

## DRAWN INTO THE AYMARA MOLD? NOTES ON URU GRAMMAR

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### 1. Introduction

Many of the languages of the Central Andes share a number of structural features, even though they are not otherwise closely genetically related (Muysken 2000). These features are different from typical eastern Amazonian languages, but are shared in part with western Amazonian languages (Payne 1990). Many of the Andean features are typified by the largest two Amerindian languages of this area: Quechua and Aymara, which share so many of these features that researchers have been tempted to consider them one linguistic family. There is evidence that some structural features of Quechua derive from Aymara, rather than the reverse (Adelaar and Muysken in prep.). Therefore I use the expression *Aymara mold* here. Nothing crucial hinges on this, however, and I will be using Cerrón Palomino's *Quechumara* (1994) as my source for Aymara, a book that stresses the many parallels between the two languages.

In this paper I want to explore the hypothesis that the grammar of Aymara served as the model, the mold, for many of the languages spoken in the area, through the exploration of the grammar of Uru. Uru, a language closely related to Chipaya (they are often referred to together as Uru-Chipaya) was once spoken along the western shore of Lago Titicaca and along the Rio Desaguadero in the area between Lago Titicaca and Lago Poopo. The links often established between Uru, Chipaya and Puquina are spurious. Uru is now virtually extinct.

I should emphasize right away that the following notes on Uru are very preliminary; a proper examination of the available data has not been carried out yet.

### 2. Areal features of the western Amazon and the Andes

Doris L. Payne (1990: 214) classifies a number of the languages in the western Amazon region (including Pano-Tacanan, Maipuran, Arawakan, Tucanoan, Saliban, Zaparoan, Yaguan, Huitotoan, and Cahuapana) as typologically similar in their morphology. Shared features are 'a high degree of polysynthesis, directionals in the verb which may have tense/aspect/mode functions, and "western Amazonian" noun classification systems ...'. It should be noted that many of these features are shared by Quechua and Aymara. Similarly, suffixal agglutinative patterns are dominant, many languages have dominant OV word order, and prefixes are largely limited to pro-clitic person markers.

The languages in the eastern group of Amazonian languages, in contrast, are more isolating morphologically, have minimal or no directionals, and have no noun classifiers. In this group we find Jê-Bororo, Tupian, Cariban, and Makú, according to Doris Payne. We will see how Uru fits into this scheme of things.

### 3. *Uru and Jehan Vellard*

The French anthropologist Jehan Vellard witnessed the demise of Uru when recording the last speakers in the period and studying their culture. He visited the Uru in 1948, 1950, and 1951. Between 1948 and 1952 there was a great drought, which destroyed the basis of livelihood for the Uru, which was centered around fishing and the cutting of the *titora* reeds for boats, houses, and various household implements. The Uru live surrounded by Aymara, who they refer to as the ‘dry people’. They have borrowed a great number of words from Aymara, as well as from Quechua; certain spheres of life, like plant vegetation, are exclusively denominated by Aymara words. Vellard (1950: 51-2) documents how after the drought many Uru had returned, married to Aymara wives ‘qui se refusent à parler uru. Les enfants ne parlent que l'aymara et se considèrent comme aymara.’ [who refuse to speak Uru. The children speak only Aymara and consider themselves Aymara.]

Vellard collected both lexical items, expressions, and phrases and the material published in Vellard (1950, 1951, 1967) covers 101 typewritten pages, with various kinds of information.

1950	57-88	lexicon organized by semantic field
1951	6-39	lexicon organized by semantic field; morphological notes
1967	1-37	simple sentences and grammatical notes

Thus we have a quite rich set of data available. So far, Uru has only been analyzed phonologically and lexically, to my knowledge, and not grammatically. The reason is, in part, the variation apparently to be found in the Vellard data.

### 4. *Phonology*

The phonological inventory of Uru's sister language Chipaya, according to Olson (1967) contains a rich set of elements:

p	t	c	č	č	k	k <sup>w</sup>	k	k <sup>w</sup>
p'	t'	c'	č'	č'	k'		k'	
		s	š	š	h	h <sup>w</sup>	x	x <sup>w</sup>
m		n	ñ		ŋ			
		l	l <sup>y</sup>					
		r						
w		y						

Table 1: Chipaya consonants

	i	i:		u	u:
	e	e:		o	o:
			a	a:	

Table 2: Chipaya vowels

In the data provided by Vellard, the following sounds are given:

p	t	*c	č	k	*K	*k <sup>w</sup>	#q
#p <sup>h</sup>	#t <sup>h</sup>		#č <sup>h</sup>	#k <sup>h</sup>			#q <sup>h</sup>
p'	t'		č'	k'	*K'		#q'
*b							
		s	*š		x		
m		n	ñ				
		#l	l <sup>y</sup>				
		r					
w			y				

Table 3: Uru consonants

	i	*i:		u	*u:
	*e	*e:		*o	*o:
			a	*a:	

Table 4: Uru vowels

To compare the phonological inventory of Uru with that of Aymara, the sounds marked # are present in Aymara but not in Uru, and those marked \* are present in Uru but not in Aymara (Cerrón Palomino, 1994: 21-38). The main differences involve the aspirated series in Aymara, the more complex vowel system of Uru, the labialized velar k<sup>w</sup> of Uru, and the post-velar /q/ of Aymara. In the latter case, there is some doubt as to whether the sound marked /K/ by Vellard is not in fact post-velar. A more detailed study of the notational conventions of Vellard, as indeed of Uru phonology, is required. In conclusion, however, we notice quite a few parallels between the sound inventories of Uru and Aymara in general.

5. *Word formation*

Word formation in Uru shows some features similar to Aymara, and others which are proper to the language itself. This sometimes leads to inconsistency.

5.1 *Compounds*

Many compounds are right headed or nucleus final (the references to Vellard are as follows: V50:5 = Vellard 1950, example 5):

- (1) čúK'e či  
     eye body-hair  
     ‘eyebrows, eyelashes’

V50:5

- (2) hús pita  
nose opening  
'nostril' V50:8
- (3) kárš-túsi  
hand interior  
'palm of the hand' V50:34

These nucleus final structures can be quite complex, as is extensively documented by Vellard:

- (4) ačíwi pára ma kís-ku k'áru  
sail wood cylinder tying rope  
'rope that links the mast to the cylinders' V50:285
- (5) túx's hós-ta píci káru  
go stern-to double cord  
'long rope that goes from the top of the mast to the stern' V50:296

However, in a few instances the nucleus is initial rather than final, and a left-headed structure is found:

- (6) xaús wí-ri  
hole buttocks  
'anus' V50:27
- (7) ti-hi Kára  
bone arm  
'radius, cubitus' V50:69

Admittedly, these instances are rare. It is possible, following the line of argument in this article, that these exceptional cases represent the original pattern, which has been supplanted by a right-headed Aymara pattern (Cerrón Palomino 1994:148-151).

### 5.2 Descriptive phrases

We sometimes encounter descriptive phrases to circumscribe a certain object:

- (8) šápa hí-is luk óx-šay  
each moon blood goes  
'menstruation' V50:62
- (9) hána hep' šeš-čay  
not father exist  
'illegitimate son' V50:125
- (10) tū-háta hípu-píčay  
West-from wind-come  
'wind from the West' V50:152

It is possible that the left-headed structures described in section 4.1 are related to these descriptive phrases.

### 5.3 Reduplication

There is iconic complete reduplication in Uru, involving different word classes: numerals, nouns, verbs, and adverbs:

- |      |   |           |
|------|---|-----------|
| (11) | tíhu-tíhu-čay      suwási pa.a.-čay<br>one one            baby    they.make<br>'the two are having sex' | V67:I,36  |
| (12) | wára-wára yúk'-čay<br>star star much<br>'there are many stars'  | V67:II,11 |
| (13) | wíst'u hux-hux-čičay<br>to me fault fault is<br>'it is completely my fault'                             | V67:35    |
| (14) | tíka-tiks-na-č̣a-k.<br>die die he will<br>'he will die'   | V67:I,9   |
| (15) | lo <sup>u</sup> wa-lo <sup>u</sup> wa čap-čap-íska<br>'quick quick put it in'<br>'put it in quickly!'   | V67:I,8   |

There is some evidence, which needs to be further explored, that Uru has partial reduplication in addition:

- |      |   |        |
|------|---|--------|
| (16) | ši-šinaki<br>tell<br>'you tell (stories)'   | V67:32 |
| (17) | pek'-pesk'u<br>ask<br>'you ask (questions)' | V67:32 |
| (18) | či-čuni/ču-čuni<br>very good<br>'very good' | V67:33 |

However, so far it is not clear whether there is a single morphological pattern involved or several unrelated processes.

#### 5.4 Incorporation

Occasionally, we find instances of incorporation:

- (19) lúli-p-lúxs'  
 food eat  
 'you are going to eat' V67:31

#### 5.5 Suffixation

In addition to the suffixation involved in person, tense, and aspect, and case marking, which may involve encliticization rather than true suffixation, there are some cases of plural marking with the Aymara suffix *-naka*:

- (20) kót súñ-náka  
 lake people PL  
 'the lake people' V67:II,104

There may well be other suffixes as well, but the material in Vellard does not portray a wide range of suffixes, at first sight.

An example of the verbal enclitics is given in the following paradigm:

- (21) *a* wíril ókwa-čay present  
 I go IN  
 'I go/I am going'
- b* wíril ókwa-čaki-čay future  
 I go FU IN  
 'I will go'
- c* wíril ókwa-ču-čay remote past  
 I go RPA IN  
 'I went' V51:37

#### 5.6 A comparison with Aymara

It is clear that Uru word formation only partially fits the Aymara mold, which is characterized by agglutinative suffixation (Cerrón Palomino, 1994: 69) and nucleus-final (right-headed) nominal compounds. The fact that there are also a few left-headed nominal compounds and that one of the suffixes is in fact of Aymara origin could be construed as evidence for a partial adjustment to Aymara morphology.

#### 6. Uru syntax and the particle čay

I am not yet in a position to discuss Uru syntax in any detail, particularly because on this point the data appear at first sight contradictory and in any case require much further analysis.

Pronominal possession can be expressed in two ways: either with a preposed pronoun or with the same pronoun encliticized to the possessed element.

- (22) amp' áča  
you head  
'your head' V50:1
- (23) čúl túti-s-amp' xwi  
how name-... you  
'What is your name?' V51:619

Possibly, this second possibility emerged under the influence of Aymara, which has a productive set of nominal possession suffixes (Cerrón Palomino, 1994: 86).

Adjectives and modifiers always precede the head noun:

- (24) maxt-tukūnua  
young woman  
'young woman' V67:III,45
- (25) piš čárK'a tú.š-ma.  
two large balsa-cylinder  
'two large cylinders of the balsa' V50:276

There is an elaborate, but still to be explored, system of postpositions and/or case markers, sensitive to the movement or absence of movement of the predicate:

- |      |                   |        |                   |             |                   |
|------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| (26) | <i>+ movement</i> |        | <i>- movement</i> |             | <i>± movement</i> |
|      | kína              | toward |                   |             |                   |
|      | kistáni           | from   |                   |             |                   |
|      | wíntani           | into   | kostá             | in          |                   |
|      |                   |        | xo                | to (pers.)  |                   |
|      |                   |        | šrap'a            | in order to |                   |
|      |                   |        | staki             | for         |                   |
|      |                   |        | stáni             | accompanied |                   |
|      |                   |        | ná/stá            | instrument  |                   |
|      | winki-wil         | onto   |                   |             | ka poss           |
|      |                   |        |                   |             | kali on           |
|      |                   |        |                   |             | koske under       |
|      |                   |        | yukíl             | before      |                   |
|      |                   |        | stám              | behind      |                   |
|      |                   |        |                   |             | nis through       |
|      |                   |        | káma              | during      |                   |

The most striking feature of Uru sentences is the particle *čy* (also sometimes [ča] or [sa]), which is obligatory in most sentences. It is such a central feature that it often also appears in the vocabulary list with individual words, presumably meaning 'it is X'. I

will gloss it as IN ('indicative'), for reasons that will become clear below. The particle occurs in virtually all declaratives (27), exhortatives (28), yes/no questions (29), and some wh-questions (30).

- (27) tukū-wáwa pit-**čay** wir-wíña  
 'the women arrive-IN at the back'  
 'the women arrive behind [us]' V67:I,2
- (28) yak'-ača-**čáy** pikíl-táni túke  
 'let's try-IN the two first'  
 'let's try the two first' V67:I,7
- (29) hána čučul nam-kalíki-ači-**čay**? tika-tiks-na-**ča**-k.  
 not thing Q-can-do-IN die die he will  
 'Can nothing be done? He will die.' V67:I,9
- (30) ampt' hép' čul'tu šiš-ták-**čay**  
 you father how-name say-IN  
 'What is your father's name?' V67:I,31

It does not occur on the verb in infinitival complements (31)-(32), and imperatives (33).

- (31) céru-**ča** stréšin-ham  
 see-IN do  
 'I have seen [them] do [it]' V67:I,3
- (32) hána šiš-ačú-**čay** kwás-na lách-ki  
 not we know-IN water-in swim  
 'We do not know how to swim.' V67:I,29
- (33) lo<sup>u</sup>wa-lo<sup>u</sup>wa čap-čap-íska  
 quick quick put it in  
 'put it in quickly' V67:I,8

Neither does it occur in hypotheticals (34), desideratives (35), and dubitatives, indefinite wh-questions (whoever ...) (36).

- (34) tukūn<sup>w</sup>a tikčna-kačn'iki čéri-nas-**čay**  
 woman will die I will look  
 'When my wife dies I will look (at her photo).' V67:I,12
- (35) ník' hána pini hóxk'  
 this not ever go  
 'May this one never go.' V67:I,33
- (36) ak'ám-sa ti-húras axsím wátta-ki<sup>t</sup> ok<sup>w</sup>a'ki wíri-co  
 tomorrow this hour where I will go go away  
 'Tomorrow at this hour wherever will I go when I go away?' V67:I,32



The particle occurs almost always at the end of a word. There are some exceptions, two of which involve the element glossed *este* 'this', which may be an emphatic:

- (37) tíka-tiks-na-**ča**-k'  
die die-IN-this  
'he will die' V67:I,9
- (38) tis-ča lá-ča-ki  
this tall-IN-this  
'This one is the tallest.' V67:III,25
- (39) hána-**ča**-n'i šišťák' šiš  
not-IN-thus talk  
'There is no reason to talk like that.' V67:I,23

Generally, the element *čay* occurs on the verb; however, this is not absolutely obligatory, as in (40), where it occurs on a noun in a contrastive construction:

- (40) há-na čúki-**čay** čersk'e šila čukútki  
not eyes-IN we will look, seat we will turn  
'We will not look, we will turn our seats.' V67:III,12

Sometimes it appears to have a copular function, as in (41) and (42):

- (41) kučúlu **ča**-ni-ki sámp-ti hú-nan-šráp'a čičúñi  
llama foetus IN-..-this virgin eat-for good  
'These are llama foetuses, good to offer to the Virgin.' V67:I,27
- (42) k<sup>w</sup>ás-nu háx-nulá-**čay** ti-parak kanú-**ča**  
water-in wash-I.will-IN this-wood dirty-IN  
'I will wash this wood in water, (because) it is dirty' V67:I,37

Occasionally it occurs in non-verbal predications:

- (43) wír-či-čay  
I-..-IN  
'it's me' V51:759

It is clear that the behaviour of this *čay* very much resembles that of Quechua *-mi* and Aymara *-wa* (Cerrón-Palomino, 1994: 131-2).

Particularly revealing is the behaviour of *čay* in verbal clusters. Sometimes we find an infinitival form preceding the main verb (44), as in Aymara (Cerrón Palomino, 1994: 166-79).

- (44) wíril xála káya pék'-u**čay**  
I llama buy want-IN  
'I want to buy a llama.' V67:III,41

However, in other cases, subordinate verbs follow the main verb within the same cluster (marked by *čay*). These cases can be either infinitival (45) or serial (46) in nature; in (45) ‘rest’ follows rather than precedes ‘want’ and carries the *čay* marker:

- (45) yas pek' hēs-na-čay háp'pay  
 now I want rest-INF-IN father  
 ‘Now I want to rest father.’ V67:II,23
- (46) čúki kōta háyn-čay  
 let us kill hang-IN  
 ‘Let us kill him hanging him.’ V67:I,22

The pattern in (45) and (46) is definitely not like Aymara, and it is tempting to think of this pattern, more characteristic of VO-type languages, as the original one, and of the pattern in (44) as an innovation.

In addition to cases where the subordinate verb follows the main verb in the same cluster, we have examples where an infinitival complement as a whole follows the main verb, which is then marked by *čay*. The following example is repeated from (32):

- (47) hána šiš-ačú-čay kwás-na lách-ki  
 not we know-IN water-in swim  
 ‘We do not know how to swim.’ V67:I,29

### 7. Summary

The main purpose of this paper has been to give a preliminary sketch of some features of Uru, features which are open to the interpretation that the language has been drawn into the Aymara mold. More complete and careful analysis both of the Uru data themselves and of the data from its sister language Chipaya will need to reveal whether this initial hypothesis receives further support.

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