The Proto-Ñyqy People

Their Culture, their Language

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Contents

Chapter 1

Foreword

This document is about a constructed language (conlang) I created. However, it will be written as an in-universe document would be. Therefore, any reference to other works, documents or people will be completely fictional. If there is somewhere written that there "needs to be more research done on the subject" or any similar kind of expression, this simply means I haven't written anything on this subject, and I may not plan to. As you might notice, the style of writing in this document will be inspired mainly by the book *Indo-European Language and Culture* by Benjamin W. Forston. Go read this book if you haven't already, it's extremely interesting (except for the part with the Old Irish and Vedic people and what their kings and queens did with horses, I wish to unread that).

This is a work of fiction. Any resemblance to persons living or dead, to any real event, or any real people is purely coincidental.

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Chapter 2

Introduction

2.1 Language Evolution

We are not sure which was the first language ever spoken in our world. Was there even one primordial language, or were there several that spontaneously appeared around our world here and there? We cannot know for certain, this is too far back in our history. Some scientists estimate the firsts of our kind to be gifted the ability to speak lived some hundred of thousand of years back, maybe twice this period even. There is absolutely no way to know what happened at that time with non-physical activities, and we can only guess. We can better guess how they lived, and how they died, than how they interacted with each other, what was their social interaction like, and what were the first words ever spoken on our planet. Maybe they began as grunts of different pitches, with hand gestures, then two vowels became distinct, a couple of consonants, and the first languages sprung from that. This, we do not know, and this is not the subject of this book anyways.

What we do know is, languages evolve as time passes. One language can morph in the way it is pronounced, in the way some words are used, in the way they are shaped by their position and role in the sentence, by how they are organized with each other. A language spoken two centuries back will sound like its decendent today, but with a noticeable difference. Jumping a couple of centuries back, and we lost some intelligibility, and some sentences sound alien to us. A millenium back, and while the language resonates, we cannot understand it anymore. Going the other way around, travelling to the future, would have the same effect, except that we would not necessarily follow only one language, but several, for in different places, different changes would take place. As time goes by, these differences become more and more proeminent, and what was once the same langage becomes several dialects that become less and less similar to one another, until we end up with several languages, sister between themselves, daughters to the initial language.

2.2 Relating Languages Between Themselves

We are not sure who first emited the theory of language evolution; this has been lost to time during the great collapse two thousand years back, and only a fraction of the knowledge from back then survived the flow of time. We're lucky even to know about this. It's the Professor Loqbrekh who, in 3489, first deciphered some books that were found two decades prior, written in Énanonn. They described the principle of language evolution, and how language families could be reconstructed, how we could know languages are related, and a hint on how mother languages we do not know could be reconstructed. The principle on how historical linguistics are the following:

> If two languages share a great number of coincidentally similar features, especially in their grammar, so much so that it cannot be explained by chance only, then these two languages are surely related.

By this process, we can recreate family trees of languages. Some are more closely related to one another than some other, which are more distant. Sometimes, it is even unsure if a language is related to a language tree; maybe the language simply borrowed a good amount of vocabulary from another language that we either now of, or died since.

The best attested languages are the ones we have written record of. In a sense, we are lucky: while we do know a vast majority of the written documents prior to the great collapse were lost during this sad event, we still have a good amount of them left in various languages we can analyze, and we still find some that were lost before then and found back again. The earliest written record we ever found was from the Loho language, the oldest member of the Mojhal language tree attested; the Mojhal tree has been itself linked to the Ñyqy tree some fifty years ago by the Pr Khorlan (3598).

2.3 Principles of Historical Linguistics

So, how does historical linguistics work? How does one know what the mother language of a bunch of other languages is? In historical linguistics, we study the similarities between languages and their features. If a feature is obviously common, there is a good chance it is inherited from a common ancestor. The same goes for words, we generally take the average of several words, we estimate what their ancestor word was like, and we estimate what sound change made these words evolve the way they did. If this sound change consistently works almost always, we know we hit right: sound changes are very regular, and exceptions are very rare. And this is how we can reconstruct a mother language that was lost to time thanks to its existing daughter languages.

But as we go back in time, it becomes harder and harder to get reliable data. Through evolution, some information is lost — maybe there once was an inflectional system that was lost in all daughter languages, and reconstructing that is nigh impossible. And since no reconstruction can be attested, we need a way to distinguish these from attested forms of words. This is why attested words are simply written like “this”, while reconstructed words are written with a preceding star like “**this*”. Sometimes, to distinguish both from the text, you will see the word of interest be written either in **bold** or *italics*. This bears no difference in meaning.

2.4 On Proto-Languages

As we go back in time, there is a point at which we have to stop: we no longer find any related language to our current family, or we can’t find enough evidence that one of them is part of the family and if they are related, they are very distantly related. This language we cannot go beyond is called a proto-language, and it is the mother language of the current language family tree. In our case, the Proto-Ñyqy language, spoken by the Ñyqy people, is the mother language of the Ñyqy language family tree and the ancestor of the more widely known Mojhal languages.

There is something I want to insist on very clearly: a proto-language is not a “prototype” language as we might think at first — it is not an imperfect, inferior language that still needs some iterations before becoming a full-fledged language. It has been proven multiple times multiple times around the world, despite the best efforts of the researchers of a certain empire, that all languages are equally complex regardless of ethnicity, education, time, and place. Languages that are often described as “primitive” are either called so as a way to indicate they are ancient, and therefore close to a proto-language, or they are described so by people trying to belittle people based on incorrect belief that some ethnicities are somehow greater or better than others. This as well has been proven multiple times that this is not true. A proto-language bore as much complexity as any of the languages currently spoken around the world, and a primitive language in linguistic terms is a language close in time to these proto-languages, such as the Proto-Mojhal language (which is also in turn the proto-language of the Mojhal tree). The only reason these languages might seem simpler is because we do not

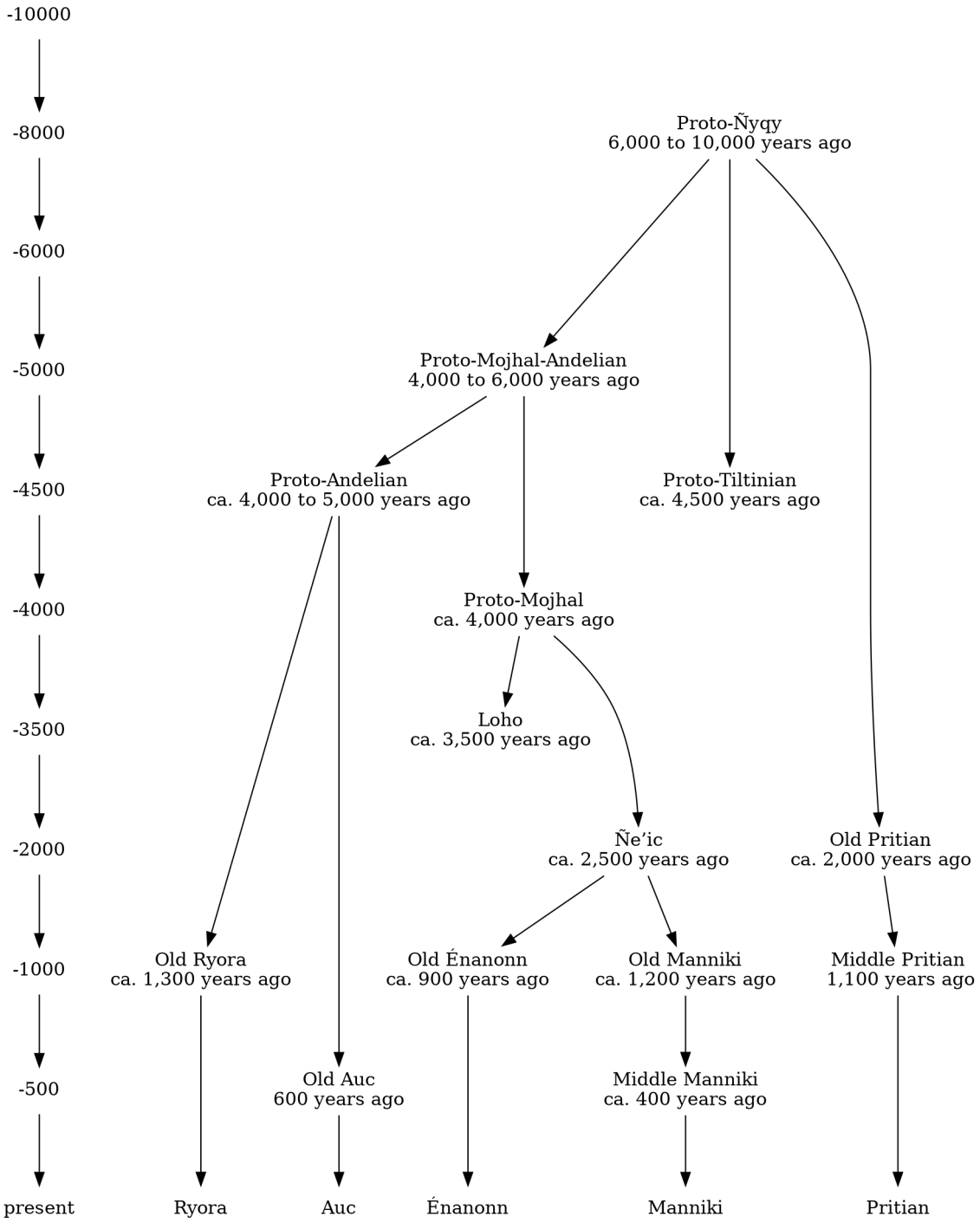

Figure 2.1: Ñyqy Family Tree

know them and cannot know them in their entierty, so of course some features are missing from it, but they were surely there.

Note that “Proto-Ñyqy” is the usual and most widely accepted spelling of the name of the language and culture, but other spellings are accepted such as “Proto Ñy Qy”, “Proto Ñy Ħy”, “Proto Ḿy Qy”, or “Proto Ḿy Ħy”, each with their equivalent with one word only after the “Proto” part. As we’ll see below in §Section 4.2.2, the actual pronunciation of consonants is extremely uncertain, and each one of these orthographies are based on one of the possible pronunciations of the term **ñyqy*. In this book, we’ll use the so called “coronal-only” orthography, unless mentionned otherwise. Some people also have the very bad habit of dubbing this language and culture as simply “Ñyqy” (or one of its variants), but this is very wrong, as the term “Ñyqy” designates the whole familiy of languages and cultures that come from the Proto-Ñyqy people. The Tiltinian languages are as much Tiltinian as they are Ñyqy languages, but that does not mean they are the same as the Proto-Ñyqy language, even if they are relatively close in terms of time. When speaking about something that is “Ñyqy”, we are generally speaking about daughter languages and cultures and not about the Proto-Ñyqy language and culture itself.

Note also we usually write this language with groups of morphemes, such as a noun group, as one word like we do with **ñyqy*. However, when needed we might separate the morphemes by a dash, such as in **ñy-qy*.

2.5 Reconstructing the Culture Associated to the Language

While the comparative method described in §Section 2.3 work on languages, we also have good reasons to believe they also work of culture: if elements of different cultures that share a language from the same family also share similar cultural elements, we have good reasons to believe these elements were inherited from an earlier stage of a common culture. This is an entire field of research in its own right, of course, but linguistics also come in handy when trying to figure out the culture of the Ñyqy people: the presence of certain words can indicate the presence of what they meant, while the impossibility of recreating a word at this stage of the language might indicate it only appeared in later stages of its evolution, and it only influenced parts of the decendents of the culture and language. For instance, the lack of word for “honey” in Proto-Ñyqy but the ability to reconstruct a separate word for both the northern and southern branches strongly suggests both branches discovered honey only after the Proto-Ñyqy language split up into different languages, and its people in different groups, while the easy reconstruction of **mygú* signifying *monkey* strongly suggests both branches knew about this animal well before these two groups split up. More on the culture in §Chapter 3 below.

Chapter 3

Culture of the Proto-Ñyqy People

While the Proto-Ñyqy is the most well attested cultural and linguistic family, the temporal distance between the Proto-Ñyqy people and us makes it extremely hard to reconstruct anything. The various branches of the Ñyqy family evolved over the past eight to twelve past millenia, and some changed pretty drastically compared to their ancestors. Therefore, do not expect an in-depth description of what their society was like, but rather what could be considered an overview compared to some other culture descriptions.

3.1 The Name of the Language

First, it is important to know where the name of this language came from. Since it has such a wide spread in this world, giving it a name based on where its daughter branches went would give it a very long name, or with a shorter one we would have very boring or limited names — the "Proto-Northern-Southern" language doesn't sound very good, and the "Proto-Mojhal-Andelian" language leaves other major branches out, such as the Pritian branch which we cannot ommit, just as the Mojhal and Andelian branches. So, researchers went with the reconstructed word for the inclusive *we*: **ñyqy*. It itself is a coumpound word made up of **ñy*, which is the first person pronoun, and **qy* which is sometimes used as a grammatical morpheme indicating a plural — it also means six, as we will later on, the number system of the Proto-Ñyqy people was a bit complex.

3.2 Geographical Location

It is often very hard to find the location of very old reconstructed languages, such as the Proto-Mojhal language itself which location is still not clearly known despite its name. But when it comes to the Proto-Ñyqy people, we have a surprisingly good idea of where they were: in the hot rainforests of the northern main continent, most probably near nowadays' Rhesodia. We know this thanks to some of their reconstructed words which are typical for the other people that lived or still live in hot rainforests, and these terms are older than the split between the northern and southern groups. For instance, both groups have a common ancestor word for *bongo*, **zebec*, as well as for the *bonobo*, **pœwec*, which are only found in these rainforests.

3.3 Society

The Proto-Ñyqy was a matriachal society, led most likely by older women who had an important spiritual role. This cultural trait is found in numerous daughter branches of the Ñyqy family, and it would be unreasonable to think a large amount of them would change in the same way despite many branches being most likely disconnected from one another, and the patriarchal branches almost all retained women as their spiritual figurehead, even if political power passed in the hands of men.

3.4 Religion and Beliefs

This question might be the hardest of all to answer, as we can only speculate based on the religions the daughter cultures of the Ñyqy family had, as well as the few hints we can get through the Proto-Ñyqy vocabulary. Through this keyhole, dusted by millenia of cultural and linguistic changes, we can offer an initial answer. It seems the Proto-Ñyqy reveered several gods, with however one god or goddes above them called **Qiisci*, that might have been to them some form of queen or some sort of god for the gods themselves. We can find for instance this figure in the Mojhal patheon under the name of Kísce. Other than the parental figure of this divinity, their role is vastly unknown.

Chapter 4

Structural Overview

4.1 Typological Outline of Proto-Ñyqy

Proto-Ñyqy is a language that appears to be strongly analytical and isolating. It relies mainly on its syntax when it comes to its grammar and seldom on morphological rules if at all. It wouldn't really make much sense to say whether the language is postpositional or prepositional since the only rule defined in Hawkin's Universals Proto-Ñyqy respects is relative clauses and possessives before the noun, though it tends to make Proto-Ñyqy slightly more postpositional than neutral. Most of its words contain either one or two syllables and its sentenses often revolve around linked morphemes which could be interpreted as grammatical particules. You can find some examples of Proto-Ñyqy and its translation below as well as its glossing.

1. **yq ñe pom qy*

yq	ñe	pom	qy
dem.prox3	home	GEN	1sg(ABS)

   This house is mine

2. **cø ne*

cø	ñe
1sg.POSS.INCL	house(ABS)

   This is my house

3. **pim bú qi coq op*

pim	bú	qi	coq	op
mango	2sg(ERG)	DU	eat	PST

   We (two) ate a mango

4. **cø pim i bœ mygú coq ug mún op zø qy zúmu op*

cø	pim	i	bœ	mygú	coq	ug	mún	op
POSS.1sg	mango	undef.art(ABS)	def.art	monkey(ERG)	eat	SUBJ	PROG	PST

zø	qy	zúmu	op
3sg(ABS)	1sg(ERG)	see	PST

   I saw the monkey that would have been eating a mango of mine

In the first and second examples, we can notice the absence of a verb "to be" or any equivalent, this shows existential predicates did not need a verb in order to express the existance of something and its attributes. This also reveals the word order of the genitive form in Proto-Ñyqy, the genitive particle follows the element it propertizes and is followed by its property. For instance, in **yq ñe pom qy*, **yq ñe* "this house" has the property of being mine **qy* is the first person singular). *I* characterize *this house*, therefore *this house is of me*, *this is my house*. The main difference between the first and the second examples is the first example is the accent in the first example is on the fact that said house is *mine*, whereas in the second example "my house" is simply presented to the interlocutor.

As you can see in the third example, Proto-Ñyqy used to have a dual number which has been lost in most of its decendent languages, and the remaining languages employ the former dual as their current plural dissmissing instead the old plural. Only does the Énanon keep it with its plural, using the former dual as a paucal. As indicated by its name, the dual was used when referencing to two elements when an otherwise greater amount of elements would have required the plural. Hence, in this example, you could consider **bú qi* to be kind of a 2DU pronoun.

Finally, the fourth example gives us an overview of Proto-Ñyqy syntax, such as a different position depending on whether we use an indefinite or definite article, as well as a subclause inserted in the main clause defining a noun phrase, here **zø* refering to **mygú*. We can also clearly see the word order of main clauses presented as Patient-Agent-Verb. Although most of its are nominative languages, Aarlerte (3652) postulates in her recent papers Proto-Ñyqy might have been primarily ergative. The loss of this trait in its closest descendent languages such as Proto-Mojhal-Andelian and Proto-Tiltinian might indicate this feature was already unstable in Proto-Ñyqy. Ergativity might have been in use only in main clauses, and Aarlerte argues this might have been the last trace of ergativity in an otherwise nominative language.

Note that although linguists suppose Proto-Ñyqy was a mostly analytical language, some people like to write related morphemes together as one word, hyphenated or not. Thus, the third example could also be written as **pim búqi coqop* or **pim bú-qi coq-op* by some. It is due to the fact Proto-Ñyqy was for a long time thought to be an agglutinative language like Proto-Mojhal-Andelian and the habit of writing related morphemes as one word stuck around. However, nowadays we know an analytical Proto-Ñyqy is instead most likely and scolars began writing morphenes separated from each other instead.

4.2 Phonetic Inventory and Translitteration

4.2.1 Vowels

As we stand today, eight vowels were reconstructed for Proto-Ñyqy, as presented in the table Table 4.1. Below is a short guide to their pronunciation:

e /*ɛ/ as in General American English *"bed"* [bɛd]

i /*ɪ/ as in General American English *"bit"* [bɪt]

o /*ɔ/ as in General American English *"thought"* [θɔːt]

ø /*ø/ as in French *"peu"* [pø]

œ /*ɤ/ as in Scottish Gaelic *"doirbh"* [d̪̊ɤrʲɤv]

u /*ʊ/ as in General American English *"hook"* [hʊ̟k]

ú /*u/ as in General American English *"boot"* [bʊ̟ːt]

y /*y/ as in French *"dune"* [d̪yn]

Table 4.1: Proto-Ñyqy Vowels

	antérieures	postérieures
fermées	y	ú
pré-fermées	i	u
mi-fermées	ø	œ
mi-ouvertes	e	o

We also have a ninth vowel, noted <ə> which denotes an unknown vowel. It is most likely this was before the Proto-Ñyqy breakup a simple schwa standing where a vowel got reduced either at an earlier stage than Proto-Ñyqy or during the breakup of the language. Depending on the languages that evolved from Proto-Ñyqy, some got rid of it later while some other reinstated it as a full vowel with different rules each on which vowel it would become. Thus in the current stage of reasearch on Proto-Ñyqy, we cannot know for certain which vowel it should have been.

It is however possible to create a featural tree for the known vowels, determining which would have been considered closer to others, as seens with figure Fig. 4.1.

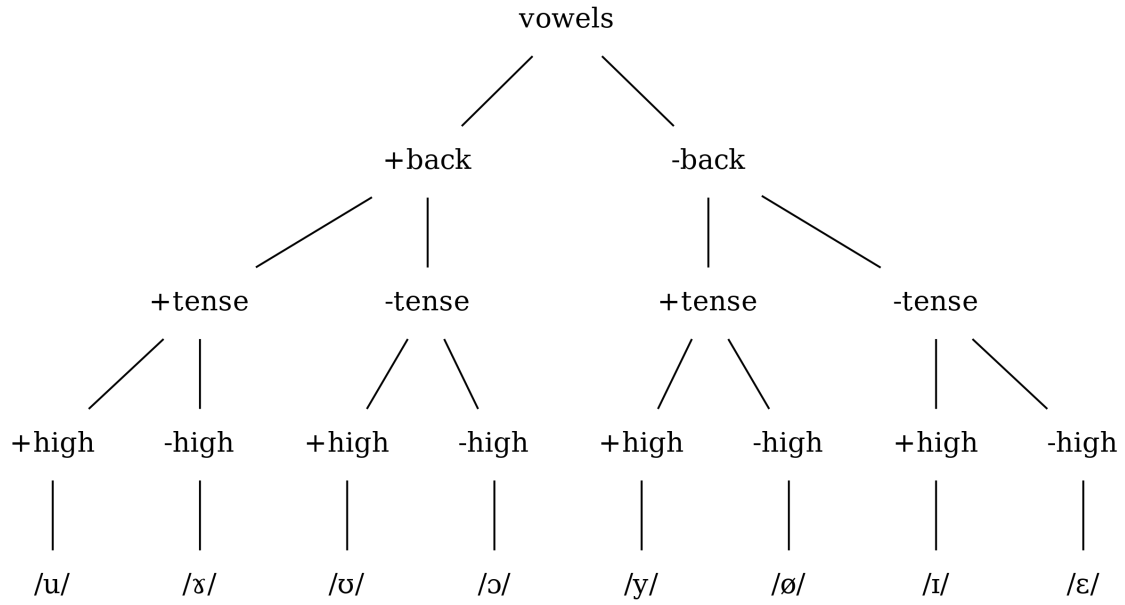

Figure 4.1: Proto-Ñyqy Vowels Featural Tree

4.2.2 Consonants

The topic of consonants, unlike vowels, is a hot debate among linguists. while we are pretty sure proto-ñyqy has twelve consonants, we are still unsure which consonants they are due to the extreme unstability of the dorsal feature, and there is seemingly no consistency as to how the consonants stabilized in the different languages that emerged from the proto-ñyqy breakup. it is only in the recent years Ishy Maeln proposed a new theory that is gaining traction among proto-ñyqy specialists: each consonant could be pronounced either as a dorsal or as a non-dorsal depending on its environment and both potential pronunciation can be correct. she even goes further and proposes proto-ñyqy had an alternating rule stating a given consonant had to be non-dorsal if the previous one was, and vice versa. this would explain the common pattern of dorsal consonants alternation found in some early languages found after the breakup such as proto-mojhal. this phenomenon is

more thouroughly explained in §Section 4.2.2.

You can find the featural tree of the Proto-Ñyqy consonants in the figure Fig. 4.2. Each grapheme displays below its dorsal pronunciation on the left and its non-dorsal pronunciation on the right.

As you can see, each one of the consonants have their two alternative indicated below their grapheme. In the case of the coronal consonants, the alternative consonant is obtained by replacing the anterior feature by the dorsal feature when it is present.

The way of writing consonants was therefore standardized as presented in the table Table 4.2. For each

Table 4.2: Possible Pronunciations of the Proto-Ñyqy Consonants

Main Grapheme	Dorsal Phoneme	Non-Dorsal Phoneme	Alternate Grapheme
ñ	/*ɴ/	/*n̈/	ḿ
q	/*q/	/*ħ/	ħ, h_1
g	/*ɢ/	/*ʕ/	ȟ, h_2
c	/*c/	/*t͡ʃ/	ł
j	/*ɟ/	/*d͡ʒ/	ʒ
w	/*ɯ/	/*v/	l
m	/*ŋ͡m/	/*m/	r, r_1
p	/*χ/	/*p/	xh, r_2
b	/*g͡b/	/*b/	rh, r_3
n	/*ɳ/	/*n/	y
s	/*ç/	/*s/	x, r_4
z	/*ʝ/	/*z/	ɣ, r_5

of these consonants, the letter chosen represents what we suppose was the most common or the default pronunciation of the consonant represented. In the table are also included alternate graphemes you might find in other, mostly older works, though they are mostly deprecated now.

As you can see, Proto-Ñyqy had potentially two different consonants that could be pronounced as /*m/. Although it did not influence Proto-Ñyqy as far as we know, it definitively influenced the Pritian branch of the family, with <ñ> and <m> influencing differently the vowel following it.

Several consonants used to be unknown at the beginnings of the Proto-Ñyqy study, as can be seen with the old usage of <h_1, h_2, r_1, r_2, r_3, r_4, and r_5>. These are found mostly in the earlier documents but progressively dissapear as our understanding of the Proto-Ñyqy grew during the past century. They are not used anymore, but any student that wishes to read older documents on Proto-Ñyqy should be aware of these.

4.2.3 Pitch and Stress

It is definitively known Proto-Ñyqy had a stress system that was used both on a clause and on a word level, as the languages that evolved from it inherited this characteristic. However, it is not possible to reconstruct it accurately, we only know the vowel <ə> was unstressed and only appeared in words with two syllables or more. However, we do not know if it had any morphological meaning or if it was productive.

On the other hand, we are much less sure about whether it had a pitch system, and if it did whether it was productive or not. Most of the languages that evolved from Proto-Ñyqy had or have one such as the Mojhal-Andelian family, but some don't such as the Pritian family. The most commonly accepted answer is a pitch system appeared after the breakup of the pitchless branches which happenned earlier than the other branches which do have a pitch system. In reconstructed Proto-Ñyqy however, if such a system was present, pitches were most likely non-phonemic and unproductive. It only gained productivity in later stages, after the first breakups we know, in a common unknown ancestor language of the branches which did or still do have either an accent or a pitch system, and even there the evolutions seem to have happened in different ways depending on the branches. It is therefore impossible to know what the pitch system of Proto-Ñyqy was if it

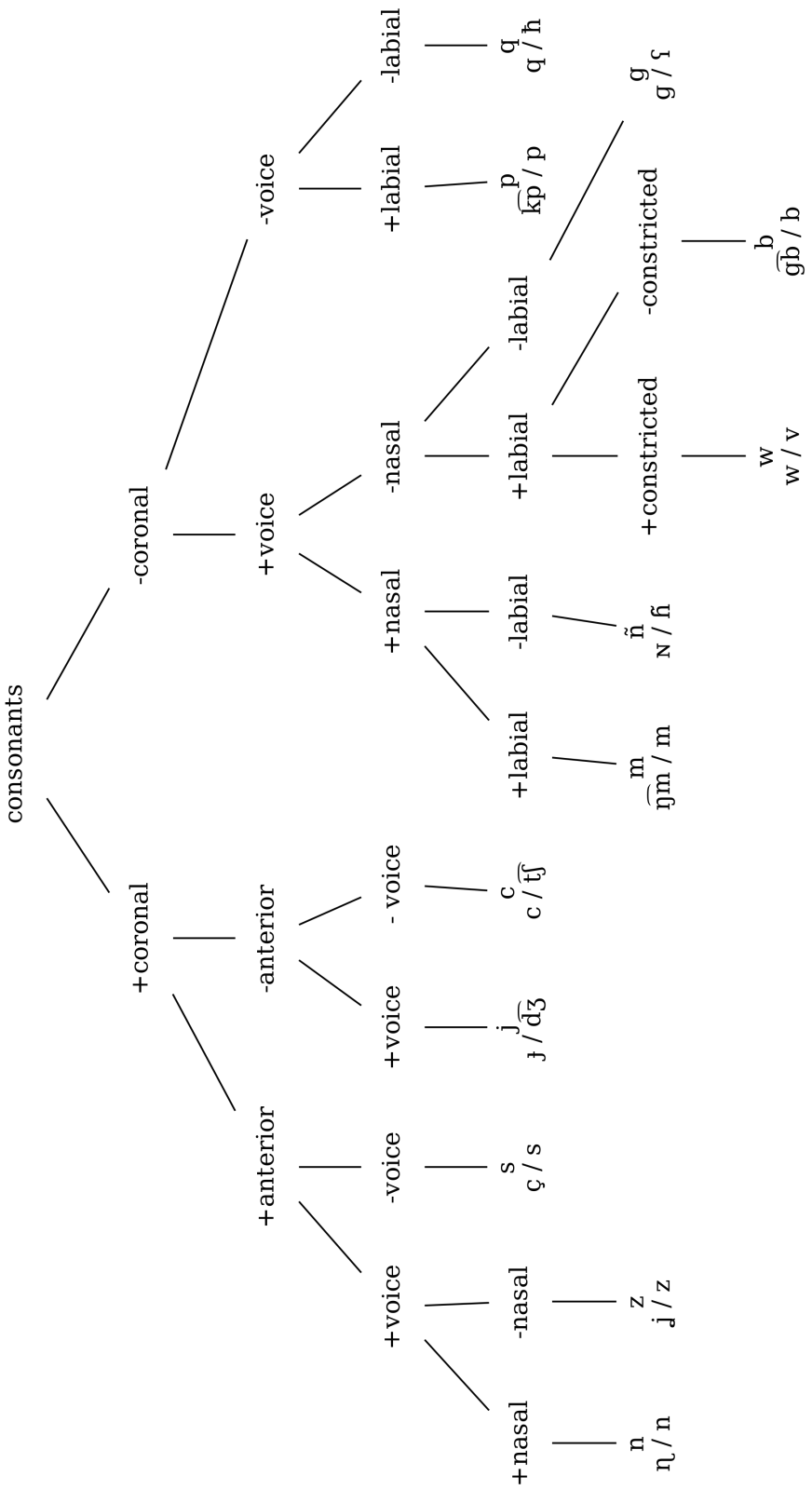

Figure 4.2: Feature Tree of Proto-Ñyqy Consonants

had one.

4.3 Phonotactics

4.3.1 Syllable Structure

The prototypical syllable in Proto-Ñyqy appears as a (C)V(C)(C) syllable with at least one consonant around the vowel, either in the onset or in the coda. At most, it can have one consonant in the onset and two in the coda.

No special rule have been found to rule the onset, it can host any consonant without any effect on the vowel.

However, it has been found the coda has some rules:

- two nasal consonants cannot follow each other — no **-ñm*
- two coronal consonants cannot follow each other — no **-ns*
- labial consonants are never found with another consonant in the coda — no **-ps*

For instance, **noc zebec* would be pronounced as **noc gebec*. It is most likely the features to chose from when converting a consonant from a coronal to a non-coronal were considered as absent by default. This results in the table Table 4.3 — as you can see, the pair <z> and <j> and the pair <s> and <c> convert to the same consonant respectively.

Table 4.3: Conversion Table of Coronal to Non-Coronal Consonants

Coronal Consonant	Non-Coronal Consonant
n	ñ
z	g
s	q
j	g
c	q

It has also been found that if two coronal consonants do follow each other in cross-syllabic environments, with the first one in the coda of a first syllable and the second one in the onset of a second syllable, then the former will become voiced as the latter.

Similarly, if two nasal consonants are found near each other in a cross-syllabic environment, the second nasal consonant will become denasalized. Thus, we get the conversion table Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Denasalization Table for Proto-Ñyqy Consonants

Nasal Consonant	Non-Nasal Consonant
n	z
m	w
ñ	b

It has also been found a schwa tends to appear between syllables when the first one ends with two consonants and the second one begins with one.

4.3.2 Consonantal Dorsal Alternation

As mentioned above in §Section 4.2.2, it seems probable according to Maeln's theory consonants were alternating between dorsals and non-dorsals. We do not know if it only happened between words, within

words, or along whole clauses, but this would explain much of the different languages that evolved from Proto-Ñyqy. Table Table 4.5 shows different possible pronunciation of Proto-Ñyqy words with word-wise consonantal dorsal alternation whether the first consonant is to be considered a dorsal consonant or not. Note the nasal switch as well as the extra schwa insertion in the third example as described above in chapter §Section 4.3.1.

Table 4.5: Different Possible Pronunciation of Proto-Ñyqy Words

Word	Dorsal-Initial	Dorsal-Final
**pœwec*	/*pʁwɛt͡ʃ/	/*pʁvɛc/
**zebec*	/*zɛg͡bɛt͡ʃ/	/*ʝɛbɛc/
**ñocm noc*	/*nɔt͡ʃŋ̍m ə ɦɔc/	/*ɦɔcm ə nɔt͡ʃ/

4.4 Word Structure

Words in Proto-Ñyqy belong to one of two categories: either a bound morphene, or a free morpheme. The former have a restricted use and must be used in certain contexts and do not mean anything by themselves. In Proto-Ñyqy, they are most of the time grammatical morphemes, for instance for marking the genitive between two words or the tense of a verb. Although the morpheme is bound, it does not mean it is part of another word — it will still be most of the time a full fledged word obeying the phonological rules of a whole word.

On the other hand, free morphemes do not require another morpheme to exist. The most basic example is the sentence ***ñe* which means *"It is a house"*. It is also the word for *"house"* by itself. All nouns in Proto-Ñyqy are free morphemes, although they can act as bound morphemes if need be such as when they act as adjectives.

Among multi-syllable world, it is not rare to find compound world made from other known root words. Generally, the order of the new word roughly follows the adjective order, however some words might reflect short noun phrases that became over time a word by itself through abbreviation with for instance **zosøwe* (*shawl*, *veil*) composed of **zoc* and **søwe*. This term is most likely the abbreviation of **zoc pom søwe*, or *head fabric*. Phonetic rules on abbreviation in Proto-Ñyqy are unfortunately very much unknown with no consensus reached on this point, most of them might be older innovations.

4.5 World Classes

4.5.1 Nouns

Nouns in Proto-Ñyqy generally refer to defined entities, such as objects, people, concepts, or events. Regardless of their role during locution, a noun bears no morphological information such as its syntactic role or its number. However, nouns can associate with each other and act as adjectives.

Noun phrases in Proto-Ñyqy are head-first, meaning the noun in noun phrases come relatively early although the former is built around the former and not exclusively after it. Noun phrases are mainly found as agents or patients of a sentence, but they can also be found in genitive and dative constructions.

The nouns could most likely take genitive pronouns, but how they interacted exactly is yet unsure. The

4.5.2 Pronouns and Anaphoric Clitics

Personal Pronouns

It seems only three pronouns existed in Proto-Ñyqy, one for each of the persons you would find in a typical language, as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Proto-Ñyqy pronouns

Person	Pronoun
1	**qy*
2	**bú*
3	**zø*

It appears Proto-Ñyqy pronouns did not have any morphological rule to make them agree in number and due to the apparent lack of gender neither did they agree with it. However, it is possible that at some stage of the development of the language, Proto-Ñyqy began affixing cardinal numbers in order to its pronouns up until the number "six" **ñy* which would have marked a general plural. It is very much possible all numbers up to **ñy* were used with pronouns, however only remains of it as well as **qi* (*two*) for some dual or paucal, and in the case of the Tiltinian family **nø* (*three*) was used for trial and later on for paucal. No remains of **gø*, **co* or any number higher than **ñy* is found in its daughter languages. It is also unlikely **mi* (*one*) was ever used to mark the singular, or at least its usage never persisted in its recorded daughter languages as it cannot be reconstructed with our current knowledge.

- **møgusqim qy ij*

møgusq	im	qy	ij
village	towards	1sg	go

I'm going to the village

- **møgusqim qyqi ij*

møgusq	im	qy	qi	ij
village	towards	1	two/DU	go

We both are going to the village

- **møgusqim qynø ij*

møgusq	im	qy	nø	ij
village	towards	1	3/TRI/PAUC	go

We three are going to the village

- **møgusqim ñyqy ij*

møgusq	im	ñy	qy	ij
village	towards	six/PL	1	go

We are going to the village

It doesn't appear either that there was any morphology associated to their grammatical case. All of its daughter languages have at least a distinction between nominative, accusative, and genitive pronouns, but it appears they all evolved after the Proto-Ñyqy breakup, with no relation between the main daughter language families. The best example is the striking difference between the Andelian and the Mojhal families despite the fact they both come from Proto-Mojhal-Andelian which is the earliest known language to split off from Proto-Ñyqy, as well as Proto-Tiltinian and Old Pritian which again have no similarities regarding their pronoun declensions. The only common roots found are these three pronouns described in Table 4.6.

Personal pronouns are free pronouns which do not need to be bound to other elements in a sentence.

1. **qibú qy qe*

qi	bú	qy	qe
DU	2	1sg	see

I see them both

2. **qyim ñocm qe? *ee qy*

qy	im	ñocm	qe
1sg	DAT	someone	see

ee	qy
yes	1sg

Does anyone see me? Yes, me.

Demonstrative Pronouns

Four levels of demonstratives seems to have existed in Proto-Ñyqy:

****bœce*** near the speaker

****pue*** near the interlocutor

****yqe*** **and** ****jœe*** distant from the speakers

It is interesting to see here a common pattern among languages which is demonstratives pronouns coming from words meaning “here” or “there”. In that case, these pronouns are derived from **bœc*, **pu*, **yq*, and **jœ*.

We are not sure about the difference between **yq* and **jœ*. It is theorized they had differences in distance between the element described by the pronoun and the speakers, maybe one describing something that could be seen and the other not. In any case, only one of the two survived in each language family so we cannot compare their use in documented languages.

Chapter 5

Dictionary

5.1 B

***beñ**

1. (n) tooth/teeth

***bin**

1. (n) something bad, badness
2. (n) mischief, ill-will, maliciousness
3. (n) dirtiness

5.2 C

***cø**

1. (pron) my, first person singular possessive pronoun

5.3 E

5.4 G

5.5 I

5.6 J

5.7 M

5.8 N

***noc**

1. (n) old age
2. (n) elderly person

*__núc__

1. (n) youth
2. (n) youngster, teenager

5.9 Ñ

*__ñocm__

1. (n) human being
2. (n) someone

*__ñe__

1. (n) house

5.10 O

5.11 Ø

5.12 Œ

5.13 P

*__pœwec__

1. (n) bonobo

*__pom__

1. genitive particle

5.14 Q

*__qy__

1. (pron) first person singular

5.15 S

5.16 U

5.17 Ú

5.18 W

5.19 Y

*__yq__

1. demonstrative of proximity, designating something visible by but far from both speakers.

5.20 Z

zebec

1. (n) bongo (antelope)