of "culture"'; Myril Bruns 'Book report: The Tiwi of North Australia by CWM Hart and Arnold R Pilling'; Donn Carstens 'The growing-up processes of several south sea societies and their relation to American processes: Socialization'; Bruce Grindal 'Western impact and development in the territory of New Guinea'; Mickey Clampit 'Sexual Customs in Melanesia'; Joanne Dombrowski 'Vikings of the Sunrise by Peter H Buck (Te Rangi Hiroa)'; Sue Sessions 'The Wintu view of self and reality as seen in his language'; JoAnne Baughan 'Rank and authority systems in Melanesia and Polynesia'; Bernice Mazor 'Speech development of a bilingual child; a linguist's record by Werner F Leopold'.

## **Series 2   Guwamu Language**

Stephen Wurm started collecting material on Guwamu language in 1955. The photocopy of his research fieldnotes are in AIATSIS collection MS 1502.

### **Folder**

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| MS 5332/2/1 | <b>AIAS, Guwamu</b><br><br>English to Guwamu language vocabulary, including verbs, nouns, pronouns, indefinite pronouns etc.  |
| MS 5332/2/2 | <b>Guwamu vocabulary and English-Guwamu finder list</b><br><br>Peter Austin 1980 'Guwamu vocabulary and English-Guwamu finder list', Department of Linguistics and Philosophy MIT. Pp. 1-38, 171-219. |
| MS 5332/2/3 | Index card: Guwamu to English   |
| MS 5332/2/4 | Index card: English to Guwamu   |

## Series 3 Other papers 1976-1989

### Folder

MS 5332/3/1

#### Dixon Review

Review of SA Wurm's article 'Languages of Australia and Tasmania' (Janua linguarum, series critica, 1.) by RMW Dixon, 1972.

MS 5332/3/2

#### Nostratic, Dravidian-Australian

Schevoroschkin wrote to Wurm about the argument in the publication Der Spiegel.

Includes M Kaiser 1988 'Nostratic', *Annual Reviews Anthropology* 17:309-29; Vaclav Blazek 1988, 'Australian Elements in Dravidian Lexicon?'; Agenda of the International symposium on language and prehistory, 8 Nov - 12 Nov 1988; Clipping copied from the West German magazine Der Spiegel (2 Jan 1989).

## Box List

Series	Folder	Box
1	1-13	1
1	14-18	2
1	19	3
2	1-2	3
2	3-4	4 (Index card box)
3	1-2	3

Finding aid compiled by Man-Ting Hsu, September 2022.

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