

The syllabic liquids /ʀ ʁ ʎ/ are included as unitary vocalic phonemes, following Schenker (1995: 94), rather than as combinations of /ʁ ʀ/ + /ʀ ʁ ʎ/, because these groups descend from PIE syllabic liquids and many descendant South Slavic dialects which retain syllabic liquids in this position (including most of those underlying canonical OCS) do not show any evidence of an intervening oral-vowel + liquid stage (such a view is shared by Bethin 1998: 71-72; cf. also Bulgarian dialectal evidence in Stojkov 1954: 130-131, where hard consonants precede reflexes of the LCS /ʀ ʁ/ even in dialects with secondarily-palatalised consonants before fallen weak LCS /ʁ/).

While most OCS shows no sign at all of a front-back distinction in the syllabic-liquids and writes the reflexes of these groups overwhelmingly with <ꙗ> and <лз>, the Kiev Folia, which is the only OCS text that reflects a pre-Jer Shift stage and is very nearly flawless in its etymologically correct rendering of the jers, also spells *r̥_j *r̥_j and *l̥_j as one would expect: *ѣръ ѡуѣрьѡ - ѡѣрьѡуѣ - ѡѣрьѡуѣ - ѡѣрьѡуѣ* <*r̥_j, *ѣлъ ѡуѣлъѡ* <*r̥_j, and *ѣлѣ ѡуѣлѣѡ* <*l̥_j (Winslow 2022: 313), and even Zographensis spells all 5 occurrences of *vľk- ‘wolf’ with *вѣкъ-/въкъъ-* and all 15 instances of its *-mlĭč- root with *-мѣльч-* (e.g. *мѣльчѣиѣ*). Therefore, taken as a whole the Slavic evidence pretty securely points to front and back variants of both syllabic liquids, and for searching purposes it's far preferable to denote them with separate symbols⁷ rather than as the sequences /ьр ьл ъл/⁸.

The so-called ‘dejotated’ reflexes of *tj (and *kt+front-vowel) and *dj are denoted using the modern Serbian Cyrillic letters /ћ/ and /ђ/ respectively, because the commonly used alternatives, i.e.