

PHONOLOGY OF SYNHARMONISM AND  
A NEW SYNHARMONIC SCRIPT

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Turkic phonology is the phonology of synharmonism. The model of the phonology of synharmonism is proposed. The synharmonic script theory is worked out and the system of the syllabic turkic script is proposed.

None of the accepted at different times graphs in Turkic languages - Arabic, Latin or Russian - was an optimum script from the point of view of phonological and phonetic nature of the turkic speech. Since in the first place it was necessary to introduce quite a number of additional letters in the second place extra orthographic and orthoepic rules were needed, in the third place the main shortcoming of these scripts was that the principle "one sound for one symbol" was adopted. While successive and systematic synharmonic consonance of syllables inturkic speech, required syllabic principle of the script. Apparently it is not accidentally that ancient turkic runic script was just as such.

The script must be formed on the basis of the phonological and phonetic structure of the given language (or cognate group of languages). Only in that case graph and orthography will be rational and easy for mastering this script. Synharmonism is such means for Turkic languages, and it permits to construct an easy and economical turkic script.

Synharmonism is not an ordinary phonetic phenomenon, but a basis of the whole linguistic structure of the Turkic languages. It is a specific language unit forming the integrity of syllables and words in turkic speech.

Here is the model of synharmonism, built as a "circle" because both synharmonic types (palatal and labial) as well as all the four synharmonic timbres (hard nonlabial, soft nonlabial, hard labial, soft labial) together make up the phonological system of the Kazakh language. The main thing in this model is the equal relevance of all its components.

The upper half of the circle reflects hard (complete line), the lower half

- soft (dotted line), the left half - labial (chain of circles), the right half - nonlabial (absence of circles) synharmonic types. Palatal and labial synharmonic types do not function separately however. Four independent and compound synharmonic timbres are formed out of their combination: hard labial (chain of circles joined by a complete line); soft labial (chain of circles joined by dotted line); hard nonlabial (complete line and absence of circles).

Here are four timbres forming the system of synharmonism. The middle circle reflects distribution of vowels in the synharmonic system. Crossed squares indicate the absent vowels in the vocalic system (in this case the Kazakh language which is one of the Turkic languages). The inner circle reflects the synharmonic system of consonants. It is open from all the sides, which indicates simultaneous presence of all the four synharmonic timbres in the system of consonantism. Such universality of consonants (in contrast to vowels) permits to use them as basic sounds in constructing the synharmonic script.

The level of formalism of the proposed model may be subjected to criticism, and we shall be glad if someone will manage to give more efficient and accurate definition of synharmonism and to construct the appropriate variant of the model. We want, to remind that nobody succeeded in constructing a good working model of synharmonism at

least those referring to "harmony of vowels". That is why it is necessary to seek and to seek. In order to succeed it is necessary to have a strict synharmonic theory, ensuring true linguistic interpretation of primordial phonetic phenomena in Turkic languages. For all this one must not be afraid of seeming or factual contradictions of this theory with established well-known theories of "europocentric" trend in Turkicology. It is law-governed: phonology of the language, which differs from Indo-European languages can not be explained by the theory, ensuring linguistic interpretation of phonetic phenomena in these (Indo-European) languages. By the way, our knowledge of the nature and functions of synharmonism turned out to be insufficient and erroneous.

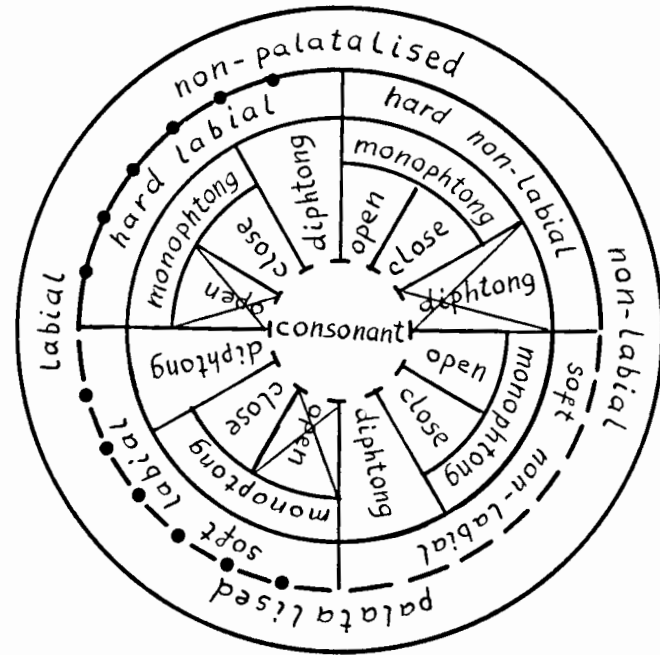
So far as synharmonism is the phonological basis of the proposed system of the script, we use the simplified term "syngramma" for designating the syllabosymbol. Graphs of syngrammas are elementary: they consist of the joining of only straight lines (we intentionally avoided round, oval, curved and other complex lines for the scripts) and there are only three of them. Each syngramma consists of the combination of the three straight lines: vertical line " | " which is basic for all syngrammas; horizontal " - " - place, number and direction of its joining with the basic line indicates the type of the consonant; oblique " \ " -

place, number and direction of its joining with the basic line indicates the synharmonic timbre of the syllable and the phonological type of the vowel.

Syngrammas are constructed according to certain logical principle (the basic being articulatory and acoustic features of sounds) which facilitates mastering the script. This principle helps to manage with minimum of rules and exceptions to them (unfortunately, we can not give here a detailed and accessible description of the rules of the script, because

of the limited number of sheets and we limit ourselves to the illustration of Consonant Symbols by Syngrammas of the consonant [p] and examples of their linear sequence).

THE MODEL  
OF THE PHONOLOGY  
OF SYNHARMONISM



CONSONANTS

|     |   |     |   |     |   |
|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|
| p   |   | b   | \ | m   | / |
| t   |   | d   |   | n   |   |
| k·q | [ | g·q |   | ŋ·r |   |
| š   |   | ž   |   | l   |   |
| s   | [ | z   | ] | r   |   |
|     |   |     |   | j   |   |
|     |   |     |   | w   |   |

VOWELS

|           |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|
| open      |    |    |
| close     |    |    |
| diphthong | .. | .. |

SILLABL MARKED

|    |  |    |  |     |  |
|----|--|----|--|-----|--|
| ap |  | pa |  | apa |  |
| äp |  | pä |  | äpä |  |
| op |  | po |  | opo |  |
| öp |  | pö |  | öpö |  |
| yp |  | py |  | ypy |  |
| ip |  | pi |  | ipi |  |
| ep |  | pe |  | epe |  |
| up |  | pu |  | upu |  |
| üp |  | pü |  | üpü |  |

for example :

türük tilderi:

ṽṽṽ ṽṽṽ

qazaq tuba

ṽṽṽ ṽṽṽ

qyrqyz ojqur

ṽṽṽ ṽṽṽ

SINHARMOTEMERS

|                |  |  |
|----------------|--|--|
| nonpalatalised |  |  |
| palatalised    |  |  |
| labial         |  |  |