

Re: Ugaritic Affiliations

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2007-09/msg00254.html>

- *From:* "Richard Wordingham" <jrw0602@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 09 Sep 2007 19:06:12 GMT
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"Peter T. Daniels" <grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Sep 8, 6:07 pm, "Richard Wordingham" <jrw0...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

"Peter T. Daniels" <gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:
> On Sep 8, 9:17 am, "Richard Wordingham" <jrw0...@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
wrote:

>> Unicode documents are a pretty reliable source of ISO 10646 character
>> names,
>> which can be useful when there's uncertainty as to which character is
>> meant.

Being a character list rather than
a glyph list, it does have the disadvantage that glyph variants are not
covered, so that for neo-Assyrian, for example, one has to use to
supplementary tables, such as the alphabetically-ordered one at
<http://www.sumerisches-glossar.de/download/SignListNeoAssyrian.pdf>.

??? Who in their right mind would even think of looking in Unicode
for reliable information on cuneiform writing?

It's the natural place to look for the standard identification of a character, regardless of script. It has the
advantage of being available to anyone with unrestricted internet access.

By what license do you
separate out "Neo-Assyrian" from the whole universe of Akkadian
cuneiform?

Why should I need a licence? Ideally one should have similar tables for Hittite and Neo-Babylonian, and

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probably other stages.

There are three special features of Neo-Assyrian. 1) It is the style used by WWS. (That is probably a significant though extrinsic feature). 2) It is possible to make an alphabetic order using sign shapes. 3) I know where to find a list of signs, moreover, one in alphabetic order of sign shapes. For Ur III forms one might hope to use the Unicode charts, though I don't doubt that the shapes of some of the signs, signs that are not attested (and don't exist) for Ur III, are Michael Everson's invention.

At first glance the image of the 31st letter
[in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ugaritic_script] does indeed appear to be the word divider. That seems to be a mistake, but I am looking for confirmation based on some understanding of the basis of this 31st letter.

So it's not Colless's illusory added sh? Then why did you bring in Colless's list?

The 31st letter is clearly Colless's added 'sh'. I suspect the image in the Wiki page is derived by taking Colless's list, the 31 characters in the Ugaritic block of Unicode, putting 2 and 2 together, and making 5.

I already mentioned that Colless is not well regarded. Does he provide evidence — graphical and etymological — for this new letter, this new letter that doesn't happen to be found in any of the nearly dozen abecedaries that have been excavated at Ugarit?

Everything I've seen, apart from the image on the wiki page, tells me that it is a variant of SHIN. I would not expect to see the two 'sh' letters in the same abecedarium.

>> Peter Daniels wrote of Arabic and Ugaritic, 'Their consonant >>
inventories
>> are
>> in fact identical'. What is the basis for equating SSU with Arabic >> dad?

I missed this one before. What don't you understand about "the third s was added for Hurrian (or maybe IE) and is not used in Ugaritic words"? Who has suggested that it has anything to do with Dad?

I'm not sure how to quote an additional post, but the following post has been accessed using URL <http://groups.google.com/group/sci.lang/msg/8910eba34d128d67> :

A: On Sep 4, 11:30 pm, "Peter T. Daniels" <gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:
A> On Sep 4, 3:47 pm, Yusuf B Gurseay <y...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

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A> > On Sep 4, 7:53 am, "Peter T. Daniels" <gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

A> > > If you don't know how similar Ugaritic and Arabic are (their consonant
A> > > inventories are in fact identical), then you have no business making
A> > > any comments whatsoever touching on Semitic linguistics.

A> > according to my sources ugaritic has 3 non-emphatic sibilants but no
A> > Dad.

A> You haven't consulted a Ugaritic grammar. Dad was marginal but had a
A> letter.

Classical Arabic has 28 consonants. The Ugaritic script has 28 characters.

That immediately raises the question of what Ugaritic consonants correspond to Arabic <t.>, <d.>, <s.> and <z.>? (Lest this notation be ambiguous, note that I am referring to the sounds represented by the letters whose names Unicode butchers as TAH, DAD, SAD and ZAH.) Likewise, it raises the question of what Arabic consonant Ugaritic SSU corresponds to. There's also the lurking issue of what sort of correspondence the post is talking of when the inventories are declared to be identical.

I recall a post saying that one should look to the end of the Ugaritic abjad for dad, but I can't find it, so perhaps I imagined it.

(The next quote is worth repeating!)

What don't you understand about "the third s
was added for Hurrian (or maybe IE) and is not used in Ugaritic
words"?

Just how little is known about what SSU represents.

Richard.

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