ARTICLES

UGARITIC AND CLASSICAL ARABIC

Stanislav SEGERT
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of California,
376 Kinsey Hall, Los Angeles, California 90095-1511, U.S.A.

Various relations between Ugaritic and classical Arabic can be observed: cf. consonantal writing, phonology, pronouns, formation and inflection of nouns, verbal system, syntax. Both these conservative languages, attested in poetry and in religious texts, are closely related, in spite of distances, temporal – two millennia – and geographical. Ancient tradition about Phoenicians coming from the shores of Eritrean Sea may be mentioned. Arabic can be used as effective tool for learning Ugaritic.

A contribution to this volume should deal primarily with Arabic matters. This contribution points to some relations between Classical Arabic and an ancient Canaanite language.

Its author studied Arabic after 1945 at Charles University in Prague, with Professor Rudolf Růžička and Dr. Yuriy Zawadowski. Then he participated in classes of Professor Felix Tauer on Arabic historical texts.

This knowledge of Arabic was very helpful to the autodictat who learned the ancient Ugaritic language from the grammar by C. H. Gordon.[1] Slavomil Daněk, Professor at the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Prague was explaining the importance of Ugaritic language and literature for the study of the Old Testament.

Ugaritic was taught at the Philosophical Faculty of Charles University in 1955-56 by this writer. Then he published articles and reviews on Ugaritic matters. He was sending them to Claude F.-A. Schaeffer, Professor at Collège de France in Paris, who was conducting excavations of the ancient city at the Mediterranean Sea in Northern Syria.

Professor Schaeffer invited this writer to work on the excavation. He studied Syrian Arabic and held conversation with Sharif Bahbouh, a young student from Syria. This acquaintance with Syrian Arabic was helpful at the 1963 excavation season at Ras Shamra, the hill under which the remains of Ugarit were preserved. And it was useful for travels in other Arab countries.

---

[1] *Ugaritic Grammar*. Roma 1947.

ARTICLES

UGARITIC AND CLASSICAL ARABIC

Stanislav SEGERT

Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, University of California, 376 Kinsey Hall, Los Angeles, California 90095-1511, U.S.A.

Various relations between Ugaritic and classical Arabic can be observed: cf. consonantal writing, phonology, pronouns, formation and inflection of nouns, verbal system, syntax. Both these conservative languages, attested in poetry and in religious texts, are closely related, in spite of distances, temporal – two millennia – and geographical. Ancient tradition about Phoenicians coming from the shores of Eritrean Sea may be mentioned. Arabic can be used as effective tool for learning Ugaritic.

A contribution to this volume should deal primarily with Arabic matters. This contribution points to some relations between Classical Arabic and an ancient Canaanite language.

Its author studied Arabic after 1945 at Charles University in Prague, with Professor Rudolf Růžička and Dr. Yuriy Zawadowski. Then he participated in classes of Professor Felix Tauer on Arabic historical texts.

This knowledge of Arabic was very helpful to the autodictat who learned the ancient Ugaritic language from the grammar by C. H. Gordon.[1] Slavomil Daněk, Professor at the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Prague was explaining the importance of Ugaritic language and literature for the study of the Old Testament.

Ugaritic was taught at the Philosophical Faculty of Charles University in 1955-56 by this writer. Then he published articles and reviews on Ugaritic matters. He was sending them to Claude F.-A. Schaeffer, Professor at Collège de France in Paris, who was conducting excavations of the ancient city at the Mediterranean Sea in Northern Syria.

Professor Schaeffer invited this writer to work on the excavation. He studied Syrian Arabic and held conversation with Sharif Bahbouh, a young student from Syria. This acquaintance with Syrian Arabic was helpful at the 1963 excavation season at Ras Shamra, the hill under which the remains of Ugarit were preserved. And it was useful for travels in other Arab countries.

---

[1] *Ugaritic Grammar*. Roma 1947.

Some ancient Ugaritic traditions survived and could be found in the Thousand and One Nights. They are mentioned in an article published in 1963 in Prague.[2] And in 1989 they were presented in the lecture at the Giorgio Levi della Vida conference held at University of California, Los Angeles. This lecture was published in 1997.[3]

Arabic words are quoted in Ugaritic grammars, also in this writer's *A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language*, published by University of California Press in 1984.[4]

The importance of Ugaritic for the comparative Semitic linguistics was evaluated by this writer in 1969.[5]

Sabatino Moscati assignes in his comparative grammar[6] to Ugaritic the position among major Semitic languages, also in tables presenting basic features of phonology and morphology. In the Russian comparative study of Semitic languages by B. M. Grande[7] Ugaritic is mentioned in the introductory section, but not included in comparative surveys.

In his studies on linguistic relationships of Ugaritic Joseph Aistleitner[8] deals with contemporary linguistic materials, with West Semitic elements in the El Amarna letters and with the Old Mesopotamian West Semitic.

Classical Arabic is the language represented in the Pre-Islamic poetry and in the Qur'ān, in literary texts from the 6th and 7th centuries C. E. There is interval of about two millennia between Classical Arabic and Classical Ugaritic. This indication is appropriate for poetry and official documents preserved from the 14th and 13th centuries B.C. They are composed in literary language with respect to the tradition, while the non-literary texts were submitted to influence of spoken everyday language.

This temporal interval between Ugaritic and Classical Arabic is as relevant as the geographic distance. Ugaritic texts were written and preserved at the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, east from the most eastern promontory of Cyprus. Classical Arabic texts were composed mostly in Hejaz, near the Red Sea, in the middle of its eastern shore.

---

[2] "Zu den altorientalischen Motiven in 'Tausend und einer Nacht'", *Archiv Orientální* 31, 1963, 630-634.

[3] "Ancient Near Eastern Traditions in *The Thousand and One Nights*", pp. 106-113 in R. G. Hovannisian and G. Sabagh, eds., *The Thousand and One Nights in Arabic literature and society.* Cambridge 1997.

[4] Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1984; 1997.

[5] "Le rôle de l'ougaritique dans la linguistique sémitique comparée", pp. 461-477 in *Ugaritica VI*, Paris 1969.

[6] Sabatino Moscati, ed., *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages:* Phonology and Morphology. Wiesbaden 1964.

[7] B. M. Grande, *Vvedenie v sravniteľnoe izučenie semitskich jazykov.* Moskva 1972.

[8] "Studien zur Frage der Sprachverwandtschaft des Ugaritischen", I, *Acta Orientalia* VII/2-3, 1957, 251-307; II, ib., VIII/1, 51-98.

Another substantial difference has to be mentioned: Classical Arabic texts have been preserved through uniterrupted tradition, accompanied by pronunciation, Ugaritic texts were buried since about 1200 B.C., there were discovered since 1929, and they had to be deciphered.[9]

Neither temporal nor geographical distance between Ugaritic and Classical Arabic prevent study of relations between these two languages.

Their lexical relation was studied by I. al-Yasin.[10] Substantial analogies, formal and semantic, point to affinity of Ugaritic and Classical Arabic.

In this article only selected structural relations are presented and evaluated. The Ugaritic words and phrase are marked by the abbreviation U, the Classical Arabic ones are indicated by CA.

The grammatical material for both these languages are presented in special publications and also in collections presenting Semitic languages.

A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language by Stanislav Segert[11] was used as primary source. For Classical Arabic the grammar which can be considered classical, *Arabische Grammatik* by Carl Brockelmann[12], served as basic textbook. Some additional information was taken from the collection *The Semitic Languages* edited by Robert Hetzron;[13] the chapter on Ugaritic was contributed by Dennis Pardee,[14] Classical Arabic was presented by Wolfdietrich Fischer.[15] Alan S. Kaye edited *Phonologies of Asia and Africa*,[16] and also wrote the chapter "Arabic Phonology".[17] "Ugaritic Phonology" was contributed by Cyrus H. Gordon.[18]

Ugaritic word forms are listed in indexes by Petr Zemánek[19] and by Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz,[20] in context in the concordance by Richard E. Whitaker.[21] As lexical tools glossary in *Ugaritic Textbook* by Cyrus H. Gordon[22] and Arabic dictionary by Hans Wehr edited by J. Milton Cowan[23] were used.

---

[9] Reports about deciphering: S. Segert, "Decipherment of Forgotten Writing Systems: Two Different Approaches", pp. 131-156 in K. Ehlich and F. Coulmas, eds., *Writing in Focus*, Berlin 1983; Id., "Decipherment", pp. 416-423 in H. Günther and O. Ludwig, eds., *Schrift und Schriftlichkeit – Writing and its Use*, 1, Berlin/New York 1994.

[10] Izz-al-Din Al-Yasin, *The lexical relation between Ugaritic and Arabic*. New York 1952.

[11] V. n. 4.

[12] 13th ed., Leipzig 1953.

[13] London/New York 1997.

[14] V. n. 13, 131-144.

[15] V. n. 13, 187-219.

[16] Volume 1. Winona Lake, Indiana 1997.

[17] V. n. 16, 187-204.

[18] V. n. 16, 49-54.

[19] *Ugaritischer Wortformenindex*. Hamburg 1995.

[20] *Word-List of the Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places*. Münster 1996.

[21] *A Concordance of the Ugaritic Literature*. Cambridge, Massachusetts 1972.

[22] Roma 1965.

A comparison of two languages preserved in written sources has to begin with comparison of their writing systems. Both U and CA texts are written in alphabetic script. Their technical difference – cuneiform signs engraved on U clay tablets, letters written by ink on mostly white soft basis – is not relevant for comparison of languages.

Both U and CA use alphabetic scripts indicating consonants by letters. Some inconsistencies can be observed as concerns indicating vowels. On the U alphabet of 30 signs 26 are consonant letters, and 4 are syllabic signs. All 27 letters of the CA alphabet express consonant sounds; only 3 letters can be used also for indicating long vowels.

In this article Ugaritic signs and Arabic letters are transliterated in Roman upright letters. Reconstructed forms are also in Roman letters, within slanted brackets, e.g. /su/.

The original cuneiform alphabet had 27 consonant letters; it is attested on a fragmentary clay tablet excavated at Beth Shemesh, west from Jerusalem.[24] This alphabet has different order of letters than the alphabets found at Ras Shamra. These alphabets have 30 signs; the last one transliterated usually as $\check{s}$ indicate the syllable /su/.[25] The preceding two signs, transliterated as i and u, are also syllabic signs, their first element is glottal stop, /'i/, /'u/. Also the first sign of this alphabet is syllabic, a – /'a/.[26] In 1938 Otto Eissfeldt found that Eisirios was inventor of three letters according the tradition mentioned by Philo of Byblos.[27] Eissfeldt supposed that these letters were signs containing vowels connected with "Aleph", i. e. glottal stop.[28] It seems that these three new letters were the last three letters of the U alphabet, which are apparent as innovations both by their position at the end of the alphabet and their complicated shape, $3 + 1$ wedges in i and u, imitation of a linear letter in $\check{s}$.[29] The first letter indicated originally the glottal stop only, then it was used for its combination with /a/, /'a/.

Thus vowels in U script can be seen only if they follow or precede glottal stop in the same syllable, /'v/ or /Cv'/.

In the CA script the consonant letters ', w, y can be used for indicating long vowels, ā, ū, ī. Short vowels can be indicated by special devices above or below letters, for a, i, u.

---

[23] *A dictionary of modern written Arabic*. Ithaca, New York 1976.

[24] Cf. Manfried Dietrich – Oswald Loretz, *Die Keilalphabete*. Münster 1988.

[25] S. Segert, "The Last Sign of the Ugaritic Alphabet", *Ugarit-Forschungen* 15, 1983, 201-208.

[26] Cf. n. 4, 22.

[27] "Die Herkunft der drei Zeichen für Aleph im Alphabet von Ras Schamra", 1938, reprinted in *Ras Schamra und Sanchunjaton*, Halle (Saale) 1939, 58-62; cf. 60.

[28] Ibid., 58-60.

[29] This transliteration (cf. nn. 4, 22) is more appropriate than that by ś (cf. nn. 19, 20) reminding Hebrew śīn. The sibilant in the last letter of the U alphabet is phonetically identical with the 19th letter s (cf. n. 25).

The evidence for U vowels can be supplemented from U words written in Akkadian texts from Ugarit in the cuneiform syllabary.[30]

In the following selective survey of U and CA other Semitic languages are mentioned only occasionally.

Phonological systems of U and CA are very similar. They can be used for reconstruction of "Proto-Semitic" – abbreviated PS – phonology.[31]

Consonants common to U and CA can be listed according to their articulation: glottals: /'/, h; pharyngeals: ḥ, ᶜ; postvelars: ḫ, ġ, (ġ); velars: k, q; alveolars: ṣ, z; interdentals t, d, ẓ (t); dentals: t, d, ṭ; bilabial: b; nasals: n, m; liquids: l, r; semivowels: y, w.

Consonants g and p are retained in U, in CA they changed into ǧ and f. The emphatic dental ḍ is attested in CA, in U it changed into ṣ; cf. CA 'arḍ-, U arṣ /'arṣ-/ "earth".

The relations concerning sibilants are complicated, due to the complicated phonetic character of these sounds and to the presence of two sibilants only, s and š. In U the PS * /š/ is preserved as š, in CA it changed into s; cf. U šbᶜ, CA sabᶜ- "seven". If š appears in both U and CA – e.g. ᶜšr, ᶜašr "ten" -, it can be traced back to PS sibilant, probably lateralized s /s¹/, preserved in Epigraphic South Arabian, ᶜs²r; cf. Hebrew ᶜśr, Syriac ᶜsar. PS s is preserved in both U and CA, e.g. ḫsr, ḫasira "to lack". The last letter of the U alphabet, usually transliterated as s, does not signify a specific sibilant, but the syllable /su/.[32]

Vowel systems are also similar. Both U and CA have three basic vowels, short, /a/, /i/, /u/, and long /ā/, /ī/, /ū/. In U these vowels are indicated, if they are in close vicinity to the glottal stop, by specific signs, a, i, u. The length is not indicated. In CA the vowels are indicated by specific signs above or below letters, the length is indicated with help of letters ', w, y.

Diphthongs -ay- and -aw- are preserved in CA, in U they are monophthongized, */ay/ to /ē/, */aw/ to /ō/. These vowels can be indicated by signs i and u. The CA 'ayna "where?" is related to U in /'ēn/, "there is not" – as negative answer to "where". Counterpart of CA 'aw "or" is U u /'ō/; cf. Hebrew 'ō.

Two phonological changes concerning consonants may be mentioned.

The original *w- at beginning of words remains in CA, in U is changed into y-, like in other Northwest Semitic languages, with few exceptions. E.g. CA waᶜ(i)l, U yᶜl "wildgoat".

Progressive assimilation of /n/ to the immediately following consonant can be observed in U – and in other Northwest Semitic languages while n remains in CA; e.g. */-nt-/ – U /'atta/, at, at-ta; CA 'anta "you".

Morphological relations are presented in usual sequence: pronouns, nouns, numerals, verbs, particles.

[30] John Huehnergard, *Ugaritic vocabulary in syllabic transcription.* Atlanta 1987.

[31] V. n. 6, 44-45.

[32] V. n. 25.

For nominal and verbal patterns traditional roots are often used, q-t-l "to kill", f-ᶜ-l "to do". More convenient is k-t-b "to write", as for all three root consonants their spirantized allophones in Hebrew and in Aramaic languages can be clearly indicated. Here are the root consonant expressed by numerals, 1, 2, 3 and also 4.[33]

Independent personal pronouns in U and CA are very similar. U has also special forms for genitive-accusative of third persons. There are two forms of 1. person sing. in U. In CA – nt- is not submitted to assimilation.

Also suffixed pronouns are similar. For 1. person sing. there is special form after the noun in genitive or accusative, -y /-ya/, after nominative θ /-ī/.

Personal pronouns:

			suffixed	
independent				
	U	CA	U	CA
Sign. 1.	ank, a-na-ku		-θ /-ī/	-ī
	an	'anā	-y /-ya/	
2. m.	at, at-ta	'anta	-k	-ka
2. f.	at	'anti	-k	-ki
3. m.	hw	huwa	-h	-hu
gen.-acc.	hwt			
3. f.	hy	hiya	-h	-hā
Dual 1.			-ny	
2.		'antumā	-km	-kumā
3.	hm	humā	-hm	-humā
gen.-acc.	hmt			
Plur. 1.		naḥnu	-n	-nā
2. m.	atm	'antum	-km	-kum
2. f.		'antunna	-kn	-kunna
3. m.	hm	hum	-hm	-hum
gen.-acc.	hmt			
3. f.		hunna	-hn	-hunna

As the U forms are similar to CA forms, they can be reconstructed according to them. The same is true for relative pronouns, concerning U and shorter CA forms of singular.

Sign. M.	d, du-u /dū/	d̠ū
f.	dt	d̠ātu
Plur. m.	dt	d̠awū
f.	dt	d̠awātu

The original */d̠/ changed into d in U.

---

[33] Cf. Wolfgang Richter, *Materialien einer althebräischen Datenbank: Nominalformen.* St. Ottilien 1998.

Demonstrative pronouns were not yet fully developed in U, they are attested only in late prose texts. The forms are compound: m. hnd "this", f. hndt. The first element /han-/ is similar to the Hebrew article ha-, the second to the CA simple demonstrative pronoun, sing. m. ḏā, f. ḏī. The longer CA form is similar to the U form; CA sing. m. hāḏā, f. hāḏihi.

In interrogative pronouns both similarity and differences can be seen.

Personal, "who?"	my	man
Impersonal, "what?"	mh	mā
Adjective, "which?"	mn	man

Formation of words from roots – mostly triconsonantal – and patterns is similar in U and CA. Prefixes, infixes and afformatives are used. Feminine nouns are marked in both languages mostly by /-at-/ added to the base.

Also the inflection is similar. Three numbers are singular, dual and plural. Both U and CA have preserved the case system; in singular there are forms for nominative, genitive and accusative, in dual and plural one form for nominative and one for genitive-accusative.

Nouns are mostly in the absolute state, if they are followed by genitival attribute, in the construct state.

In CA nouns can be determined by a definite article, 'al-. In U there is no article.

Indetermination is indicated by addition having a nasal element, /-m/ in U, -n in CA, where it is used quite consistently.

In the following table case endings are presented; for U evidence from signs containing vowels and CA analogies were used.

	masculine		feminine	
Sing. nominative	/-u/	-u	/-tu/	-atu
genitive	/-i/	-i	/-ti/	-ati
accusative	/-a/	-a	/-ta/	-ata
Dual, absolute nom.	/-āmi/	-āni	/-tāmi/	-atāni
gen.-acc.	/-ēmi/	-aymi	/-tēmi/	-atayni
construct nom.	/-ā/	-ā	/-tā/	-atā
gen.-acc.	/-ē/	-ay	/-tē/	-atay
Plur. absolute nom.	/-ūma/	-ūna	/-ātu/	-ātu
gen.-acc.	/-īma/	-īna	/-āti/	-āti
construct nom.	/-ū/	-ū	/-ātu/	-ātu
gen.-acc.	/-ī/	-ī	/-āti/	-āti

Evidence from U forms with signs indicating vowels or written in syllabic cuneiform is so similar to CA so that its help for reconstruction is substantial. Examples: sing. nom. ksu, kàs-pu; gen.-acc. ksi; fem. a-na-tí; acc. ksa; plur. abs. nom. mrum /-'ūma/, ba-a-lu-ma; gen. mrim, la-ab-ni-ma; constr. nom. mru, mur-ú; gen.-acc. mri, mur-i.

The endings in U and CA are nearly identical.

Similarity of numerals in Semitic languages is very clear in U and CA.

For 1 and 2 masculine and feminine forms are listed, for 3-10 only the shorter masculine forms.

Numerals	cardinal		ordinal	
1 m.	aḥd	'aḥad	prᶜ	'awwal
f.	aḥt	'iḥdā		
2 m.	ṯnm	iṯnāni	ṯn	ṯānī
f.	ṯtm	ṯintani		
3	ṯlṯ	ṯalāṯ	ṯlṯ	ṯāliṯ
4	arbᶜ	'arbaᶜ	rbᶜ	rābiᶜ
5	ḫmš	ḫams	ḫmš	ḫāmis
6	tt	sitt	tdṯ	sādis
7	šbᶜ	sabᶜ	šbᶜ	sabiᶜ
8	ṯmn	ṯamānin	f. ṯmnt	ṯāmin
9	tšᶜ	tisᶜ		tāsiᶜ
10	ᶜšr	ᶜašr		ᶜāšir

Numerals for tens.
20 ᶜašrm ᶜašrūma; 30 ṯlṯm ṯalāṯūma
Higher numerals.
100 mit /mi't-/ mi'at-; 1,000 alp 'alf-

The comparison of verbal systems points to many similar features in U and CA. Mostly traditional categorization and terminology are applied.

Verbal patterns[34] express manner of action and voice. In U the passive voice is expressed in special patterns, in CA it is included as supplement to some patterns. U patterns are indicated by letters,[35] and presented with help of numerals for root consonants, for CA the traditional numbers and forms of f-ᶜ-l "to do"[36] are used.

Verbal patterns.

manner of action-voice	U		CA
simple active	G	1v2v3 yṣa, lik /la'ika/ na-qa-ma, ga-mi-ra	I faᶜala
factitive active	D	1v22v3 mla	II faᶜᶜala
causative active	Š	šv12v3 šᶜly, yššil	IV 'afᶜala
reciprocal passive	N	nv12v3 nlqḥt	VII infaᶜala
simple reflexive	Gt	– 1tv2v3 yitsp, ištmᶜ	VIII iftaᶜala
factitive reflexive	tD	tv1v22v3 tkms	V tafaᶜᶜala
causative reflexive	Št	-štv12v3 yšṯḥwy	X istafᶜala
simple passive	Gp	1u2v3 tuḥd	I passive fuᶜila
factitive passive	Dp	1u22v3 tbšr	II passive fuᶜᶜila
causative passive	Šp	šu12v3 yttb	IV passive 'ufᶜila

---

[34] V. n. 4, 55-56.

[35] Ibid., 56.

[36] V. n. 12, 34.

11

The U internal causative pattern is attested only in imperfect, e.g. yšlm, ya-aš-li-ma.

The discussion about Semitic verbal category called "tense" or "aspect"[37] will probably continue. Traditional terms "perfect" and "imperfect" used here fit both viewpoints.

In the following survey of conjugation morphemes only U forms indicating clearly specific persons and genders are listed. Only those U reconstructed prefixes and endings are listed which differ from CA ones.

		Perfect			Imperfect	
Sign	1.	-t	-tu	amlk, ilak		'a- -u
	2. m.	-t	-ta			ta- -u
	2. f.	-t	-ti	t- -n		ta- -īna
	3. m.	yṣa, na-qa-ma	-a	ya-aš-pu-ṭù		ya- -u
	3. f.	yṣat, qa-pat -t	-at	tšu		ta- -u
Dual	1.	qlny -ny		nmgn n- /-ā/ ?		
	2.	-tm	-tumā	t- -n		ta- -āni
	3. m.	mǵy	-ā	tša, tšan t- -n		ya- -āni
			-			ytn y-
	3. f.	ylt */-dt/ -t /-ta/	-atā	tmǵyn t- -n /-āni/		ta- -āni
Plur.	1.		-nā	nmlu	n-	na- -u
	2. m.	-tm	-tumā	tšun	t- -n	ta- -ūna
	2. f.	-tn /-tinna/	-tunna	thtin	t- -n	ta- -na
	3. m.	nšu /-ū/	-ū	tšu	t- /u/	
			tkln		-n /-ūna/	ya- -ūna
	3. f.	tbᶜ /-ā/	-na	tǵṣ	t- /-ā/	
			tnǵṣn		/-na/	ya- -na

Some U persons are attested in two forms, with t- or with y-, with or without -n. One of these forms corresponds to that of CA.

Characteristic short vowel at the end of some forms of indicative imperfect is attested in both U and CA.

Also characteristic end vowels in volitive moods are similar.[38]

The characteristic vowel of subjective is -a, attested in U, iqra /'iqra'a/, yqra. In CA -a appears both in perfect and in imperfect.

Jussive forms have in most singular forms no end vowels, they end on consonants. U form ispi can be reconstructed as /'ispa'/, ilak as /'il'ak/. The CA forms of this kind have no vowel sign after the last consonant letter; it is often provided with the sign for lack of vowel, called ǧazma. Also other forms of jussive are shorter than those in indicative, in both U and CA.

All forms of modus energicus in U and in CA, ending either on -an or -anna, have one feature common: the n in the ending. E.g. U iqran /-an/ or /-anna/.

---

[37] V. n. 6, 131-132; n. 4, 56, 88-90.

[38] V. n. 6, 135.

12

The endings of imperative correspond to those of the 2. person. There are no prefixes; in CA the lack of vowels between first and second root consonant is improved by forwarding vowel u- or i- before the first root consonant, e.g. uktub, if°al.

Some imperative forms and endings: sing. m. U qra /qara'/?, šu-ub; CA -θ uktub; f. U ẓi /ẓi'ī/; CA /-ī/; du. ša /ša'ā/; CA -ā; plur. m. U šu /ša'ū/; CA /-ū/; f. šm° /šam°ā/?; CA -nā.

While finite verbal forms are similar in U and CA, and also infinitives, substantial difference can be observed concerning passive participle.

Active participles of the simple active pattern (G, I) are formed in U and CA according to the same model, 1ā2i3: U aḫd /'āḫid-/, šiy /šā'iy-/, la-i-ya, plur. a-ši-ru-ma; CA fā°il.

The passive participle in U is formed according to the model 1a2ī3: ḫa-ri-mu /ḫarīm-/. This form is similar to Aramaic one. In CA passive participles are formed with prefix ma-, maf°ūl. This prefix is similar to mu- in derived verbal patterns.

In U there are two kinds of infinitive. The absolute infinitive, which is similar to that in Hebrew was vocalized according to the 1a2ā3 model: ba-tā-qú /batāqu/, gmu; it could be provided with /-m/: lakm /la'ākum/.

CA has only the infinitive corresponding to U construct infinitive, e.g. fa°l-. In U the construct infinitive usually follows a preposition, and thus appears in genitive case: (b)nši /naš'i/.

Most forms of simple active pattern are very similar in U and CA. The same is true for those derived patterns which are represented in both these languages.

The strong verbs with all three stable root consonants show only few differences. And also some classes of weak verbs, in which some root consonants are changed or eliminated, are similar. Also in those classes which differ mostly from strong verbs, that with w or y as second root consonants and that with identical second and third root consonants many similarities can be observed.

CA root consonants w or y can be in the first position, in U only y-, as the initial /w-/ changed into y-.

Particles can be categorized according to their syntactic functions: adverbs, prepositions, conjuctions, interjections.

Adverbs derived from nouns are in the accusative case. This can not be seen exactly at U adverbs; affixes –h and –m may point to the preceding /-a-/: arṣh /'arṣah/? "earthward"; špšm "at sun(set)". In CA –a is indicated: yawma "on the day".

Some similarities can be observed in adverbs of negation and affirmation.

The U negation 1- "not" can be reconstructed with help of CA 1ā. Both languages have affirmative particle, U 1-, CA 1a-.

In U and in CA prepositions can be provided with suffixed pronouns. Prepositions having one consonant are used frequently in U and CA: U b- /bi-/, cf. bi-i[; CA bi- "in"; U 1-, cf. le-e[; CA li- "to"; U k-, cf. ki-a-bi; CA ka- "as". Also some prepositions with two consonants are similar, e.g. U mn, CA min "from". In some prepositions long vowels are added to the second consonant: U °d /°adē/

(cf. Eblaitic a-de-), CA 'ilā. Some prepositions have three consonants, e.g. U tḫt; CA taḥta "under".

Some conjunctions are similar. The coordinating conjunctions are U w-; CA wa-; U p-; CA fa-. Also disjunctive conjunction has the same base: U u /'ō/; CA 'aw "or". The conditional conjunctions are related: U hm /him/, im /'im/; CA 'in "if".

In this category also some particles introducing clauses can be mentioned: U l- /la-/; CA la "verily"; U l- /lū-/ "if only"; CA law "if".

The interjection which is formally and functionally similar is that introducing a vocative: U y- /yā-/; CA yā "O!".

The similarities in all morphological categories listed here above are only selections from many such relations.

Also many similar syntactic features can be quoted, here only a few relations between U and CA will be mentioned. These similarities concern constituents – subject, nominal and verbal predicate – and components, adverbial – object, modifier – and adnominal – complement to the subject, apposition, adjectival and genitival attribute, adjunct. Also structuring of clauses and sentences is similar.

Conditional sentences deserve attention. The subordinate clause – protasis – is introduced by conjunction, in U hm, variant im, k- /kī-/; CA 'in, 'iḏā "if". Also the main clause (apodosis) is frequently introduced by a conjunction, U w-, CA fa "and".

In U, if the condition is meant as real, it is indicated by imperfect or by nominal predicate: hm...iqḥ...atn "if I take...I shall give"; whm.ḥy...tmṭrn "and if he (is) alive...they will rain". In U the perfect in protasis indicates the unreal condition: w.hm...ᶜl...w.likt "and if he had come...I would have sent".

In CA perfect in protasis can have various functions. It can point to present or future time, man ğāla nāla "if somebody looks up, he obtains". The unreal condition is indicated by perfect or imperfect with the particle law: law kāna... la-'aᶜṭayna-ka "if it were...we would give to you". The not accomplished condition is expressed by imperfect: law naᶜdamu "if we knew".

It can be seen that U retained simple structuring, while CA conditional sentences are more developed.

These close relations between Ugaritic and Classical Arabic, in phonology, morphology and syntax, require some explanation how these similarities could come up, if these two languages were distant as concerns time and as concerns geography.

Ugaritic texts are preserved from the 14th and 13th centuries B.C., basic Classical Arabic texts were composed in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. The interval of two millennia did not separate two conservative languages used in strictly regulated literary genres, in poetry and in religious texts.

Ugaritic was used in an area which can be characterized as peripheral from the viewpoint of ancient Canaanite languages. Ugaritic was used in the northern part of the eastern Mediterranean shore, while the other early Canaanite languages, preceding Phoenician, Hebrew and other languages, were used farther to south, at the sea and in inland.

Classical Arabic originated in the middle of the eastern shore of the Red Sea, in Hejaz, and in the inland areas, where the bedouins, conservative as concerns their language,[39] were living.

For the contact between these two countries the information preserved by the ancient Greek historian Herodotus[40] may be mentioned: Phoenicians have arrived from the Eritrean Sea upon the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea.

This tradition can be extended to all Canaanite peoples settled at the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. To ancient Greeks or their predecessors the city of Ugarit could be known; Cypro-minoan texts were found there.[41]

The relation between Ugaritic and Classical Arabic can be explained, at least tentatively, by moving of people from the Arabian peninsula to the Mediterranean Sea.

The close relationship between Ugaritic and Classical Arabic can be used for research. Ugaritic forms can be reliably reconstructed with help of Arabic data.

And this relationship can be used effectively for teaching and learning Ugaritic. As this ancient language is preserved in texts which are often fragmentary and in script indicating only rarely vowels, application of Arabic can be helpful.

As this writer was teaching Ugaritic in 1955-56 as external lecturer at Charles University in Prague, he had only two students, Jaroslav Oliverius and Vladimír Sadek. They knew well Arabic, and this knowledge helped them to better understanding of difficult Ugaritic texts. Both these students became eventually professors at Charles University.

As Otto Eissfeldt, Professor of Old Testament at Martin-Luther University in Halle, was in May 1957 informed about these students, he appreciated the usefulness of Arabic for studying Ugaritic.

As a kind of coda the use of Ugaritic for studying Biblical Hebrew may be mentioned. Already in 1912 Arthur Ungnad in his Hebrew grammar[42] used reconstructed original forms for explaining of complicated secondary Hebrew structures. Only later this kind of structures, this time really attested, appeared in Ugaritic texts. They can be now used in teaching and learning Biblical Hebrew.[43]

It can be expected that further comparative study of Ugaritic and Classical Arabic will provide results useful for these languages and also for comparative Semitic studies.

---

[39] Cf. n. 15, 187.

[40] Herodotus I, 1. (Loeb Classical Library). Cambridge, Massachusetts/London 1960. Quoted by Federico Mazza, p. 557 in Sabatino Moscati, ed., *The Phoenicians*. New York 1988.

[41] Jesús-Luis Cunchillos, *La trouvaille épigraphique de l'Ougarit*, 2, Bibliographie. Paris 1990.

[42] *Hebräische Grammatik*. Tübingen 1912; 1926.

[43] "Ugaritic as a Tool in Teaching Hebrew Language and Literature", *Bulletin of Higher Hebrew Education* 3, 1988, 1-6.