DOVID KATZ

—

EXPLORATIONS
IN
THE HISTORY
OF
THE SEMITIC
COMPONENT
IN
YIDDISH

—

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Explorations in the History

of the Semitic Component in Yiddish

Vol. I

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—— Christine Walker, Brian Anderson and Rose Hutton ——
were always prepared to arrange for the swift binding of
many of these materials.

My parents, Menke and Rivke, have provided unending
inspiration.

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A B S T R A C T

Yiddish arose in Central Europe.   Nevertheless, the
language includes a Semitic Component comprising thousands of
lexical items that is synchronically fused with the Germanic
Component within Yiddish.   Theories from the sixteenth
century to the present have contended that Semitisms
entered a previously (nearly) wholly Germanic language from
sacred Hebrew and Aramaic texts used in the traditional
Yiddish speaking civilization known as Ashkenaz.

The thesis challenges the text theory.   The
alternative proposed is the continual transmission theory
claiming that the Semitic Component entered Europe in the
vernacular of the original settlers who were, retroactively
speaking, the first Ashkenazim.   Questions concerning the
origin of the Semitic Component are also relevant to the
determination of the relative age of Yiddish and to the
contested status of the protolanguage within historical
linguistics.

The Semitic Component of all known Yiddish dialects
is characterized by a system of long and short vowels in
open syllables, reduced to a system of short vowels only in
closed syllabic position.   The resulting morphophonemic
alternations and unique segmental distribution are shared

neither by the Germanic Component nor the relevant varieties of traditional Hebrew and Aramaic. Nearly all nineteenth and twentieth century theories submit that an erstwhile system of five short vowels expanded in consequence of open syllable lengthening, a sound change triggered by the analogous German development.

The standard theories are challenged by internal and comparative reconstruction as well as the results of transcomponent reconstruction, a method proposed for use with fusion languages such as Yiddish. Phonological proofs put forward demonstrate that the Semitic Component entered Yiddish with its unique vocalism, including the later attested morphophonemic alternations, and can derive exclusively from a prelanguage. Moreover, Yiddish provides evidence for the recovery of a lost Northwest Semitic vowel system midway between the known Tiberian and Palestinian varieties.

C O N T E N T S

x

T A B L E S

Vol. II

S U P P L E M E N T A R Y   M A T E R I A L

comprising papers completed during residence
at University College London

C O N T E N T S

S Y M B O L S

[ ]	enclose broad phonetic representations / phonetic features
| |	enclose synchronically underlying / morphophonemic representations
< >	enclose orthographic / graphemic representations
/ /	enclose phonemic representations
___	underscores cited form
*	precedes reconstructed form
•	precedes spurious form
→	(synchronically) becomes
←	(synchronically) derives from
>	(historically) became
<	(historically) derived from
‖	cognate with
~	(morphophonemically) alternating with
#	clitic / stem boundary
##	word boundary
$	syllable boundary
C	consonant
V	vowel
´	marks primary wordstress

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1. Fusion Languages and Historical Linguistics

1.1. Need for a Model

Yiddish is a language that was born and developed in
the depths of Europe. Yet it contains thousands of forms of
obvious Semitic origin, items with cognates in attested
varieties of Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic. The native Yiddish
speech territory of Central and later also of Eastern Europe
is by no stretch of the imagination coterritorial or even
contiguous with any Semitic speaking community, let alone a
community of speakers of the relevant varieties of Hebrew
or Aramaic. We wish to explore questions concerning the
origin of the Semitic Component in Yiddish, with special
reference to historical phonology. How, when and from where
did Semitisms flow into Yiddish?

The investigator of a problem of this kind who wishes
to avoid atomistic chaos direly requires broadly speaking a
theoretical framework and narrowly speaking a model capable
of handling the history and description of a language
exhibiting two or more genealogically disparate elements.
Such languages are traditionally called mixed (or hybrid)
languages. A full treatment of the concept of the mixed
language within modern historical linguistics deserves to be
the target of a special monograph. Here we propose to sketch
briefly a few of the major trends of thought.

Recent decades boast considerable achievements in the related areas of bilingualism (e.g. U. Weinreich 1953; Paradis 1978), study of pidgins and creoles (e.g. Hymes 1971; Valdman 1977) and the phenomena studied by sociolinguistics under the rubric of mixture of varieties (e.g. Hudson 1980: 56-71). Under the heading of borrowing, Haugen (1950) distinguishes the notions loanwords, loanblends and loanshifts. Acknowledging the traditional importance of borrowing for historical linguists, he proposes, very reasonably, that borrowing "be studied for its own sake", a study he calls bilingual description (1954: 9).

Nearly all the recent work in these fields concerns the phenomenon of language mixture synchronically, that is to say borrowing in progress or in the recent past, and from the viewpoint of parole, that is to say the occurrence and results of borrowing for observed speakers. The student of historical linguistics, besides his obvious need for a diachronic model, needs to cope with the synchronic structure of the mixed language as a fait accompli (as opposed to the synchronic state of affairs at the time of borrowing or mixture). Often observing a language from the perspective of a great span of time, and concerned with comparison and reconstruction, he will also require a model oriented more towards langue than parole. That is not to say that a historical linguist working on the history of a language of diverse genetic affiliation would be wise to be oblivious either to bilingualism or to the social environment of the distant past when the mixture actually occurred. It is just that given the frequent paucity of

evidence at his disposal and his disinclination to excessive
thought experiments, his emphasis will in the nature of
things turn to the sources where the evidence lies ——
the documented and reconstructed older stages of the target
language, the attested cognates in other languages and the
empirical evidence provided by study of the modern dialects.

1.2.   Language Mixture and the Nontransferability Hypothesis

Seventeenth century orientalist Job Ludolf is generally
credited with being the first to argue that genetic affiliation
between languages cannot be established on the basis of shared
vocabulary alone but must rest also upon salient affinity in
grammatical structure (cf. Benfey 1869: 236). Closer to the
nineteenth century period of the rise of modern historical
linguistics, forerunner Christian Jacob Kraus (1787: 5) insisted
that language material be conceptually disentangled from
language structure. Concluding that similar vocabulary items
may result from borrowing, he stressed the primacy of
grammatical structure in the determination of genetic
relationships. Carrying his thinking a stage further, he
posits the dichotomy of "original" vs. "mixed" languages (15).
Founding father Rasmus Rask ([1818] 1967: 31) likewise stressed
the superior value of grammatical agreement because "one finds
that a language which is mixed with another very rarely or never
takes over changes of form or inflection".

It thus happened that one of the very advances that
enabled modern comparative linguistics to rise, the study of
cognate language structure rather than comparison of word lists,

produced as a byproduct the theory that grammatical structure cannot be transferred from one language to another. We shall refer to this theory as the nontransferability hypothesis. It was carried to the extreme of an axiom by Max Müller (1861: 69-71) who categorically pronounced that "languages are never mixed" because "the grammar, the blood and soul of the language is as pure and unmixed in English as spoken in the British Isles, as it was when spoken on the shores of the German ocean by the Angles, Saxons, and Juts of the continent". A more moderate form of the nontransferability hypothesis was formulated by A. H. Sayce (1874: 173), notably that it is not possible "for a people to mix its grammar in the same way that it can mix its lexicon". Sayce grants that "foreign influences may occasion the adaptation of existing formative machinery to new uses" (81) and even allows that an analytic language may "borrow from its neighbours not only the form of the declension, but even the words which compose this form" (186). R. Lepsius (1880: lxxxv) sharply rejected nontransferability, on the grounds that African linguistics proves it to be no more than a prejudice of European scholars.

Not all nineteenth century scholars had a definite yes or no answer to the question of nontransferability of grammar. There were some who approached the question with an open mind, and perhaps more importantly, there were those willing to see aspects of mixed language theory not directly related to nontransferability. Max Grünbaum (1885) for example, published a survey of language mixture and mixed languages in which he sought to establish a quantitative criterion for distinguishing

between the two (24). The two most structured and coherent
nonpartisan   surveys of the issue are perhaps those of
W. D. Whitney (1881) and Hermann Paul (1886).

Whitney, noting the polarically opposed positions of
Müller and Lepsius, sought to steer an intermediate course,
proposing that "the grammatical apparatus merely resists
intrusion most successfully, in virtue of its being the
least material and the most formal part of the language. In
a scale of constantly increasing difficulty it occupies the
extreme case" (14).   At the other end of Whitney's scale is
the most transferable part of language, the noun (19). Because
of the strong constraints on mixture of grammar "languages never
meet and mingle their grammar on equal terms" (16).
Foreshadowing Saussure's synchrony, Whitney notes that
borrowed material "becomes an integral part of that language,
undistinguished, except to reflective and learned study" (16).
Once "assimilated" (26), imported formatives could well become
secondarily productive, e.g. English prefixal de-, dis-, re-
and suffixal -able, -ative, -ism, -ist, -ize and -ment (16-17).

It is symptomatic of the rising consciousness of
language mixture among European historical linguists in the 1880s
that Paul (1886: 337-349) added a chapter on language mixture
to the second edition of his Principien. He differentiates
between a wider sense of mixture as a part of the history of
all languages and the more restricted sense of observed mixture
which he subclassifies into five situations: where the
languages involved are unrelated; where they are related but
have vastly diverged; where they are contiguous dialects of
one language; reintroduction of archaisms, and finally,
influence exerted by the written form of the language (337-338).

Seeking to meaningfully correlate and reconcile the notions of bilingualism with the existence of mixed languages, Paul characterizes mixed languages as the result of a shift in society from bilingualism to monolingualism. Like Whitney, Paul recognizes the native synchronic status of borrowings which are "from the point of view of the instinct of language no longer foreign at all" (340). Rejecting the normative criticisms of purists concerning the validity of Greek and Latin borrowings into modern European languages, he contends that once assimilated they are "neither Latin nor Greek" but creations within the modern languages themselves (346).

On the actual issue of nontransferability, more modern scholarship has shown that while certain types of borrowing may be exceedingly rare, none seems to be impossible. Even the "invincible" number system has passed from Spanish into the Chamorro of Guam and the Marianas (Hall 1964: 370). Mbugu, spoken in Tanzania, has the numbers one through six from one source and the rest from another (Hudson 1980: 60).

It is a curious footnote to the history of the issue that it concerned even Stalin (1950: 21) who held that when languages meet "a cross does not result in some new, third language; one of the languages persists, retains its grammatical system and basic word stock and is able to develop in accordance with its inherent laws of development". As if to surprise his readers, Stalin's example is the Russian language "with which, in the course of historical development, the languages of a number of other peoples crossed and which always emerged the victor". Explaining that Stalin must have been misunderstood, Petráček (1951: 613) concedes that "mixing of languages is one of the important laws governing language

development".

The general openmindedness of the twentieth century on nontransferability may be summarized by Bloomfield's (1933: 468) pronouncement that "it is conceivable that a conflict might end in the survival of a mixture so evenly balanced that the historian could not decide which phase to regard as the main stock of habit and which as the borrowed admixture".

1.3.   Mixed Languages and the Neogrammarian Controversy

The neogrammarians did not deny the existence of language mixture or borrowing. It is simply that for them both phenomena were nuisances that disturbed the regular operation of sound law and the discreet classifications of genealogical relations among languages according to the family tree. August Schleicher was one of the first to rigorously formulate the regularity hypothesis and he deeply influenced the younger generation of neogrammarians (cf. Schmidt 1887). His reconstruction of a Proto Indo-European fable (1868: 207) was at once the most romantic and the most controversial accomplishment of nineteenth century comparativism. Nevertheless, Schleicher (1848: 27) granted that even the oldest languages experienced mixture.

Language mixture, albeit couched in terms of diffusion of waves, played an important role in Schmidt's (1872) refutation of Schleicher's stammbaum. Schmidt's nine lists of illustrative lexical items demonstrating the existence of group of items common to different combinations of languages (36-68) serve at the same time to demonstrate the phenomenon

of mixture among the older classical languages.

Once the doctrine of the exceptionless power of sound laws was proclaimed by Leskien (1876: xxviii, 2) and Osthoff and Brugmann (1878: xiii), language mixture figured as a key argument against the neogrammarian hypothesis. Hugo Schuchardt's (1885) high powered reply to the neogrammarians contended that the intersection of sound changes with other sound changes, the effects of conceptual associations and language mixture all rendered the neogrammarian tenet untenable (3-4).

In Schuchardt's thinking, language mixture countered the neogrammarians in two ways. Firstly, he postulated an infinite mixture of speech in language that goes hand in hand with the infinite differentiation of speech (10). In consequence of this Schuchardt assumed language mixture even within the most homogeneous speech community (16). He was thus able to debunk the neogrammarian model of linear language change coming upon a homogeneous speech community. Secondly, Schuchardt held language mixture responsible not only for language differentiation but equally for the very levelling of speech so high cherished by the neogrammarians (10-11). For them language mixture upset the normal operation of sound laws, while for Schuchardt it was itself the norm rather than the exception in language. For the neogrammarians, "levelling" is a force working, as it were, on behalf of sound laws whereas mixture is parasitic. For Schuchardt both are parts of one and the same process, of mixture at different levels.

For twentieth century historical linguists working within the comparativist tradition, borrowing, ergo language mixture, has not proven to be a theoretical barrier. The question, however, never did quite disappear. Bloomfield (1932: 229-230) found it necessary to make the point that borrowing is not a logical contradiction to the regularity hypothesis. Malkiel (1964: 180) attempted to reconcile sound change and language mixture by recognizing a "state of extra-low predictability" which he called "weak phonetic change", a phenomenon considered "by no means incompatible with the assumption of regular phonological change in a stable, homogeneous society". This last notion has of course been rejected, largely in consequence of the advances made by empirical studies of language in society, especially by Weinreich, Labov and Herzog's (1968: 150-188) proof of the inherent heterogeneity of the speech community.

1.4.   Language Mixture as a Key Factor in Theories of Change

From the inception of modern historical linguistics, there has been a trend of thought deeming mixture to be a vital factor in the understanding of the mechanism of linguistic change. For scholars espousing this view, language mixture is more than an argument for or against exceptionless sound laws. It is a pivotal issue to be studied for its inherent interest and value.

Wilhelm von Humboldt, in his historic address before

the Historical-Philological Section of the Royal Prussian
Academy of Sciences, delivered on 29 June 1820, proclaimed
the confluence of multiple varieties of language to be one of
the foremost forces in the rise of new languages (1822: 241-
242).   For Humboldt, language mixture is one of three basic
causes of language differentiation (1822: 242-243; [1827-1829]
1907: 276).   The other two are the passage of time and its
consequences, and a change of habitat (migration).   Of these
three causes, the mixture of nations speaking different
languages is the mightiest ([1827-1829] 1907: 280).   On the
issue of classification of languages —— an issue closely tied
to the genealogical relationship between languages —— Humboldt
was well aware of the primacy of structure over lexicon,
citing for example the affiliation of Persian with Indo-
European on structural grounds notwithstanding its vast
Arabic element (257).   Yet he was broadminded enough to cite
the counterexample of English where he discerned a dual system
of structure where each part is based on its origin, resulting
in the proclivity of certain morphological endings to affix to
roots of the same origin.   But here again Humboldt found the
exceptions to his rule to be noteworthy, the possibility of
items of diverse origin combining, citing in this connection
dolesome, drinkable, dukedom and plentiful.

Way ahead of his time, and with much more open a mind
than many of the scholars who were to follow, Humboldt
(283) conceded the difficulty in determining the extent to
which grammatical structure may be mixed. He postulated that
there are grammatical influences in cases of language mixture,
but these do not penetrate deeply into the grammatical structure
of the recepient language. Grammatical impact in Humboldt's

thinking usually stops at the point where it would upset the inherent true form of the receiving language on a deep level. The more structurally similar two languages are, the less threat there is to the true inner form and the greater the propensity for mixture (cf. Havránek 1966: 82).

Humboldt (280-281) rejects the limiting of mixture studies to creoles such as the Lingua franca and insists on the importance of mixture as a cause for the birth of languages in general, including the "high culture languages". It is indeed to be regretted that so many of Humboldt's fertile ideas were not explored for so long a time.

The great theoretician of language mixture whose ideas were instrumental in winning a wider appreciation of the importance of the field was Hugo Schuchardt (cf. Spitzer 1943: 417). To Müller's (1861: 69) "languages are never mixed", Schuchardt (1884: 5) replied that there is no completely unmixed language. Language mixture is for Schuchardt far more than ammunition against the neogrammarians' exceptionless sound laws or Müller's denial of the mixed language existing. He held that there is no question of greater importance for linguistics (3).

Paralleling U. Weinreich's (1953) findings that there are no limits to potential interference between the linguistic systems of bilinguals, Schuchardt (1884: 6) claims that language mixture has no limit. Paralleling Labov's (1971: 422-423) uniformitarian principle that change in progress functions in ways similar to change in the past, Schuchardt (1884: 6), finding that no modern dialect is entirely free of mixture, claims that what is true for the treetop

of the stammbaum would be equally valid for its bygone generations. In fact, the boughs and twigs of the stammbaum are so intertwined by countless horizontal lines that it ceases to be a stammbaum. Extending his observations to the idiolect, Schuchardt notes that these lines become even more entangled as each speaker modifies his or her language in contact with many other individuals. This intimate mixture has the power of restraining the rise of potential change by force of its levelling power. Thus for Schuchardt, language mixture contributes to our understanding of both language change and the levelling which results in the limited degree of homogeneity that does exist.

On the related issue of language classification, Schuchardt (1917: 526) proposes that instead of arguing whether a certain language belongs to this or to that family, it would be wise for adherents of each of the theories to see it as representing an intermediate position between both candidate groups. Language mixture thus serves as evidence against discreet classifications and contributes to a classification more in concord with reality. Incorporating language mixture into his wider ideas on the development of language, Schuchardt (1919: 716) suggests that to some extent all the world's languages are related, not by common ancestry, but by virtue of mixture and levelling.

For van der Gabelentz (1891: 267), language history goes hand in hand with language mixture and each speaker is open to the influence of everything he hears. Rejecting the various proposed limitations on mixture, van der Gabelentz contends that the possibilities of mixture are infinite, ranging

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all the way from the adoption of loanwords in the native
language to the utter discarding of the native language (272).

Debrunner (1918: 436) makes the strong point that all
languages are by definition mixed languages, including those
known to us in their most ancient form. He puts forward the
claim that the term "mixed language" only means that we
happen by chance of history to know the parts of the mixture
in their other guise, that of self-contained languages.

It need be no surprise that language mixture held
great theoretical significance for the neolinguists, who placed
so much emphasis on dialect geography. Although Bonfante's
(1947) vigorous defense of the neolinguists against Hall's
(1946) scathing attack is constructed as a reply to the
neogrammarians, the overall neolinguistic position accounts
for mixed languages in a positive way. For Bonfante (1947:
350-351), the very existence of mixed languages represents
a "theoretical capitulation" for supporters of the stammbaum.
As for the nontransferability hypothesis, Bonfante remarks
that "some say the numerals, some the kinship terms, some the
pronouns, some the conjunctions, some phonetics, and some ——
the majority —— morphology in general". Bonfante's position
is that "None of this is true", and he proceeds to bring
counterexamples. In the final analysis, the neolinguists
reject the very dichotomy of "inherited" vs. "borrowed"
because "from the day we are born we imitate, we learn new
words —— that is, we **borrow** them (as the clumsy word goes)
from a source outside ourselves. All words are borrowed from

one generation to the next. Every word, whether it comes
to Manhattan (say) from Brooklyn, Boston, or China, is a
foreign word, a borrowing".

1.5. Twentieth Century Models

Generally speaking, mixed languages have not been the
focus of attention, at least as objects of theory, that they
were in parts of the nineteenth. That is not to say that
the controversies and problems of the last century have been
solved. They were rather left behind, and Humboldt's idea
of mixture as a fundamental concept in a model of historical
linguistics has still not been explored to its full potential.

Nevertheless, great progress has been made. As in
so many other areas, Ferdinand de Saussure's structural
principles invested the concept of the mixed language with
new conceptual clarity. For Saussure (1916: 43), a loanword
is not a loanword when regarded as part of the synchronic
system in which it exists. A language in which mixture is
obvious to the philologist is synchronically speaking no less
a unitary system than one where historical mixture is less
evident.

On the specific relationship between bilingualism in
its widest sociolinguistic sense on the one hand and the rise
of new languages on the other, Uriel Weinreich (1953: 104-106)
proposes that degree of difference, stability of form, breadth
of function and speakers' own rating be considered as four

determining criteria.   For Weinreich, Labov and Herzog
(1968: 155-159) "languages and dialects in contact" are
an important part of the synchronic orderly heterogeneity
characterizing all language, a heterogeneity from which
language change emerges —— "Not all variability and
heterogeneity in language structure involves change; but all
change involves variability and heterogeneity" (188).

At least two scholars have proposed a paradigm
specifically designed for the study of mixed languages.
They are M. H. Roberts (1939) and Max Weinreich (1940; 1973).
Both introduce the term fusion, although for different
reasons.   Roberts distinguishes three chronological stages:
first bilingualism, second fusion and finally mixture.
Fusion denotes the process while mixture is reserved for the
resulting situation (1939: 31-32).   Roberts presents numerous
possible scenarios of interaction between historical, social
and structural factors, although the social aspects tend to
oversimplification. In Roberts' model, bilingualism may be
subordinative   (one language is the vernacular, the other
restricted) or coordinative (both are in equipoise).
Subordinative bilingualism results in the process of affusion
(subdivided into infusion, suffusion and superfusion) and leads
to admixture.   Coordinative bilingualism results in the process
of interfusion (subdivided into diffusion, circumfusion and
retrofusion) and leads to intermixture. Notwithstanding the
confusing plethora of terms, Roberts' model is a major
contribution allowing order to be imposed upon a mass of facts.
It deserves to be tested against a sizable corpus of
documented case histories.

Although primarily concerned with the history of Yiddish, Max Weinreich (1940: 54; 1973: III, 23) proposes a general model for the structure and development of a language of diverse origins. He contends that the only proper application of the term mixed language is to macaronic texts and other situations where mixture is conscious and willful. Weinreich replaces mixture —— both as process and state —— by fusion. While all languages are characterized by some degree of fusion, in some it is particularly conspicuous. These Weinreich calls fusion languages (Yiddish šmélcšpraxn). The cognate German root schmelz had been previously used in this vein, both in reference to Yiddish by Solomon A. Birnbaum ("Das Jiddische besteht der Hauptsache nach aus drei zu einer Einheit verschmolzenen Elementen" —— 1922: 4) and in a wider sense by Humboldt ("Wenn man hierin die lateinischen Töchtersprachen und die Englische mit der Persischen vergleicht, so ist in demselben der Grad der Verschmelzung der fremden und einheimischen Elemente in der hier beobachten Folge dieser Sprachen geringer" —— [1827-1829] 1907: 257).

Weinreich's (1973: I, 32-33) paradigm for fusion languages is in brief this. The languages from which the fusion language draws are the stock languages (šmélcvargšpraxn). Those forms of the stock languages which by reason of historical time and space (cotemporality and coterritoriality) could have entered the fusion language are the determinants (determinántn).

Those forms from the repertoire of the determinants that
did in point of fact become synchronically part of the
fusion language are its components (komponéntn). Weinreich
(1973: III, 23) rejects the term "element" on the grounds that
it suggests dividing a language into parts while component
suggests part of a system and a wholeness. For Birnbaum
(1979: 82) however, the connotations are reversed: "The
words 'element' and 'reaction', taken from chemistry, seem
to provide a suitable metaphor for the linguistic processes
in question. Thus 'element' is preferable to the term
'component', which was introduced some time ago as a substitute.
However, 'components' suggests things placed side by side
without interaction".

We shall be using Weinreich's terms, partly because
they have already become standard in the field of Yiddish
and partly because his model is ideally suited for an
enquiry of this kind —— exploring the origins of the
Semitic Component in Yiddish. We shall be sharply disagreeing
with many of M. Weinreich's conclusions in the history of
Yiddish, especially with respect to the Semitic Component. It
is a tribute to the elegant simplicity and conceptual precision
of the Weinreich model that it can be used to disagree with its
author's views as easily as to support them. Roberts' model
looks through the eyes of the observer and it sees a wide
scene of history, sociology and the status and structure of all
the languages involved. Weinreich's model looks through the
eyes of the analyzed language itself. A future model taking
both into account and providing a theoretical framework and
a paradigm will be of immeasurable value for historical linguistics

2.   Yiddish as a Fusion Language

2.1.   Approaches to Yiddish as a Fusion Language

The combining of the several historically diverse
languages discernible in Yiddish has always been one of the
first characteristics of the language to attract the attention
of scholars.   The fusion character of Yiddish was noted and
discussed by Elias Schadeus (1592: [140-141]), Johann
Meelführer (1607: 265), Johann Buxtorf (1609: 657-658) and by
a number of Buxtorf's followers in Yiddish language studies,
including Andreas Sennert (1666: 64-65), August Pfeiffer
(1680: 525), Johann Christof Wagenseil (1699: 88) and
Franciscus Haselbauer (1742: 241-242).

Johann Heinrich Callenberg (1733: [1]), the missionary
who established the first known university course in Yiddish,
was also apparently the first to attempt a philological
definition of Yiddish. He called Yiddish "a mixed language,
which to be sure consists mostly of German, but also to a
considerable degree of Hebrew words". Attempting to gauge
the mixture, Callenberg called Yiddish "an appreciable mixture"
noting that for him "a slight mixture would not constitute a
separate language".

Callenberg's pupil, Wilhelm Christian Just Chrysander,
one of the greatest Yiddish scholars of the eighteenth century,
penetrated deeper into the nature of the fusion process in
Yiddish. Chrysander (1750b: 5) sought to determine whether

the Jews of other lands spoke an analogous fusion of the
national language and Hebrew. He took as one of his examples
the sample Yiddish sentence <Mit ahn Amhorez hob ich kähn
koved mefalp'l zu seih> 'It is beneath my dignity to engage
in debate with an ignoramus', in which his italics mark the
items of Hebrew derivation [= (modern) Standard Yiddish s'iz
mir nit kən kóvəd misvakéjax cə zajn mit an amórəc].
Chrysander proceeds to enquire whether the English Jew says
<With a Amhorez i haue not koved to bee mefalp'l>, the French
Jew <avec un Amhorez je n'ai point de koved d'étre mefalp'l>.
Citing as his evidence the testimony of travellers who have
been far and wide, Chrysander concludes that there is no
evidence that eighteenth century Jews of England, France,
Italy, Spain, Portugal and Holland have any such systematic
fusion in their language. He even cites (6) literary sources
to demonstrate that the Jews of China spoke the language of the
land. Notwithstanding Chrysander's ignorance of Judezmo
(Ladino), the language of Sephardi Jewry, his appreciation of
the unique status of Yiddish was a feat for its time.
Chrysander was interested in the fusion of Germanic and Semitic
in Yiddish as a systematic process although as a child of his
time he lacked the sophisticated descriptive machinery to
frame his views coherently.

Giehrl (1829: vi-vii) distinguished in a primitive way
between Hebrew per se on the one hand and the Hebrew within Yiddish
on the other. Giehrl noted that while speakers of the early

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nineteenth century varieties of Western Yiddish with whom
he was familiar used a huge number of Hebraisms in their
speech, they were unable to read a Hebrew book. In modern
times this distinction has been meticulously developed and
explored by Max Weinreich (e.g. 1954a: 85-86) as whole
Hebrew vs. merged Hebrew, a conceptual dichotomy that has
proven itself of immense value to students of other Jewish
languages and Jewish interlinguistics (e.g. Wexler 1981:
120). In the work at hand, limited to the history of
the Yiddish language, this opposition will be expressed
as Ashkenazic (a cover term for both the Hebrew and Aramaic
of traditional Ashkenaz which were in extensive use for
liturgical and academic purposes, strictly as written or
recited rather than spoken languages) vs. the Semitic
Component (those parts in Yiddish of Hebrew or Aramaic
origin).

During the nineteenth and early twentieth century,
there were two sociohistorical forces working from different
angles to cause scholars to minimize the fusion aspect of
Yiddish. The first was the theoretical predominance of the
classic comparative model which envisages lineal development
of daughter languages from parent languages. It is within
the period of the heyday of this model that Yiddish linguistics
went through a crucial phase. The most noted monograph written
along strict neogrammarian lines and ignoring the non-Germanic
parts of Yiddish was Jacob Gerzon's (1902) Heidelberg
dissertation comparing the sounds of Northeastern Yiddish with
classical Middle High German. A second force was German
patriotism of German Jewish and non-Jewish scholars alike who

wished to see the speakers of Yiddish as the carriers of German culture into the Slavonic speaking lands (cf. Hildebrand 1869; Güdemann 1888: 295).

Attitudes began to change around the turn of the century. The key transition figure on a number of crucial issues was Leo Wiener, an East European born professor of Slavonics at Harvard University. Remaining faithful to ideas that were on their way out, Wiener (1898: 2) held that the non-Germanic parts of Yiddish "in no way disguise the German form of the language". But on the very same page he remarks that "the influence of the Slavic intellectual atmosphere" and the "rigid adherence to the Mosaic ritual and [...] Hebrew training" results in a "most extraordinary mixture of Germanic, Slavic and Semitic elements, such as it probably not to be found elsewhere on the globe". Wiener's (1899: 15) account of the fusion character of Yiddish laid special stress on the religious factor, and he held that those non-Semitic languages impacted by Islam, such as Turkish, Persian and Hindustani, were better analogies to Yiddish than was a language such as English.

The conceptualization of Yiddish as purely a Germanic language was crumbling quickly. Pioneer Yiddish linguist Alfred Landau (1904: 262) was perhaps the first to openly state that any philologist wishing to investigate Yiddish seriously has to equip himself to deal with three wholly dissimilar language groups — Germanic, Slavonic and Hebraic.

By the early twentieth century, even German-Jewish scholars were criticizing such efforts as Gerzon's (1902) for disregarding the non-Germanic aspects of Yiddish (cf. R. Loewe 1904: 44).

One of the first scholars to actually attempt an analysis of the fusion of the several parts of Yiddish into an integrated system was Matisyohu Mieses (1908: 157). Examining a number of near-synonymous pairs of lexical items where each is of different historical stock, Mieses concluded that fusion could make for subtle semantic and stylistic differentiations and contributes to the expressive potential of the language. This idea, that Yiddish enjoys an inherent proclivity to delicate semantic nuance in consequence of often being able to draw upon items historically synonymous from different components within the language, has been put forward by scholars of widely disparate orientations, including Christian theologians (Strack 1916: iii), German-Jewish scholars (Perles 1918: 196) and Yiddish linguists (Borokhov 1913a: 11, 16; Birnbaum 1943: 599).

Like so many other issues in Yiddish linguistics, the groundwork for the present paradigm of fusion was laid by the founder of modern Yiddish linguistics, Ber Borokhov. Writing a few years before the posthumous publication of Saussure's (1916) celebrated dichotomies, Borokhov (1913a: 9) insisted upon the nativized synchronic status of the several components: "German, Hebrew and Slavic elements, as soon as they enter the vernacular, cease to be German, Hebrew, Slavic —— they shed their erstwhile status

and assume a new one: they become Yiddish. Their
pronunciation is suited to Yiddish phonetics, their
affixation to Yiddish morphology, their declination to
Yiddish etymology, their position in the sentence to Yiddish
syntax". These ideas were further developed and systematized
by Max Weinreich who introduced the dichotomy of determinant
vs. component (cf. §1.5).

A number of twentieth century Yiddish scholars have
regarded the fusion of several components into a unitary
system as the decisive factor in the rise of Yiddish (e.g.
Falkovitsh 1940: 8). As a powerful device capable of
descriptive and explanatory adequacy in diachronic Yiddish
studies, fusion has been the central theme of the writings
of Max Weinreich (e.g. 1936: 533, 537-538). For Weinreich,
the fusion between the determinants that gave rise to Yiddish
continues as a synchronic process of fusion between the
components that continues long after the actual materials
have entered the language. In Weinreich's môdel, the history
of Yiddish is primarily a study of the "interpenetration,
readjustment [and] reinterpretation" of the several
components (1953: 514). In his investigations of many
highly specialized difficult points in Yiddish historical
linguistics, Weinreich frequently seeks explanations in
terms of the mutual influences between the components and of
each component upon the whole (e.g. 1958a: 117). His
magnum opus is his four volume history of the Yiddish language
(1973; partially translated as M. Weinreich 1980). Unlike
conventional language histories proceeding from prehistory to

the present more or less chronologically, Weinreich's
concentrates on the cultural and historical framework, the
stock languages and the paths connecting them with the
determinants and components of Yiddish and most centrally,
the fusion of the components. Weinreich is thereby able
to emphasize the factors of selectivity and specificity
of Yiddish with respect to the cognate languages. As
summarized by his son Uriel Weinreich (1971: 792), the fusion
model for the history of Yiddish maintains that "the complex
fusion of the several stocks and the rise of purely internal
innovation is as important a principle in the formation of
Yiddish vocabulary as the multiplicity of its origins".

2.2.   Fusion and the Sociology of Yiddish

The fusion character of Yiddish has played a pivotal
role in the historical sociology of Yiddish. The ease with
which even the naive observer could discern the multiplicity
of the origins of the language —— due to continuing
familiarity with contemporary stages of the stock languages ——
continually resulted in attacks upon the legitimacy of the
language. The detractors of the language on the basis of
"bastardization" have included anti-Semites (e.g. Gottfried
1753: 3), German-Jewish scholars (e.g. Zunz 1832: 438-439)
and adherents of the movement to revive Hebrew (e.g. Tavyov
1903: 128). A number of scholars not directly involved in
the social debates over Yiddish have none the less expressed
conflicting sentiments on the issue (e.g. Andree 1881: 105).

Supporters of the social status of Yiddish have in turn made the fusion character of Yiddish one of the focal points of their own arguments. Pioneering Yiddish lexicographer Y. M. Lifshits (1863: 326) asked of other, supposedly pure languages, "Were they then given on Mount Sinai? Like our own language, they too arise from other languages". In his spirited defence of Yiddish, written incidentally in Hebrew, Mieses (1907: 270) pointed out that such languages as French, Italian, Spanish and English were also characterized by fusion. In his classic address before the Tshernovits Language Conference of 1908, which played an immeasurably important role in the sociological history of the language, Mieses (1908: 165) noted that even ancient languages could lay no claim to purity; that only languages developed in isolation from general civilization preserved their genetic purity "as kosherly as during the six days of Creation" (150); that it was only linguistic self-hatred that caused some Yiddish speakers to despise their native language on account of its mixedness (149-150); and finally that the multiplicity of sources is an asset in terms of expressive potential (157). Responding to the cries of "Jargon" of the movements antagonistic toward Yiddish, Borokhov (1913a: 8), citing English, Japanese and Persian as parallels, noted that "there are in fact beautiful, powerful languages which are even more mixed than Yiddish, but nobody will call them 'dirty Jargon' on account of it". A full account of the importance of fusion in the sociolinguistic

history of Yiddish deserves to be the topic of a special
monograph.

2.3. Interest for General Linguistics

Fusion has been the chief point of contact between
general linguistics and Yiddish studies.   Max Grünbaum
(1885: 32-41) integrated his study of Yiddish with his
survey of fusion languages.   It is clear from a personal
letter of Alfred Landau of 8 October 1892 that Hugo
Schuchardt's writings on fusion languages were a great
source of inspiration for his work (cf. Gininger 1938: 288).
Schuchardt in turn felt that Yiddish was promising
territory for the testing and development of his own theories
of language mixture.   In fact, Schuchardt encouraged Landau's
lonely work in Yiddish linguistics both in print (1886: 324)
and in personal correspondence (cf. Gininger 1938: 290-291;
1954: 154-155).

The potential interest of Yiddish studies for
general historical and descriptive linguistics on the issues
of the development and the structure of fusion languages has
been repeatedly noted (e.g. M. Weinreich 1937; 1940b: 105;
Althaus 1972: 1349).   With the exception of Gray's (1979:
220-221) recent efforts to counter Whitney's proposed
constraints on language mixture (cf. §1.2), using evidence
from the fusion of Slavonic aspect and Germanic morphemes

in Yiddish, little has yet been done in the way of
reexamining fusion process in Yiddish from the vantage
point of general linguistics.

2.4.   The Components of Yiddish

Chrysander (1750a: [1]; 1750b: 4) analyzed the Yiddish
lexicon into four elements: firstly, German, even if in
altered form; secondly Hebrew and Chaldaic [= Aramaic];
thirdly, combined German and Hebrew, i.e. Hebrew or Aramaic
stems inflected by German affixes; finally, uniquely Yiddish
words. This final category is defined as comprising forms
of German origin lost in the German with which Chrysander was
familiar but preserved in the Yiddish known to him, and items
of Latin and Polish origin (1750a: [8-10]).

If Chrysander's third category is set aside and two of
the three subcategories of his fourth group are reclassified
as separate categories, we are left with the present day
standard classification, as advocated by, among others,
Max Weinreich (1973: I, 32). The Weinreich scheme analyzes
Yiddish into four components: Hebrew-Aramaic, Laazic (= Jewish
correlates of Old French and Old Italian), German and Slavonic.

Between Chrysander and Weinreich there have been a
number of variations in the classification. Friedrich (1784:
[xiii-xiv]) analyzed Yiddish into three elements: German,
wholly Hebrew and fused Hebrew stems and German affixes.

Zunz (1832: 439-441) counted four elements: Hebrew; fused
Hebrew and German (of which he distinguished four types);
German; and finally a category comprising everything left.
Avé-Lallemant (1858-1862: III, 198-199) devised a classification
comprising two Semitic elements, the first preserving
original morphology and flection and the second inflected
Germanically. Thus, Avé-Lallemant's second type of Semitism
corresponds with the Chrysander-Friedrich-Zunz category of
combined Germanic and Hebraic.

It is obvious that the number of components in Yiddish
depends on how the reckoning is done and what counts as
a component depends on the criteria employed. Jechiel
Fischer (1936: 110-111 [= Bin-Nun 1973: 110-111]), the present
Bin-Nun strongly underlines the importance of differentiating
between element in the wider sense, which can include any
attested items of whatever quantity, spread and structural
significance and a more restricted technical sense in which
the parts of Yiddish cognate with stock languages are termed
e̲l̲e̲m̲e̲n̲t̲ only by virtue of meeting five criteria. Bin-Nun's
criteria are firstly that the candidate set of items be more
or less common to all of Yiddish; secondly, that it played a
role in the birth and development of Yiddish; thirdly that it
have impact in all areas of grammar; fourthly that it be
of quantitatively substantial importance; and finally, that
its qualitative import not be negligible. By his own criteria
Bin-Nun arrives at three elements: German, Hebrew and Slavic,
with a qualification that the few Romance vestiges can be
included if desired, in which case there are four elements.

In the work at hand we shall be using the term
component in the Weinreichian sense of language material
that is synchronically Yiddish (cf. §1.5), but with the
following three more stringent criteria.   A component
in Yiddish must be

(a)   geographically of Pan-Yiddish distribution;

(b)   temporally of Pan-Yiddish distribution;

(c)   of unquestionable lexical and structural consequence.

By these qualifications there can be no more than two
components in Yiddish: the Germanic Component and the Semitic
Component.

Within Eastern Yiddish, three components can be
reckoned with, Germanic, Semitic and Slavonic.   The Slavonic
Component is prominently represented in the phonology, lexicon
and syntax of Eastern Yiddish.   In as much as all Yiddish
spoken today is Eastern Yiddish, it is quite correct to
describe modern Yiddish as containing three components by c alone.
However, the now defunct but once massive speech community
of Western Yiddish had no Slavonic component.   At most,
Western Yiddish has a handful of lexical borrowings from
Eastern Yiddish.   In any enquiry concerning the whole of
the speech territory of Yiddish and the entirety of the history
of Yiddish, there are but two components —— Germanic and
Semitic —— meeting the three criteria. It cannot, however,
be stressed too strongly that the issue of the number of
components in Yiddish is one of methodological significance,
not of empirical substance.

All forms of Yiddish share a handful of lexical
items of ultimate Romance origin, e.g. bénčņ 'bless; recite
the grace after meals', léjənən 'read'.   Max Weinreich
(1973: II, 50) concedes that his Laazic Component is
justifiable only on grounds of pedigreed genealogy.   The
notion of a Romance (or Laazic) component is intimately bound
up with the theory that Yiddish originated in the Rhineland
in the territory known in medieval rabbinic sources as Loter.
According to this theory, the creators of Yiddish were
Jewish migrants from parts of France and Italy and their
descendants.   This theory of the rise of Yiddish, first alluded
to by Elijah Levita (1541: [164]) has been extensively
developed by Max Weinreich (1954a: 78; 1973: I, 3-5, 334-
353; III, 344-381).   Students of the history of the
Germanic Component in Yiddish, while debating amongst
themselves whether Bavarian or East Central German was of
greater importance in the formation of Yiddish, are agreed
that scarcely anything in Yiddish points linguistically to
the German dialects of the Rhineland (cf. Mieses 1924:
269-318; King 1979: 7-8).   Whatever the historical reality
of medieval Jewish population concentrations and the linguistic
reality of affinity with certain German dialects, it is clear
that the linguistic evidence does not sustain a "Romance
Component" even in a far weaker sense than our own.   A number
of nineteenth century scholars sought to demonstrate a weighty

French influence in Old Yiddish texts (cf. Jost 1850: 323; Güdemann 1880: 273-280). Nokhem Shtif (1913: 317) has noted correctly that the "French connection" in Old Yiddish cannot be seen even through a telescope.

We conclude this chapter by explaining our choice of names for the two Pan-Yiddish components.

The term Germanic Component is chosen over the equally possible German Component to emphasize the diverse dialectal origins of the Germanic Component, and to avoid confusion with some general "German" which may be misunderstood as modern standard German. The use of Germanic is not intended to leave open the possibility that some Germanic language other than forms of medieval German may be involved in the development of Yiddish.

The term Semitic Component is chosen as a cover term for both Hebrew and Aramaic, and to avoid confusion with some general "Hebrew" which may be misunderstood as modern standard Israeli Hebrew. We reject the notion of "Hebrew-Aramaic" as usually defined (e.g. M. Weinreich 1953: 488; Wexler 1981: 119) in terms of a single, merged written language. To be sure, medieval Hebrew had a weighty Aramaic Component and medieval Aramaic a weighty Hebrew Component, but the two remained separate written languages in Ashkenaz. The use of Semitic is not intended to leave open the possibility that some Semitic language other than Hebrew or Aramaic may be involved in the development of Yiddish.

3.   The Issues

3.1.   Origins of the Semitic Component in Yiddish

As noted at the outset (§1.1), the mystery of how,
when and from where Yiddish, a European language, acquired
a Semitic Component is the central issue of the thesis. There
are essentially two major theories of origin of the Semitic
Component.   The oldest and most widely accepted theory is
the text theory.   According to most versions of the text
theory, Yiddish originated as a nearly wholly Germanic language
(with or without Romance elements) which initially contained
only a small set of Semitisms semantically restricted to
the spheres of religion and communal life.   Semitisms
entered the language over the centuries from the frequently
studied texts of the Pentateuch, Talmud and later rabbinic
writings, and from the frequently recited texts of canonical
prayer.   The text theory of necessity entails two
corollaries: firstly, that the Semitic Component in its
attested strength and structure could not have been present
at the outset, and secondly that it originates from within
Ashkenaz —— the Jewish subculture of the medieval Germanic
speaking lands which expanded through much of central and
eastern Europe.

Paradigmatically, the text theory rose by analogy
with the impact of Latin upon the European vernaculars.

Historically, the text theory originated in the writings of
sixteenth and seventeenth century Christian scholars of
Yiddish. Elias Schadeus (1592: [140-141]), citing the
parallel of Latin and French borrowings in the language of
German chancelleries, proposed that the Jews incorporate
Semitisms "partly out of habit and partly to prevent
Christians from understanding them". Buxtorf (1603: 152)
likewise cited noncomprehension as a conscious objective,
and added (1609: 657) that daily use of Semitisms was a
means to teach children Hebrew. Perhaps the first to
make the explicit claim, even if in primitive terms, that
Semitisms in Yiddish derive from texts was Johann Jacob
Schudt (1714-1718: II, 281). Chrysander (1750a: 3)
suggested three explanations for the presence of Semitisms
in Yiddish: firstly, love for the Hebrew language;
secondly, the Jewish inclination to be different; finally,
to avoid being understood by non-Jews.

The text theory has on the whole been accepted by
modern Yiddish scholars. Wiener (1904: 305) cites
"isolation and [...] predilection for Talmudic and exegetic
studies" as having "introduced a large number of Hebrew and
Aramaic words into the vocabulary of the learned and thence
into that of daily life". Borokhov (1913f: 376), making
the text theory less rigid, holds that "Hebrew words
penetrated into Yiddish not only directly from the Bible,
Talmud and religious books; they also entered indirectly

from official communal use and from comercial ties with Jews who did not speak German". Prilutski (1930: 144) identifies the origins of the Semitic Component with the traditional Jewish institutions where sacred texts were studied and recited —— the kheyder (traditional primary school), the yeshive (traditional Talmudic and rabbinical academy) and the synagogue. Fischer (1936: 113) distinguishes between the Semitic Component which entered from religious writings and the other parts of Yiddish which were gleaned from the language of living speakers. While conceding that religious terminology of Semitic derivation existed in early Yiddish, Beranek (1957: 1961, 1970) ascribes the origin of the Component to the sacred language in use by the Jews. For Uriel Weinreich (1971: 795) the rise of the Semitic Component is characteristic of "the old Diaspora pattern of reaching into the sacred language for additional vocabulary". One of the twentieth century curiosities of Yiddish linguistics is Nokhem Shtif's about-face on the history of the Semitic Component. Without delving into the sources of the Semitic Component per se, Shtif (1913: 320-321; 1922: 189) regarded it to be of considerable antiquity in Yiddish. After settling in the Soviet Union, Shtif (1929: 12-13; 16) went beyond the normative calls of his colleagues for eradication of the Semitic Component from modern literary Yiddish. He argues that the "Hebrew occupation in Yiddish" was a late phenomenon

resulting from increased power of the rabbinic class which helped replace earlier "real Yiddish" words (i.e. Germanisms) which he holds were characteristic of the working classes (cf. M. Weinreich 1931; also Spivak 1934).

The text theory has been most meticulously developed and most ardently supported by Max Weinreich. Like most other modern adherents of the theory, Weinreich allows that a certain religious terminology was in use by the earliest speakers of Yiddish (cf. M. Weinreich 1928a: 15; 1939: 49; 1940a: 30-31). But by and large the Semitic Component, in Weinreich's view, resulted from the specific interaction of Ashkenazi Jews with their traditional texts — "From the sacred books there flowed into the language words, phrases, sayings and proverbs relating to the most varied aspects of life" (M. Weinreich 1973: I, 222). Analyzing the linguistic mechanism by which the Semitic Component entered into Yiddish, Weinreich (1973: II, 264) stresses that it was "not from mouth to ear but from the sacred book or through quotations from the sacred book". Thus Weinreich, like Fischer before him, posits a unique mode of entry for the Semitic Component. In fact, Weinreich often warned against parallels with earlier written German, insisting that the Germanic Component entered Yiddish not from texts but from coterritorial German dialect speakers (e.g. 1928a: 20; 1953: 489; 1954a: 75). Weinreich (1973: I, 227; III, 232-234) carries the text theory a stage further than

most of his predecessors by seeking to systematically
establish the specific passages in traditional sources
from which Semitisms derive, a notion that had previously
only been alluded to by Yiddish linguists (cf. Golomb
1910: 8; Borokhov 1913e: no. 341).   He derives álpi
'according to' < Genesis 45:21, bekórev 'soon' < Ezekiel
11:3, berójgez 'angry' < Habakkuk 3:2, txíles 'initially'
< 2 Samuel 21: 9.   Joffe and Mark (1961: xx), in the
introduction to their dictionary make the more modest claim
that cited passages are meant to offer a characteristic
usage of the item in a Hebrew or Aramaic context that
might have served as a stimulus for the introduction of the
item into Yiddish.

Although the text theory overwhelmingly carries the
field, other suggestions have been put forward. Mieses
(1915: 32; 1924: 219) argues that the Semitic Component is
of great antiquity.   Rubshteyn (1922: 22-23, 26, 33,
38-40) contends that the Semitic Component entered Yiddish
in the earlier portion of the Middle Ages in consequence
of Jewish participation in international trade.   According
to this theory, Semitisms entered the language partly to
facilitate communication with non-Ashkenazi Jewish
communities, and partly to enhance the social prestige of
the international trader in communities where use of Hebrew
and Aramaic words would be a commercial asset. Without
specifying his remark, Bloomfield (1932: 229) suggests

Yiddish "be examined for a substratum" on the grounds that
"its deviation from the other German dialects is not, one
infers, to be explained by separation since the late Middle
Ages".   Allony (1971) attempts to identify a select corpus
of Semitic Component items culled from a number of dictionaries
with the Jewish dialect spoken in parts of Palestine in the
tenth century.   Solomon A. Birnbaum has steered a moderate
course by accepting the text theory as accounting for much
of the Semitic Component (e.g. 1923b: 153; 1979: 66) while
maintaining that it "belongs to an uninterrupted development
in speech and writing" (1942: 64), and that it existed
"in and before the fourteenth century" (1939: 42).   More
recently, Birnbaum (1979: 58) has argued that the "Semitic
stratum was the primary one, and the Germanic stratum was
added to it" although he qualifies the remark by limiting
it to lexical items "essentially connected with the sphere
of religion".

The logical alternative to the text theory is a
theory claiming that the greater part of the Semitic
Component   —— not merely a core of religious terminology ——
was brought into German speaking territory in the everyday
speech of the settlers who were, retroactively speaking, the
first Ashkenazim.   It would then have fused with the medieval
German dialects at once.   However modified and developed,
this Semitic Component was uninterruptedly transmitted in the
usual manner of generation to generation linguistic transmission.

A theory making this claim to account for the attested existence of the Semitic Component in later Yiddish may be called the continual transmission theory. The continual transmission theory of necessity entails two corollaries: firstly, that the Semitic Component, at the very least in its attested strength and structure, was present at the outset, and secondly that it is pre-Ashkenazic. This second corollary further implies that to a considerable extent the Semitic Component in each dialect of Yiddish has its origin in what may be called the Proto Semitic Component. Wexler (1981: 99) in his proposals concerning the comparative study of Jewish languages, notes that Hebrew and Aramaic elements may be acquired by Jewish languages by adstratal borrowing (compatible in the case of Yiddish with the text theory) or substratal retention (consistent with the continual transmission theory).

The central theme of the work at hand is the demonstration of the plausibility of the continual transmission theory in the history of the Semitic Component in Yiddish, strictly on the basis of linguistic evidence and with special reference to phonology. Needless to say, such an inquiry cannot proceed without a workable framework for the history of the language, its dialectal structure and its minimal phonological history. These will be briefly sketched in the next chapter. There are however two additional

issues of utmost importance in the history of Yiddish
which are closely linked to the origin of the Semitic
Component ―― the age of the Yiddish language and the
viability of the concept of Proto Yiddish.

3.2. The Age of Yiddish

Debate concerning the age of Yiddish dates to the
nineteenth century. The first pronouncements on the subject
were made by German-Jewish scholars of the "Science of
Judaism" school which sought to apply the modern methods
of the historical and philological sciences to the study of
Judaism. Socially, the group was conditioned by the German-
Jewish Enlightenment of the late eighteenth and early
nineteenth century of which they themselves were a product.
An important part of their integrationist programme entailed
the spread of Standard German amongst the Jewish population
of the German speaking countries and the stamping out of
Yiddish. In their capacity as scholars, many of the
"scientists of Judaism" made invaluable and permanent
contributions to the science of Yiddish, especially in the
fields of literary history, historical bibliography and
traditional philology. Nevertheless, their socially
conditioned biases led them to propose solutions to
problems in the history of Yiddish that would be compatible
with their social approach. As a scholarly question with
potential social ramifications, no question in Yiddish studies

was more explosive than that regarding the antiquity of
the language.

The model for the history of Yiddish espoused by
many nineteenth century German-Jewish scholars was first
formulated by one of the group's founding fathers, Leopold
Zunz, who had participated in the launching of the Verein
für Kultur und Wissenschaft der Juden in 1819. For Zunz
(1832: 438) the history of Yiddish is the decline of German as
spoken by Jews. While conceding a few early specificities
in the speech of German Jews, Zunz argued that medieval
Jewry spoke a close approximation to the German of their
neighbours. In the sixteenth and subsequent centuries,
according to Zunz's model, the language declined to the
contemptible "Jargon" it was in Zunz's own time. This
model was accepted by a number of scholars (e.g. Karpeles
1886: 1002). Both in regarding Yiddish as a corruption and
by claiming that in earlier times Jews too spoke German, the
Zunz model exhibited a Jewish patriotism for Germany that
was in line with efforts on behalf of Jewish emancipation
(cf. Shtif 1913: 319; 1922: 192; Shiper 1933: 81; M.
Weinreich 1954b: 104-105; 1967: 2199). This patriotism has
a certain parallel in Eastern Europe where some scholars
argued that Jews initially spoke Slavonic dialects and switched
to Yiddish secondarily. Considerable debate has been devoted
to the Slavonic theory (cf. Harkavy 1867; Borokhov 1913e:
nos. 422-458; Rubshteyn 1913; Dubnov 1913; Shtif 1913:
321-324; M. Weinreich 1973: I, 92-95; III, 83-85).

There arose amongst a number of mid and late nineteenth century German-Jewish scholars the more extreme view that Western Yiddish did not exist until the seventeenth century when a large number of East European Jews, fleeing the massacres in the Ukraine of 1648 and 1649, fled westward and brought their Yiddish with them. Jost (1859: 208) claimed that the seventeenth century westward migration of "teachers, cantors, rabbis and community officials" was instrumental in displacing German with Yiddish. The theory was most vigorously espoused by Güdemann (1887: 105; 1888: 296-297; 1891: xxii-xxiii). Steinschneider, who made no secret of his loathing of Yiddish (cf. 1898: 75; 1904: 759-760), attributed the rise of Yiddish to the "forced isolation and general crudeness" resulting from the Thirty Years' War (1898: 76).

By the late nineteenth century, however, some German-Jewish researchers were pointing to the importance of Yiddish studies for Germanics (cf. Grünbaum 1882: viii), and some were even lamenting the academic losses resulting from the prejudices against the language (cf. Berliner 1898: 162). As on the recognition of fusion as a key feature of Yiddish (cf. §2.1), new ideas on the age of Yiddish began to emerge in the writings of a number of scholars around the turn of the century. Countering the arguments of those who sought to see seventeenth century persecutions as the cause of the

development of Yiddish, Shulman (1898: 44-46) proposed
that fourteenth century persecutions, the most notorious
of which were the Black Death massacres of 1348 and 1349,
would have had an analogous effect upon the language spoken
by fleeing Jews. Shulman did however accept that the
seventeenth century return westward had serious linguistic
implications. Here again the major transition figure was
Leo Wiener. On the one hand Wiener was ostensibly committed
to the Zunz model (cf. 1894: 175-176). On the other he
had his doubts. On the same page in which he repeats
Zunz's claim that there is no sign of Yiddish predating the
sixteenth century, Wiener (1893: 42) discusses a fifteenth
century manuscript in which "there are already to be found
the peculiarities that distinguish the Russian variety of
the Judaeo-German from the N[ew] H[igh] G[erman]". He
furthermore finds it puzzling that Grünbaum (1882: 29-30),
explaining away some of these specificities as dialectal
German variants, ignores the parallel provided by modern
spoken Yiddish. Wiener's conflicting statements are
symptomatic of his time. At one point he argues (1899:
16-17) that the importation of Yiddish books emanating
from the Slavonic speaking lands was a decisive factor
in the development of Western Yiddish. At another (1904:
304-305) he cites Buxtorf's (1609), Pfeiffer's (1680) and
Wagenseil's (1699) remarks on the specificities of Yiddish
as evidence "that the origin of Judaeo-German must be
assigned to a period much earlier than that of which they

treat".

Modern Yiddish linguistics has unequivocally
discarded the notion that seventeenth century migrations
westward into Germany could have had any serious impact
upon Yiddish (cf. e.g. Birnbaum 1923a: 152; 1929:
270; M. Weinreich 1923a: I, 50). One twentieth
century school of Yiddish linguistics argues that Yiddish
is roughly a thousand years old. A second opts for a
period of origin anywhere between the thirteenth and
fifteenth centuries.

The "millennialists" contend that Yiddish originated
"on touchdown", that the language of the first compact
settlements of Jews on medieval German soil differed
from the very beginning from that of their coterritorialists.
As irony would have it, it was first proposed by the
celebrated German police chief and criminologist, Friedrich
Christian Benedict Avé-Lallemant who was responding to the
theories of one German-Jewish scholar and was soon attacked
by another for his views on the age of Yiddish.
Avé-Lallemant (1858-1862: III, 204-207) challenged Zunz's
(1832: 438-443) ideas concerning the history of Yiddish
and put forward the theory that the history of Yiddish
begins with Jewish colonization on German speaking territory.
As evidence he cites the intensity of the fusion of the elements
in Yiddish, the documentation of Yiddish loanwords in early
criminological sources and the attestation of Germanic
archaisms in Yiddish. Most of Avé-Lallemant's specific
examples offered in support of his views are unconvincing and

frequently erroneous, but the methodology he proposes and the conclusions he reaches — anticipating many achievements of twentieth century Yiddish linguistics — are indicative of a Yiddish linguist ahead of his time. Almost immediately he was sharply attacked by Steinschneider (1864: 36-37) for his view that Yiddish was far older than Zunz had allowed.

The twentieth century millennialists are nearly all students of the "Yiddishist school" in Yiddish linguistics, the branch of Yiddish language research founded by Borokhov (1913a) which views Yiddish studies as a self centered discipline rather than a satellite of Germanic studies. Borokhov himself (1913a: 4) cautiously maintained that Yiddish "is probably not younger than six or seven hundred years". Mieses (1915: 30) was apparently the first in the present century to argue that Yiddish arose as soon as Jews settled in what was to become Ashkenaz (cf. also Mieses 1919: 123). Rubshteyn (1922: 8), in the context of his theory of international trade in the earlier Middle Ages as the prime force responsible for the rise of Yiddish, concluded that Yiddish arose in that period. Shiper (1924: 109) reexamined onomastic sources dating back to the eleventh century and concluded that the attestation of personal names of Hebraic, Germanic and Romance origin matches the later attested structure of Yiddish. He proceeded to reconstruct an early form of the fusion language of the eleventh century. Introducing the sociological

thought experiment, Shiper (1933: 79, 83) argued that
certain individuals of a privileged class may well have
spoken German but that this was not the case with respect
to the vast majority of the Jewish population who spoke
Yiddish.   Although Shiper's specific linguistic points
are frequently flawed (cf. Prilutski's notes to Shiper
1933 and Kalmanovitsh 1937: 384), he introduced methods
which have yet to be fully explored for possible linguistic
ramifications.   Another proponent of the theory that
Yiddish was distinct from the very earliest times of the
Ashkenazi subculture was Yiddish literary historian Y.
Tsinberg (1935: 22-28).

Solomon A. Birnbaum (1929: 270) was perhaps the
first to specifically state the view that Yiddish is
about a thousand years old.   Invoking practical,
psychological, philological and sociological criteria,
Birnbaum too (1939: 43; 1979: 57) traced the origins of
Yiddish to the beginnings of continuous compact Jewish
settlement on Germanic speech territory.   In his Marburg
University doctoral dissertation, Max Weinreich (1923a: I,
53) had maintained that even the oldest Yiddish was
distinctly different from coterritorial German dialects.
At first, Weinreich (1923a: I, 65; 1928a: 14) set the age
of the language at "at least seven to eight hundred years".
Later, in his outline of the history of Yiddish placed before
the Fifth International Congress of Linguists in Brussels

in 1939, he asserted that the beginning of Yiddish must be
assigned "to the time when the uninterrupted history of the
Jews in Germany starts, that is, to about 1000 A.D." (1939:
49), bringing him into conformity with Birnbaum. Weinreich
often stressed that Jewish communities —— as opposed to
individuals —— on German soil never spoke German before
modern times (cf. 1953: 497; 1954a: 78-79; 1954b: 107-108;
1955: 13; 1959: 565). For Weinreich (1954a: 78), any
model positing a pre-Yiddish stage in which Jews spoke
German could be tenable only "if we were to fancy a group
of Germans in the Rhineland, pagan to begin with and afterwards
Christianized, embracing Judaism" and developing a separate
language. It is somewhat curious that one of the staunchest
adherents of a maximal age of Yiddish is at once a strong
supporter of the text theory (cf. §3.1) which implicitly
suggests fusion as a secondary process in the history of
Yiddish.

None of the adherents of the millennial theory has
produced hard linguistic evidence although the school has
collectively mustered a noteworthy collection of circumstantial
evidence. The modern opposition to the theory maintains that
Yiddish began somewhere between the periods proposed by
the Zunz school and the Avé-Lallemant approach. Consisting
largely of Germanists, this school places the birth of Yiddish
anywhere between the thirteenth and the fifteenth century.
Its founder is Jechiel Fischer (1936: 39-40) who maintains
that the beginnings of Yiddish can most productively be
searched for in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Specifying his datings further, Fischer (1936: 61) concludes that the thirteenth century needs to be included in the history of Yiddish as the period of events leading to the development of Yiddish and the fourteenth century as the early stage of actual development of Yiddish.

Süsskind (1953: 106), disputing Weinreich's datings, posits a period of "Judeo-German" extending until around 1350, followed by an Old Yiddish period which he extends from 1350 to 1500. Joffe (1954: 102) considers that present evidence confirms the existence of Yiddish for "over six hundred years" noting "I prefer to err on the side of understatement". Beranek (1957: 1961, 1963-1964), maintaining that the language of Ashkenazi Jews did not differ at first from German, with the exception of Hebrew and Aramaic expressions for religious concepts, places the beginnings of Yiddish between 1300 and 1350. Marchand (1965: 250) places the beginnings of Western Yiddish as a language with certain uniform traits not linked to the local German dialect between 1450 and 1500. His pupil Howard (1972: 18, 21) contends there is no evidence of Yiddish before 1450 but his own unfamiliarity with Yiddish linguistics renders the linguistic portions of his dissertation somewhat confusing.

Now the specificity of Yiddish vis-à-vis medieval German is not exclusively contingent upon the weighty presence of a Semitic Component in the language. The cooccurrence of

attested German dialectal features in a structure that
is uniquely Yiddish would have made Yiddish a separate
entity in the medieval period. In fact, it has been
shown that the configuration of the Germanic Component
in later Yiddish is not congruent with any one German
dialect (cf. Landau 1896: 58; Prilutski 1917: 289-290;
M. Weinreich 1938: 289). The separateness of such an
early Yiddish would have been enhanced by the sprinkling
of Romance lexical items and the use of Semitisms for
religious concepts and communal activities. Nevertheless,
the resolution of the question of the origin of the Semitic
Component in Yiddish would be of inestimable value as a hard
linguistic tool for helping determine the age of Yiddish.
On the one hand the presence of the Semitic Component
— by and large in its later attested strength and
structure — at the outset is incontrovertible evidence of
fusion from the very beginning. On the other, it would
be debatable whether any Germanic dialect spoken by Jews
without the Semitic Component can be called Yiddish. It
can be argued that Yiddish by definition includes as two
panterritorial and panchronological elements the Germanic
and Semitic Component (cf. §2.4). In the work at hand,
we are not necessarily interested in confirming or rejecting
any of the proposed datings for the beginnings of Yiddish.
The contribution of Semitic Component studies to the
debates on the age of Yiddish is only of value in a relative
capacity. Suffice it to say that the text theory of

necessity presupposes <u>secondary fusion</u>, ergo a relatively
late origin of the language as a whole.   The continual
transmission theory on the other hand presupposes <u>primary
fusion</u>, ergo a relatively early origin of Yiddish.

3.3.   The Viability of Proto Yiddish

The protolanguage concept, an axiom of the stammbaum
theory, is neither completely valid nor wholly fallacious.
It frequently represents a portion of reality and an even
greater degree of practical usefulness for the expression of
systematic correspondences between attested language varieties.
Some modern scholars consider as one of the goals of historical
linguistics the recovery of the "ancestor language"
(Hoenigswald 1960:   119) while for others "the end result
of reconstruction is vastly less interesting [...] than the
assumptions and procedures that advance us toward that
reconstruction" (King 1969: 155).   This is a difference
in emphasis.   A far more substantive theoretical clash
is the classic debate between the comparativists and the
diffusionists.   Schleicher's (1848-1850) stammbaum theory
and his (1868) reconstruction of a Proto Indo-European fable
symbolize the first school.   Schmidt's (1872) wave theory
and Schuchardt's (1884) theory of language mixture represent
the second.   The real question is then whether phenomena

explained by the comparative model in terms of genetic descent from a protolanguage might not be equally explainable by diffusion and language mixture.

Marchand (1960: 41), concerned with the inter-relationships between Yiddish and German dialects, has pointed to Yiddish as an ideal test case for general protolanguage theory. Perhaps even more valuable for general historical linguistics is the question of the genetic unity of the Semitic Component in Yiddish. The text theory of necessity assumes polygenesis of the Semitic Component — continuous use of sacred texts in many different times and places cumulatively resulting in the component as it is known today. Continual Transmission assumes monogenesis of the Semitic Component — initial entry of Semitic language material in the everyday speech of settlers in Europe at the beginning of the history of Yiddish fusing with and subsequently spreading and developing along with the structurally and quantitatively far more weighty Germanic Component. The protolanguage model is here challenged by the text theory, not by diffusion or mixture, and it is here that the interest for general historical linguistics is greatest. As there were no Hebrew or Aramaic dialects spoken in Central or Eastern Europe, diffusion and mixture are eliminated from consideration as potential contributing factors to any attested aspect of the Semitic Component. There are, of course, possibilities of diffusion between dialects of Yiddish, but phonological criteria generally betray such cases.

While any Germanic Component form is a priori under suspicion of having entered at any one of a number of possible times from a coterritorial or contiguous German dialect, the possibility of wave theory explanations is crucially reduced with respect to the Semitic Component. The notion of a Proto Semitic Component can be tested by a number of methods, including examination of the degree of lexical and structural affinity between the Semitic Components of disparate Yiddish dialects, and most importantly, the degree of similarity in the precise structural way in which the two components have fused in different areas.

As the Semitic Component does not exist in a vacuum, any evidence for or against a Proto Semitic Component is in effect contributory evidence for or against Proto Yiddish. A number of scholars have taken a positive view toward the possibilities of reconstructing Proto Yiddish (e.g. M. Weinreich 1923a: I, 65; 1940a: 33-35; 1954b: 100). The most important accomplishment of these scholars within the framework of protolanguage theory has been the construction of a number of systems of Proto Yiddish vocalism (cf. below § 4.1). Others have taken a sharply negative view of the concept of Proto Yiddish (Süsskind 1953: 98; Marchand 1960: 41; 1965: 249-250).

4.   An Outline of Pan Yiddish Vocalism

4.1.   The Systematization of Pan Yiddish Vocalism

Any cosmic account of the genealogical relations between a considerable number of partially similar language varieties over a great span of time of necessity does violence to the true synchrony of any of these varieties at a given point in time. Complexity and heterogeneity are obscured by the comparative model and this is one of its overriding weaknesses. Nevertheless, the comparative method, once freed from excesses, is valid as a more abstract level of analysis to the extent that stated reflexes of presumed protoentities do correspond to the actual empirically real realizations as documented from informants or attested in older monuments. Most significantly, the comparative model provides a framework for the coherent expression of specific correspondences. In studying aspects of the phonology of the Semitic Component, work is facilitated if reference can be made to a systematic framework for the history of Yiddish vocalism —— that aspect of Yiddish phonology of direct concern to our work. Needless to say, such a framework can be dubious if it is based upon hypothetical reconstructions, even if these are posited on the evidence of cognate languages. The more serious danger is that questions for research are treated as foregone conclusions and posited as part of the "framework". Reasoning then becomes circular and potential conclusions are rendered fallacious. Reconstructions, as valuable as they are for

helping to express change, need to be kept notationally
distinct from expressions of known correspondences. For
the study of the stressed vowel systems of a number of
related varieties, this can be achieved if reconstructions
are expressed in the traditional manner of asterisk prefixation
while known correspondences are expressed as diaphonemes.
The diaphoneme is a child of structural dialectology (cf.
U. Weinreich 1954b) which achieves a multidialectal
representation of spatially differentiated reflexes of
phonemes that occur in the same lexical items with no necessary
reference to a protolanguage or to cognate languages.

Attempts at systemizing Yiddish vocalism in the
twentieth century have shown a constant rise in scope and
sophistication. Gerzon (1902: 20-29), faithfully following
neogrammarian tradition, took the vowel phonemes of classical
Middle High German as his point of departure and went on to
relate them to the realizations in cognate lexical items in
a dialect of Yiddish. In Gerzon's time, it was of course
a feat to relate Yiddish to a specific form of German, rather
than some general "German". The same operation was carried
out with a great deal more depth by Sapir (1915: 237-250).
Reyzen (1920: 51-63) took the graphemes of literary Yiddish
as his point of departure and related these to realizations
in the dialects of modern Eastern Yiddish and to Middle High
German cognates. He then proceeded (79-83) to relate the
vowel phonemes of classical Hebrew to their realizations in

the several modern dialects. Prilutski (1920; 1921)
presented far more material than anybody before him or since
on individual sounds, taking Middle High German, Hebrew,
or literary Yiddish as a starting point, as seemed best to
him in any individual case. He drew explicit charts (e.g.
1921: 240, 276) to relate stock language vowels to
localized documentations from varieties and subvarieties of
Yiddish, and incorporated evidence from the largely
defunct dialects of Western Yiddish. Birnbaum (1923b)
surpassed these efforts conceptually by positing the synchronic
vowel system of the analyzed language itself as a point of
departure —— the dialect of Yiddish he was studying ——
and relating each phoneme to cognates in all the stock languages
as well as to those of another Yiddish dialect. Although
he reverted to using the stock languages for his framework,
Veynger (1929: 60-73, 94-100, 116-119) related the usual
correspondences and exceptions holding between all the stock
languages and all the modern dialects of Yiddish.

The next major conceptual advance was Fischer's
system of Proto Yiddish vocalism which is an autonomous
system easily relatable to both stock language cognates and
attested Yiddish realizations, a system he proposed in
the unpublished portions of his 1934 Heidelberg dissertation
(see now Bin-Nun 1973: 183-322). It was followed in its essential
by Beranek (e.g. 1957; 1965ab). U. Weinreich (1958), in

one of his now-classic studies on the development of Eastern
Yiddish vocalism, devised a system of fifteen numbered
diaphonemes corresponding with the fifteen correspondences
he selected for the study.   The numbering of diaphonemes,
credited to Haudricourt and Juilland (1949) allows for the
expression of a dialectal realization and its relation to
an unlimited number of other dialectal realizations, with
no necessary tie to any specific protovalue.

The system now widely accepted in Yiddish studies is
M. Weinreich's interdialectal scheme of Pan Yiddish vocalism
(proposed as M. Weinreich 1960a and revised as 1973: II, 321-
382; IV, 364-384). It is primarily designed as a system
of synchronic correspondences but can serve as a protosystem
as well. It accounts for all known varieties of Yiddish,
and although autonomous for dialectological work, can be
easily related to stock language cognates in comparative
work.   It has, moreover already been successfully used by
a number of researchers (e.g. Guggenheim-Grünberg 1964; 1973;
Herzog 1965: 159-233, 275-278; 1969).

Max Weinreich's system, in short, is as follows.
There are five series of vowels, 1 — historically short vowels,
2 — historically long vowels, 3 — historically short vowels
subject to early lengthening, 4 — historical diphthongs and
5 — a single lengthened a vowel.   While avoiding reference
to specific protoqualities of vowels, Weinreich (1973: IV, 369)

does wish to make a general statement about broad qualities
of protovowels. This is accomplished by means of upper case
characters. There are five series 1 vowels: A_1, E_1, I_1, O_1
and U_1; five series 2 vowels: A_2, E_2, I_2, O_2 and U_2; five
series 3 vowels: A_3, E_3, I_3, O_3 and U_3; four series 4
vowels: E_4, I_4, O_4 and U_4; one series 5 vowel: E_5.
As an illustration, one could say that E_5 appears as the
diaphoneme ej ‖ I ‖ i ‖ ε in Eastern Yiddish, with specifications
concerning the geographic areas intended by each part of the
diaphoneme. In work on the Language and Culture Atlas of
Ashkenazic Jewry, U. Weinreich replaced his father's upper
case letters by digital designations according to the code
1 = A, 2 = E, 3 = I, 4 = O and 5 = U and prefixing the
number designations to the series designation. The result is
the system of double digit designations in use today (cf.
Herzog 1965: 228, note 1). As an illustration, one could
now say that vowel 25 appears as the diaphoneme ej ‖ I ‖ i ‖ ε
in Eastern Yiddish; but more importantly, the double digit
designations can be subscripted to any actual realization
or reconstruction, e.g. Northeastern Yiddish $ε_{25}$ derives from
Proto Eastern Yiddish $*\bar{e}_{25}$ in a collapse of tense and lax vowels
giving present day Northeastern Yiddish $ε_{21/25}$.

In the work at hand, the Weinreich system has been
modified. Four of the proposed vowels, 23 (E_3), 33 (I_3), 43
(O_3) and 53 (U_3) are omitted because they are in no way different
from 22 (E_2), 32 (I_2), 42 (O_2) and 52 (U_2) respectively, in any

known variety of Yiddish (cf. Katz 1978b: §§ 2.2, 2.4; 1983: § 4). The positing of these vowels on the basis of cognate Middle High German vowels is a violation of the synchronic reality condition which distinguishes a system of interdialectal correspondences from a protosystem in the classical sense. The omission of these four vowels makes for the regrouping of the two remaining historical short vowels subject to early open syllable lengthening in series 3, and the dropping of series 5. To avoid confusion with the existing literature, no number of any single vowel has been altered. Hence vowels 13 (A_3) and 25 (E_5) form series 3. The diaphonemic systematization of Pan Yiddish Vocalism is illustrated in Table 1, where ten everyday items in their Standard Yiddish forms are provided to illustrate each of the sixteen diaphonemes. All 160 examples are gleaned from the Germanic Component of Yiddish. The Semitic Component is the target of our inquiry and the question of which Semitic Component vowels have fused with which Germanic Component vowels is potentially contentious. It is a tribute to the Weinreich system that it can be used to disagree with its inventor's opinions on these matters as easily as to defend those opinions. Finally, we have supplied a proposed protovowel for each diaphoneme to facilitate expression of certain major developments in historical Yiddish phonology and stated the environment for lengthening for vowels 13 and 25 which would, in a classical protosystem, be part of 11 and 21 respectively.

Table 1: Diaphonemic Systematization of Pan Yiddish Vocalism

Series 01:   Historically Short Vowels

1.1.   Vowel 11 (A_1) < Proto Yiddish *a:
alt 'old', árbət 'work', bak 'cheek', gast
'guest', kalt 'cold', láxn 'laugh', naxt
'night', vásər 'water', zalc 'salt', zamd
'sand'.

1.2.   Vowel 21 (E_1) < Proto Yiddish *ε:
brénən 'burn', ésn 'eat', féfər 'pepper',
feld 'field', héntələx 'tiny hands', néxtn
'yesterday', šrεk 'fear', švεstər 'sister',
vεlt 'world', vεnt 'walls'.

1.3.   Vowel 31 (I_1) < Proto Yiddish *i:
din 'thin', fiš 'fish', gəvís 'certainly',
glíčik 'slippery', kind 'child', klíngən
'ring, sound', nídərik 'low', šif 'ship',
vínčn 'wish', zílbər 'silver'.

1.4.   Vowel 41 (O_1) < Proto Yiddish *ɔ:
kɔp 'head', lɔx 'hole', lɔzn 'allow',
mórgn 'tomorrow', ɔks 'ox', tóxtər 'daughter',
vɔlf 'wolf', vólvl 'inexpensive', vɔx 'week',
zɔk 'sock'.

1.5.   Vowel 51 (U_1) < Proto Yiddish *u:
frum 'religious, pious', hunt 'dog', kúmən
'come', kunc 'trick, feat', kuš 'kiss',
plúclung 'suddenly', pútər 'butter',
úmətik 'sad', úndzər 'our', zun 'sun'.

Table 1 (Continued)

Series 02:   Historically Long Vowels
               (including lengthened vowels fully merged
               with their originally long counterparts)

1.6.   Vowel 12 (A$_2$) < Proto Yiddish *$\bar{\mathrm{o}}$:
blózn 'blow', gərótn 'successful', hor 'hair',
jor 'year', klor 'clear', nódl 'needle',
nóənt 'near', ódər 'vein', on 'without',
šlófn 'sleep'.

1.7.   Vowel 22 (E$_2$) < Proto Yiddish *$\bar{\mathrm{e}}$:
bejz 'angry', éjbik 'forever', gejn 'go',
héjbn 'lift', lejb 'lion', léjdik 'empty',
léjgn 'place', néjtik 'necessary', šejn
'beautiful', véjtik 'pain'.

1.8.   Vowel 32 (I$_2$) < Proto Yiddish *$\bar{\mathrm{i}}$:
briv 'letter', dínən 'serve', gísn 'pour',
grin 'green', lib (hobn) 'love', lid 'song,
poem', štívl 'boots', tífəniš 'depth', tíxl
'kerchief', zis 'sweet'.

1.9.   Vowel 42 (O$_2$) < Proto Yiddish *$\bar{\mathrm{o}}$:
brojt 'bread', grojs 'large', hójkər
'hunchback', hójzn 'trousers', lojz 'loose',
nojt 'necessity', pójliš 'Polish', rojt
'red', šojn 'already', vójnən 'dwell'.

1.10. Vowel 52 (U$_2$) < Proto Yiddish *$\bar{\mathrm{u}}$:
brúdər 'brother', bux 'book', du 'you',
fus 'foot', grus 'regards', hústn 'cough',
nu 'Well! Come on!', šul 'synagogue',
šux 'shoe', zúxn 'look for'.

Table 1   (Continued)

Series 03/05:   <u>Historically Short Vowels subject to Early Lengthening</u>

1.11.   Vowel 13 (A_3) < Proto Yiddish *a_{11} in stressed open syllabic position, extendable by analogy to closed syllabic allomorphs: <u>fótər</u> 'father', <u>grɔz</u> 'grass', <u>gróbn</u> 'dig', <u>jógn</u> 'chase', <u>nómən</u> 'name', <u>šlógn</u> 'hit' <u>štɔt</u> 'city', <u>tɔg</u> 'day', <u>vógn</u> 'wagon', <u>zógn</u> 'say'.

1.12.   Vowel 25 (E_5) < Proto Yiddish *$ɛ_{21}$ in stressed open syllabic position, extendable by analogy to closed syllabic allomorphs: <u>bétn</u> 'request', <u>kɛz</u> 'cheese', <u>lébədik</u> 'alive; lively', <u>lédər</u> 'leather', <u>mɛl</u> 'flour', <u>mɛr</u> 'more', <u>šémən</u> (<u>zəx</u>) 'be ashamed', <u>špɛt</u> 'late', <u>štétl</u> 'village', <u>zɛn</u> 'see'.

Series 04:   <u>Historical Diphthongs</u>

1.13.   Vowel 24 (E_4) < Proto Yiddish *ɛj: <u>fléjš</u> 'meat', <u>gléjbn</u> 'believe', <u>héjlik</u> 'sacred', <u>hejm</u> 'home', <u>klɛjd</u> 'dress (n.)', <u>klejn</u> 'little', <u>méjnən</u> 'be of the opinion', <u>nejn</u> 'no', <u>réjxərn</u> 'smoke', <u>zéjgər</u> 'clock'.

1.14.   Vowel 34 (I_4) < Proto Yiddish *əj: <u>bašájmperləx</u> 'obvious', <u>cajt</u> 'time', <u>fajn</u> 'nice', <u>lájləx</u> 'sheet', <u>lajt</u> 'people', <u>majn</u> 'my', <u>šájnən</u> 'shine', <u>šnájdər</u> 'tailor', <u>vajn</u> 'wine', <u>vajs</u> 'white'.

Table 1   (Continued)

1.15.   Vowel 44 (O₄) < Proto Yiddish *ɔu:
bɔjm 'tree', dɛrlójbt 'permitted', farkójfn
'sell', hɔjbt 'main', lójfn 'run', ɔjg 'eye',
ójx(ət) 'also', rɔjx 'smoke (n.)', tɔjb
'deaf', tɔjgn 'be fit for'.

1.16.   Vowel 54 (U₄) < Proto Yiddish *əu:
bójən 'build', bɔjx 'stomach', fɔjl 'lazy',
hɔjz 'house', lɔjz 'louse', mɔjl 'mouth',
mɔjz 'mouse', pɔjk 'drum', trɔjər 'sadness',
zójər 'sour'.

4.2.   Phonological Criteria for the Classification of
         Yiddish Dialects

Given the overall regularity in the correspondences
between the stressed vowel phonemes of the varieties of
Yiddish and the sharp differences in the concrete realizations
of these diaphonemes, it is hardly a surprise that nearly
all proposed classifications of Yiddish dialects have
employed vocalic criteria.   Needless to say, there are
many salient differences in lexicon and syntax but none of
these can compete with stressed vocalism as a means of
delimiting both the entire territory of Yiddish and most of
its vocabulary from the perspective of geolinguistics.

The major divide sets off Western Yiddish from Eastern
Yiddish.   It was proposed by Landau (1896) who defined
as "west" those areas where the two vowels now known as
24 and 44, cognate with Middle High German diphthongs ei
and ou, are merged as unitary $\bar{a}_{24/44}$, hence Western Yiddish
flāš 'meat', klān 'little', mánən 'be of the opinion'; bām
'tree', káfn 'buy', láfn 'run' (cf. Middle High German fleisch,
klein, meinen vs. boum, koufen, loufen).

Dividing each of the two major areas chronologically as
well as geographically, Borokhov (1913fg) proposed a north
vs. south division for the Western Yiddish of old Yiddish
literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and
a three way division of the modern, spoken dialects of
Eastern Yiddish more or less corresponding with the popular

designations "Polish", "Lithuanian" and "Ukranian"/"Volhynian"
which Borokhov calls the "Southern dialect".   Taking into
consideration that the two southern varieties (Borokhov's
"Polish" and "Southern") share many features which set them
off against the north ("Lithuanian"), Birnbaum (1918: 16)
grouped the two together.   Seeking at the time to avoid
geographic or ethnographic nomenclature, Birnbaum called the
two southern varieties the u dialect (after vowel 12/13 realized
as u or ū in the south and as ɔ in the north), and the northern
variety the ɔ dialect. He then subdivided the u dialect into
an aj and an ej subdialect (after vowel 22/24 realized as aj
in "Polish" and as ej in "Ukranian"). This analysis, setting
the south vs. north division as the primary one for modern
Yiddish, was in its essentials followed by Mieses (1924),
elaborated upon by Fischer (1936) and restated in geographic
terms by Birnbaum himself (1979).

Seeking to classify the entire historical speech
territory of Yiddish ─── the nearly defunct Western Yiddish
alongside the modern spoken Yiddish of Eastern Europe ───
Prilutski (1920: 79) adopted vowel 24, one of Landau's
criterial vowels for delimiting the West, as a classificatory
device. In a single sweep, Prilutski postulated three major
divisions within Yiddish: Western Yiddish ($\bar{a}_{24}$), Central
Yiddish (aj_{24}) and Eastern Yiddish (ej_{24}). To this day,

Yiddish linguists speak of _Birnboyms simen_ ("Birnbaum's criterion", i.e. vowel 12/13) vs. _Prilutskis simen_ ("Prilutski's criterion", i.e. vowel 24). Prilutski's scheme has become almost standard, probably because of M. Weinreich's acceptance of it (e.g. 1940a: 37; 1958b: 41-42). Prilutski's ethnographic designations for the two subdivisions of his "Eastern Yiddish" — South Russian and Lithuanian — have since been replaced by the correlative geographic terms Southeastern and Northeastern Yiddish. While masterfully succeeding in spanning the entire time and space of Yiddish with a single isogloss, Prilutski's classification suffers from two major weaknesses. Firstly, the two most similar dialects of modern Yiddish, Prilutski's "Central" and his "South Russian" are severed, and the latter attached to "Lithuanian" on the evidence of a single isogloss. Secondly, the term "Central Yiddish" is somewhat misleading as it implies an area intermediate between West and East when in fact the _aj_ dialect ("Polish") occupies much of the heartland of Eastern Yiddish.

The several schemes are of course not mutually contradictory when considered within a more modern framework more sympathetic to the description of observed phenomena than to the "feat" of classification by a single isogloss. Some of the proposed classifications are schematically outlined in Table 2. The seventh column outlines the classification

Borokhov 1913fg	Birnbaum 1918	Prilutski 1920	Mieses 1924	Fischer 1936	Birnbaum 1979	Proposed Scheme
Northern Germanic Y (16-17th Century) / Southern Germanic Y		Western Yiddish	Western Yiddish	Western Branch (Western Yiddish / Eastern Branch)	West Yiddish	Northwestern Yiddish / Midwestern Yiddish, Southern Western Yiddish / Southwestern Yiddish — Western Yiddish
					Central Yiddish	Northern Transitional Yiddish / Transitional Yiddish / Southern Transitional Yiddish
Polish (Modern Period) / Southern, Lithuanian	ái Subdialect (ú Dialect, ái Subdialect) / ó Dialect	Central Yiddish / Southrussian Yiddish, Eastern Yiddish / Lithuanian Yiddish	Western Southern Yiddish / Southern Yiddish, Eastern Southern Yiddish / Northern Yiddish	Western Middle Yiddish / Middle Yiddish, Eastern Middle Yiddish / Eastern Yiddish, Northeastern Yiddish	East Yiddish South West, East Yiddish South / East Yiddish South East, East Yiddish / East Yiddish North	Mideastern Yiddish, Southern Eastern Yiddish / Southeastern Yiddish, Eastern Yiddish / Northeastern Yiddish

Table 2: Proposals for the Classification of Yiddish Dialects

followed herein (after Katz 1979b; 1983: §3). Western Yiddish
is divided into Northwestern Yiddish, Midwestern Yiddish and
Southwestern Yiddish. The latter two, sharing many features,
collectively comprise Southern Western Yiddish. Analogously,
Eastern Yiddish consists of Northeastern Yiddish, Mideastern
Yiddish and Southeastern Yiddish, the latter two collectively
comprising Southern Eastern Yiddish. The area intermediate
between West and East and indeed displaying features of both
is called Transitional Yiddish in the proposed scheme.
Transitional Yiddish itself exhibits two distinct branches,
Northern Transitional Yiddish and Southern Transitional
Yiddish. The approximate geographic spread of the dialects
is illustrated in the appended map of the historical speech
territory of Yiddish. The stressed vowel systems of the
six major varieties are schematically illustrated in Tables
3-8. That of modern Standard Yiddish is illustrated in
Table 9. Although a societal creation rather than a naturally
developed system, the standard variety is used by a
noteworthy number of speakers. It is based upon the vocalism
of Northeastern Yiddish (Table 6).

NORTHEASTERN Y.

EASTERN Y.

SOUTHEASTERN Y.

MIDEASTERN Y.

NORTHERN TRANSITIONAL

SOUTHERN TRANSITIONAL

NORTHWESTERN Y.

MIDWESTERN Y.

SOUTHWESTERN Y.
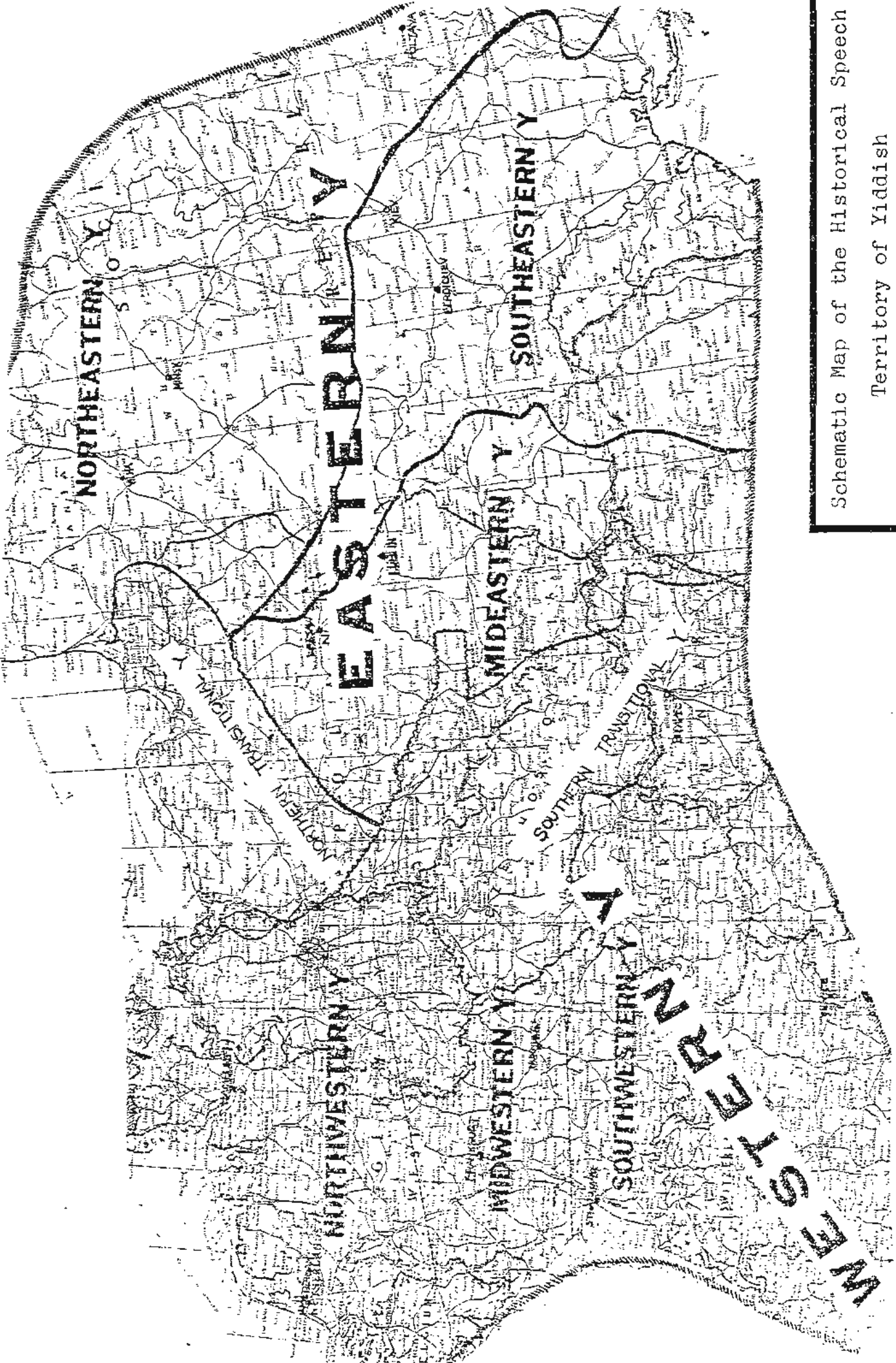
WESTERN

Schematic Map of the Historical Speech
Territory of Yiddish

Table 3:   Northwestern Yiddish Vocalism

$\bar{\imath}_{32}$ $\bar{u}_{52}$

i_{31} o_{51}

$\bar{e}_{25}$ $\bar{o}_{12/13}$

$\varepsilon j_{22/34}$ $\mathrm{ɔu}_{42/54}$

$\varepsilon_{21(/31)}$ $\mathrm{ɔ}_{41}$

$\bar{a}_{24/44}$

a_{11}

Table 4:	Midwestern Yiddish Vocalism

$\bar{\imath}_{25/32}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $\bar{u}_{12/52}$

i_{31} $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ u_{51}

$\bar{e}_{22}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $\bar{o}_{42}$

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $\mathrm{ɔ}^{u}{}_{(12/42)54}$

ε_{21} $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $\mathrm{ɔ}_{41}$

$\qquad\qquad$ aj_{34}

$\qquad\qquad$ $\bar{a}_{13/24/44}$

$\qquad\qquad$ a_{11}

Table 5:	Southwestern Yiddish Vocalism
$\bar{\imath}_{32}$	$\bar{u}/\ddot{u}_{52}$
i_{31}	u_{51}
$\bar{e}_{25}$	$\bar{o}_{12}$
$\varepsilon j_{22(/25)}$	$\jmath u_{(12/)42/54}$
ε_{21}	$\jmath_{41}$
	aj_{34}
	$\bar{a}_{13/24/44}$
	a_{11}

Table 6:	Northeastern Yiddish Vocalism

$i_{31/32}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $u_{51/52}$

$ej_{22/24/42/44}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $ɔj_{54}$

$\varepsilon_{21/25}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $ɔ_{12/13/41}$

aj_{34}

a_{11}

Table 7:   Mideastern Yiddish Vocalism

$\bar{\imath}_{32/52}$ $\bar{u}_{12/13}$

$i_{31/51}$ $u_{12/13}$

ej_{25} ou_{54}

                                              $ɔj_{42/44}$

$ɛ_{21}$ $ɔ_{41}$

                        $aj_{22/24}$

                        $\bar{a}_{34}$

                        a_{11}

Table 8: Southeastern Yiddish Vocalism

$\overline{\mathrm{I}}_{32/52}$ $\qquad$ $u_{12/13/54}$

$\mathbf{i}_{(25/)31/51}$

$ej_{22/24(/25)}$ $\qquad$ $oj_{42/44}$

ε_{21} $\qquad$ $o_{11/41}$

$a_{(11/)34}$

Table 9:	Standard Yiddish Vocalism

$i_{31/32}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $u_{51/52}$

$ej_{22/24}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $\mathfrak{I}j_{42/44/54}$

$\varepsilon_{21/25}$ $\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $\mathfrak{I}_{12/13/41}$

aj_{34}

a_{11}

4.3. Phonological Criteria for the Periodization of the History of Yiddish

For expository purposes, the history of Yiddish may be divided into Old Yiddish, Middle Yiddish and New Yiddish on the basis of phonological criteria. Unlike other periodizations (e.g. Birnbaum 1929: 270; Süsskind 1953: 106; M. Weinreich 1973: II, 397), the proposed periodization is correlative. No specific dates are proposed or defended, and only internal linguistic evidence is taken into account.

The earliest event in the history of Yiddish lending itself to reconstruction is Open Syllable Lengthening ($\acute{V} \rightarrow$ [+long] / __\$), a rule Yiddish obtained no doubt from the well known development in German (cf. e.g. Bach 1970: 226-227; Penzl 1975: 113-114; Paul 1975: 52-53; Russ 1978: 74-77). The complexities of the Yiddish rule, and the ways in which it differs from its German counterpart merit special study. As for the question of which vowels were processed by Lengthening, we have empirical evidence from Yiddish only with respect to Proto Yiddish *a and *ɛ, which split as a result of Lengthening into *a/ā and *ɛ/ɛ̄. At first allophonic, the split was in time phonologized, perhaps in direct consequence of its extention by analogical levelling to closed syllabic allomorphs and to closed syllabic position by apocope of unstressed vowels. In any case, the effect of Lengthening upon the Proto Yiddish vowel system (Table 10) was to give rise to two new diaphonemes

| Table 10: | Proto Yiddish Vocalism |

$*\bar{\imath}_{32}$ $*\bar{u}_{52}$

$*i_{31}$ $*u_{51}$

$*\bar{e}_{22}$ $*\bar{o}_{42}$

$*əj_{34}$ $*əu_{54}$

$*εj_{24}$ $*ɔu_{44}$

                     $*\bar{ɔ}_{12}$

$*ε_{21/25}$ $*ɔ_{41}$

$*a_{11/13}$

vowels 13 and 25 (Table 11). Unlike later regional splits, Lengthening has Pan Yiddish effects which are apparent in the form of the modern diaphonemes. Southern Western Yiddish opposes $\bar{a}_{13}$ to $\bar{o}[/ou]_{12}$. Northwestern Yiddish preserves a distinct $\bar{\varepsilon}_{25}$. Conversely secondary mergers have obscured these diaphonemes in some areas. Thus, for example, all of Eastern Yiddish and Northwestern Yiddish have merged vowel 13 with vowel 12. Northeastern Yiddish has merged 25 with 21.

Besides giving rise to two new diaphonemes, Lengthening served as part of the input to the Great Yiddish Vowel Shift, which consisted of two stages. Firstly, the early Yiddish lower-mid long vowels, $*\bar{\varepsilon}_{25}$ ($< *\bar{\varepsilon}_{21/25}$) and $*\bar{o}_{12}$ were raised to upper-mid $*\bar{e}_{25}$ and $*\bar{o}_{12}$ while the original upper-mid $*\bar{e}_{22}$ and $*\bar{o}_{42}$ were lowered to lower-mid $*\bar{\varepsilon}_{22}$ and $*\bar{o}_{42}$. This exchange is illustrated in Table 12. The resulting lower-mid $*\bar{\varepsilon}_{22}$ and $*\bar{o}_{42}$ were then diphthongized to $*\varepsilon i_{22}$ and $*ou_{42}$ while the original diphthongs, $*\varepsilon i_{24}$ and $*ou_{44}$ were monophthongized to $*\bar{\varepsilon}_{24}$ and $*\bar{o}_{44}$. This exchange is illustrated in Table 13. All these events precede the split into Western and Eastern Yiddish and may be regarded as belonging to the period of Old Yiddish. That is not to say that features later known to be characteristic of West and East did not make their appearance in the Old Yiddish period. They undoubtedly did. But the major phonological split of the two branches postdated Open

Table 11: Open Syllable Lengthening

$*a_{11/13}$

$*\varepsilon_{21/25}$

$*a_{11}$

$*\bar{a}_{13}$

$*\varepsilon_{21}$

$*\bar{\varepsilon}_{25}$
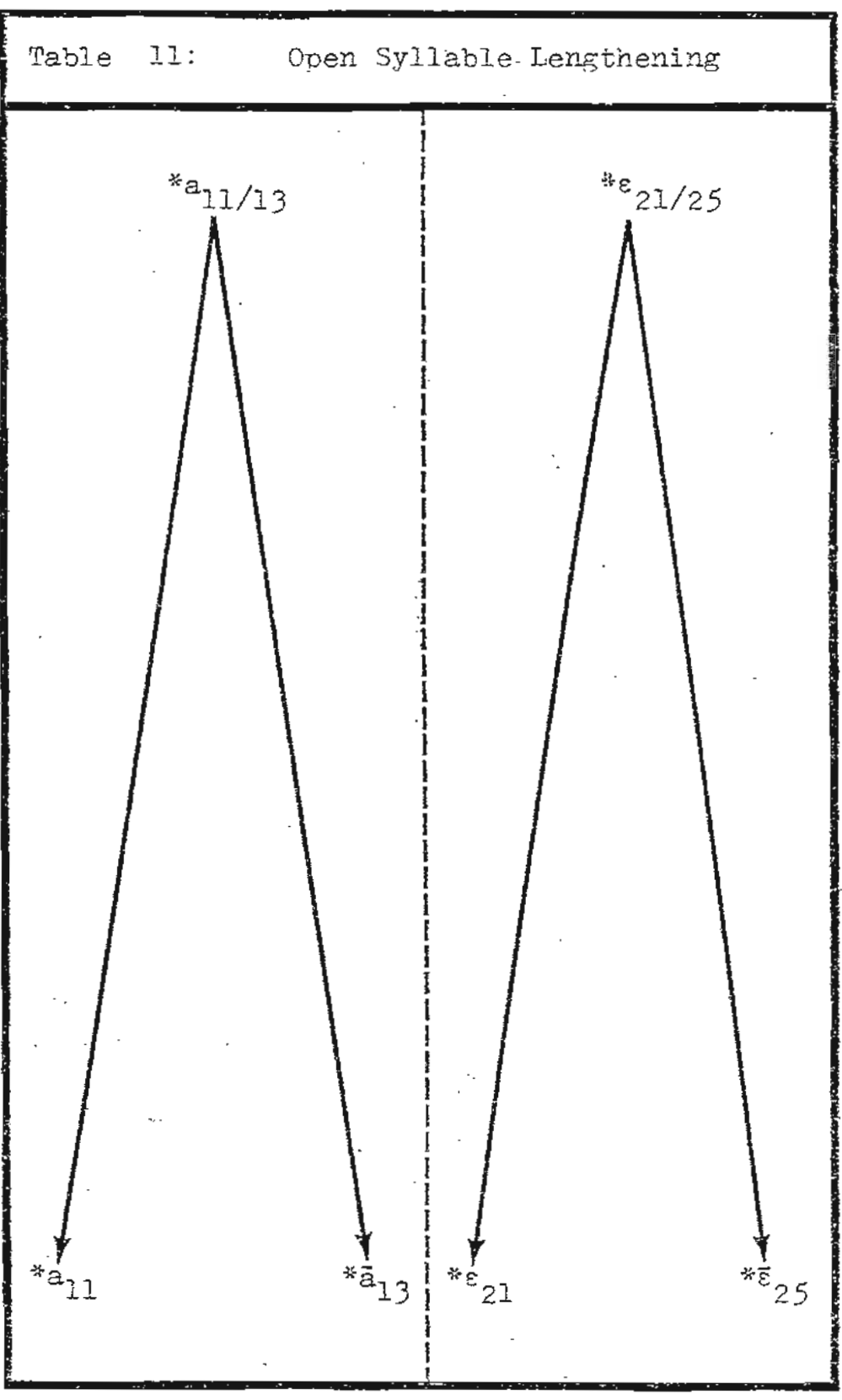
Table 12:   The Great Yiddish Vowel Shift (First Stage)

	LOWERING	
	$*\bar{e}_{22} \longrightarrow *\bar{\varepsilon}_{22}$	$*\bar{o}_{42} \longrightarrow *\bar{\jmath}_{42}$

	RAISING	
$*\bar{\varepsilon}_{25} \longrightarrow *\bar{e}_{25}$		$*\bar{\jmath}_{12} \longrightarrow *\bar{o}_{12}$

Table 13: The Great Yiddish Vowel Shift (Second Stage)

DIPHTHONGIZATION

$$*\bar{\varepsilon}_{22} \longrightarrow *\varepsilon j_{22}$$

$$*\bar{o}_{42} \longrightarrow *ou_{42}$$

MONOPHTHONGIZATION

$$*\varepsilon j_{24} \longrightarrow *\bar{\varepsilon}_{24}$$

$$*ou_{44} \longrightarrow *\bar{o}_{44}$$
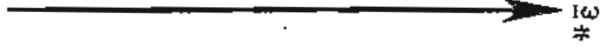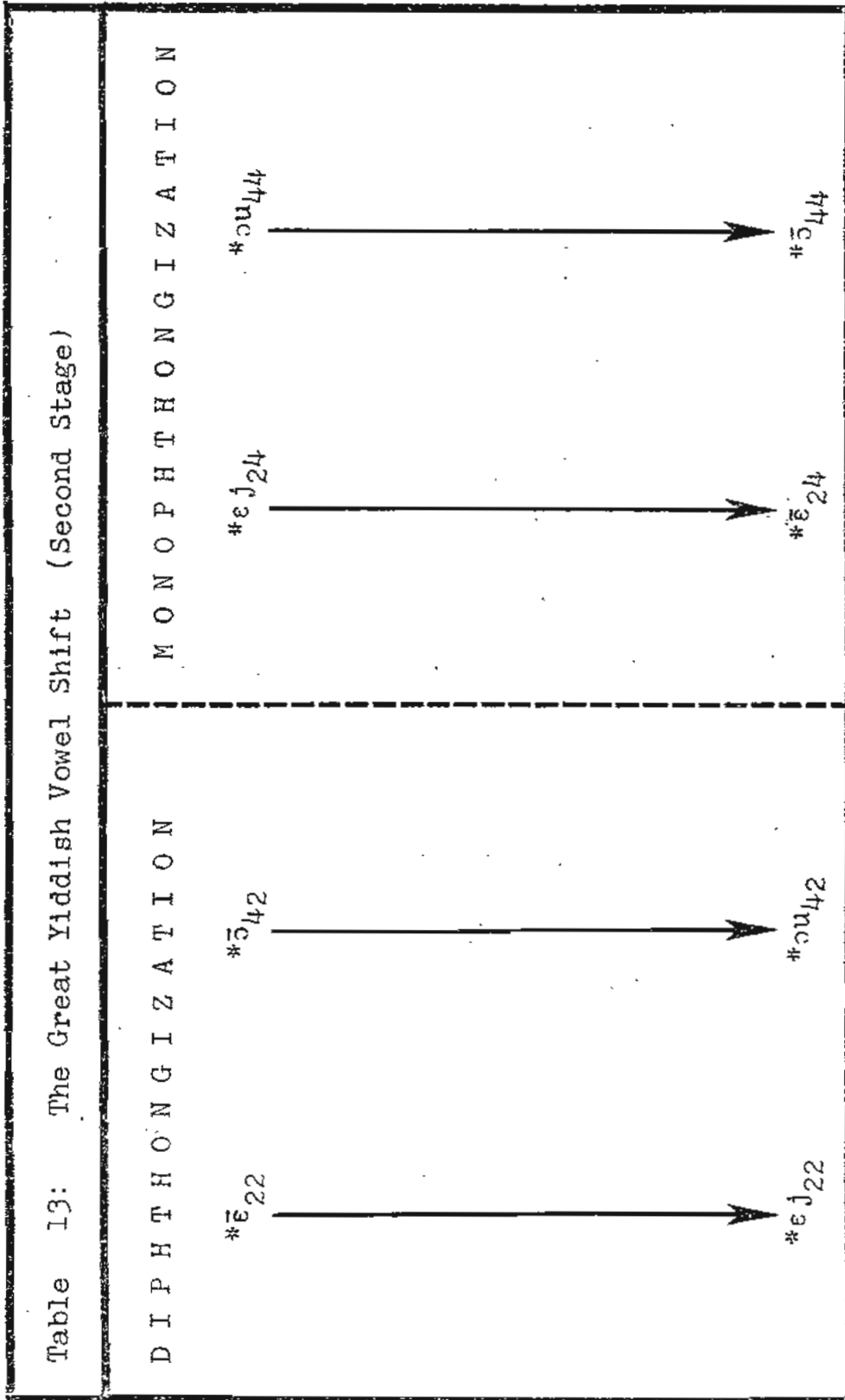
Syllable Lengthening and the Great Yiddish Vowel Shift.
That split defines the onset of the _Middle Yiddish_ period.
It involved the four products of the final stage of the
Great Yiddish Vowel Shift —— diphthongs $*ɛj_{22}$ and $*ɔu_{42}$ and
the new lower-mid long $*\bar{ɛ}_{24}$ and $*\bar{ɔ}_{44}$. In the West, Old
Yiddish $*ɛj_{22}$ and $*ɔu_{42}$ remained unchanged, while $*\bar{ɛ}_{24}$ and
$*\bar{ɔ}_{44}$ merged as unitary $\bar{a}_{24/44}$, the hallmark of Western
Yiddish to this very day. In the east, the lower-mid long
monophthongs $*\bar{ɛ}_{24}$ and $*\bar{ɔ}_{44}$ merged with diphthongs $*ɛj_{22}$ and
$*ɔu_{42}$, giving unitary $*ɛj_{22/24}$ and $*ɔu_{42/44}$. Whatever the
phonetic realizations, 22 is merged with 24 and 42 with 44 in
all modern forms of Eastern Yiddish (Mideastern $aj_{22/24}$, $ɔj_{42/44}$
‖ Southeastern $ej_{22/24}$, $ɔj_{42/44}$ ‖ Northeastern $ej_{22/24/42/44}$).
The _Primary Split_ into West and East is illustrated in Table
14. "West" and "East" rather than the technical dialectal
designations Western Yiddish and Eastern Yiddish are used because
as mentioned previously, certain characteristic developments
of each branch undoubtedly were taking place before the Primary
Split. If we use the modern dialects as our point of departure
and reconstruct Proto Western and Proto Eastern Yiddish, the
systems arrived at will resemble those illustrated in Tables
15 and 16. One cannot reconstruct $*\bar{a}_{24/44}$ for Proto Western
Yiddish because Northwestern Yiddish (cf. Table 3) has rounded
vowel 13 to $\bar{ɔ}$, giving unitary Northwestern Yiddish $\bar{ɔ}_{12/13}$. Vowel

Table 14:   THE PRIMARY SPLIT

West   Old Yiddish   East

$*ej_{22}$ ⟶ $*ej_{22}$ $*ej_{22} \nearrow *ej_{22/24}$

$*ɔu_{42}$ ⟶ $*ɔu_{42}$ $*ɔu_{42} \nearrow *ɔu_{42/24}$

$*ā_{24/44}$ $*ɔ_{44}$

                                 $*ā_{24}$
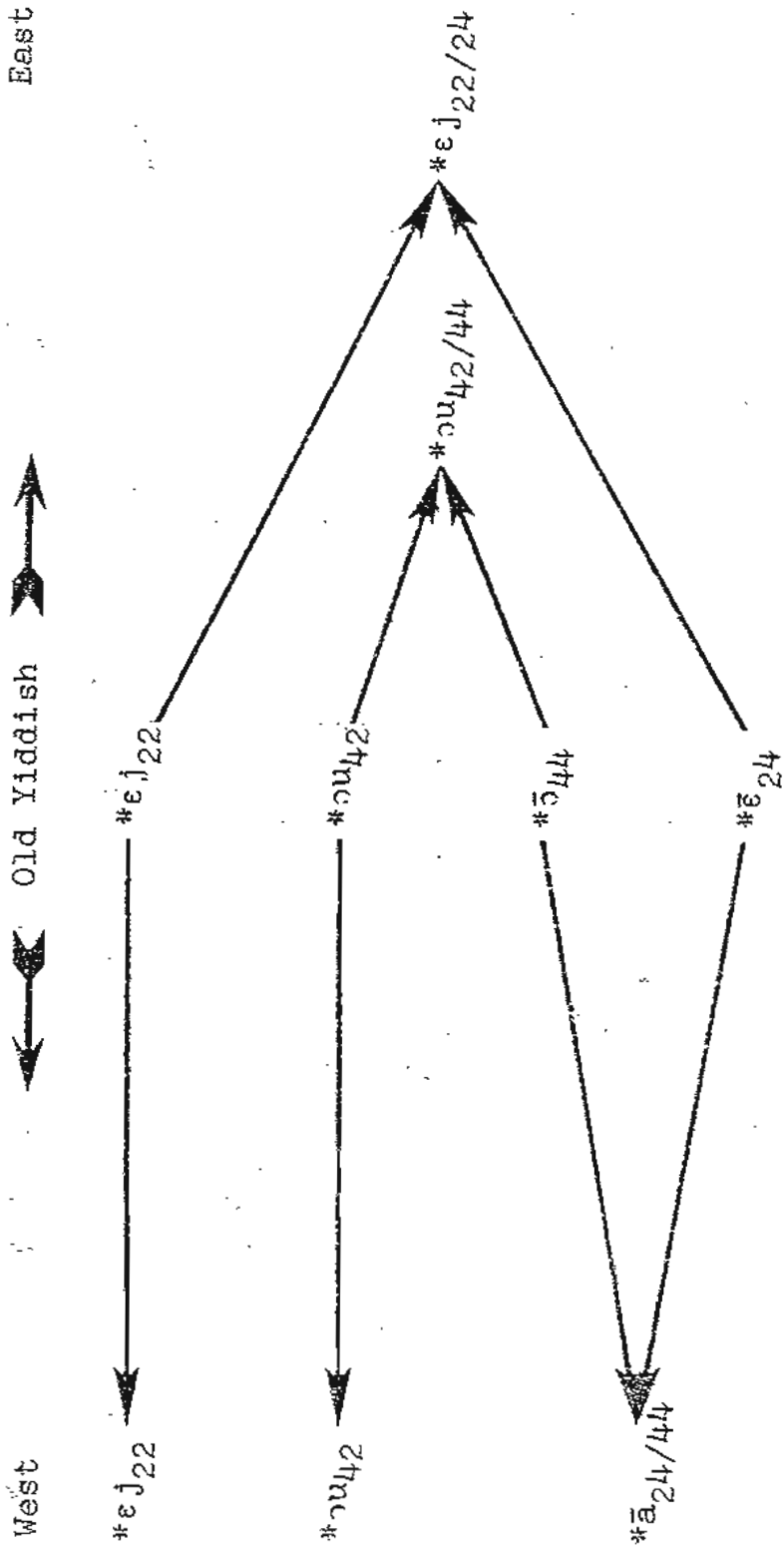
Table 15:   Proto Western Yiddish Vocalism

$*\bar{\imath}_{32}$ $*\bar{u}_{52}$

$*i_{31}$ $*\dot{u}_{51}$

$*\bar{e}_{25}$ $*\bar{o}_{12}$

$*\varepsilon j_{22}$ $*{}_{\ni}u_{42}$

$*\bar{\varepsilon}_{24}$ $*\bar{\jmath}_{44}$

$*\varepsilon_{21}$ $*{}_{\jmath}{}_{41}$

$*aj_{34}$

$*au_{54}$

$*\bar{a}_{13}$

$*a_{11}$

Table 16:	Proto Eastern Yiddish Vocalism

$*\bar{\imath}_{32}$

$*\bar{u}_{52}$

$*i_{31}$

$*u_{51}$

$*\bar{e}_{25}$

$*\bar{o}_{12/13}$

$*\varepsilon j_{22/24}$

$*ɔ\ddot{u}_{42/44}$

$*\varepsilon_{25}$

$*ɔ_{41}$

$*aj_{34}$

$*au_{54}$

$*a_{11}$

24/44 is preserved as $\bar{a}$. Had 13, 24 and 44 been merged
in Proto Western Yiddish as unitary $\bar{a}$, vowel 13 could not
have then been disentangled and merge on its own with 12.
Northwestern rounding of 13 is therefore of great antiquity
and was underway in the Old Yiddish period. Nor could one
reconstruct merged $\bar{o}_{12/13}$ for Proto Western Yiddish as Southern
Western Yiddish has preserved unrounded $\bar{a}_{13}$. Had the two been
merged, vowel 13 could not have then been disentangled and
merge on its own with 24/44. Analogously, the Primary
Split does not "equal" Proto Eastern Yiddish in any mechanical
way. One cannot, for example, reconstruct Proto Eastern Yiddish
*$\underline{ou}_{42/44}$ because all the modern reflexes (Mideastern, Southeastern
$\underline{ai}_{42/44}$ ‖ Northeastern Yiddish $\underline{ej}_{42/44}$) display front unrounded
offglide $\underline{i}$. We therefore reconstruct Proto Eastern Yiddish
$\underline{a\ddot{u}}_{42/44}$ (cf. Herzog 1965: 163).

During the Middle Yiddish period, the two key blocks
underwent continuing consolidation and the underlying north vs.
south divisions within each block became firmly established.
Amongst the phonological shifts which in all likelihood
transpired during this period, one may cite the monophthongization
of 22 and 42 in Midwestern Yiddish (cf. Table 4) and the chain
shifts initiated by the fronting and unrounding of 51 and 52
in Southern Eastern Yiddish (cf. Tables 7-8). The dialectal
structure of the language known from twentieth century
investigation characterizes New Yiddish.

5.   Synchronic Evidence

5.1.   The Synchronic Semitic Component

It is an inherent feature of the fusion process that each component can exert an attractive analogical force upon its sister components within the overall structure of the fusion language.   Such attractive analogical forces can result in new forms specific to the fusion language which are inconceivable in the stock languages and their determinants. A few examples from Yiddish can serve to illustrate the process of transcomponent analogy.   The Hebrew roots $\sqrt{mhq}$ and $\sqrt{sht}$, albeit of obvious Semitic origin, have joined the Synchronic Germanic Component within Yiddish.   They give the weak Yiddish verb mékŋ 'erase', past participle gamékt (cf. e.g. Germanic Component lékŋ 'lick', past participle galékt) and the strong Yiddish verb šéxtŋ 'slaughter', past participle gašóxtŋ (cf. e.g. Germanic Component méstŋ 'measure', past participle gamóstŋ).   By proportional analogy with such Germanic Component nouns as lɔx 'hole', pl. léxar, the Semitic Component in Yiddish pluralizes pónam 'face' (< pōním, itself morphologically a plural) by umlaut and suffixation of -ar, giving pénamar.   The series of Semitic Component abstract nouns terminating in suffixal -as (< -ūθ) is pluralized by suffixation of Germanic Component pluralizing morpheme -ŋ (< -en), e.g. hisxájvas 'obligation', šájxas 'relation', pls.

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hisxájvəsn̦, šájxəsn̦.   Analogously, Germanic Component dóktər
'doctor' and pójər 'peasant' are pluralized by suffixation
of Semitic Component pluralizing morpheme -əm (< ím), hence
the Yiddish plurals dɔktójrəm, pójərəm.

As important as these types of fusion are for the
understanding of the history of Yiddish, they must not be
permitted to obscure the degree of synchronic structural
autonomy enjoyed by each of the components.   Using strictly
descriptive criteria, a Synchronic Semitic Component can be
discerned at certain levels.   With the exception of the
types just enumerated, it will most frequently be congruent
with the Semitic Component in the usual historical sense of the
term.   The coexistence of diverse phonological and morphological
patterns within the suprasystem "Yiddish" is at least as
characteristic of the language as intercomponent fusion.
Just as many Yiddish speakers familiar with several geographically
disparate varieties of Yiddish are at home with the diasystem
"Yiddish" (cf. U. Weinreich 1954b: 393-394), all Yiddish
speakers are by definition in control of the suprasystem
within which the synchronic components coexist and interact.

5.2.   Syntax
In the realm of syntax in the strict sense of the
term —— entailing the underlying arrangements and relationships
between parts of the sentence —— there is little that can be
proven to emanate from the Semitic Component.   Some features

have been attributed diachronically to Semitic Component
impact (cf. e.g. Birnbaum 1922: 45-49). Many of these,
such as the use of vɔs as relative pronoun in all three
genders and both numbers, or the nominalization of
adjectives, e.g. di méjdl iz a šéjnə 'the girl is pretty'
(alongside di méjdl iz šéjn), are better explained as
results of Slavonic impact within Eastern Yiddish or as
internal Yiddish developments. In any event, such features
can by no stretch of the imagination be discerned as
belonging to the Synchronic Semitic Component. The most
prominent syntactic category restricted to the Semitic
Component within Yiddish is the construct state of nouns
(coexisting with the Germanic Component genitive), e.g.
sxar líməd 'tuition (fee) [lit. +reward of study']'.
But even these can plausibly be treated synchronically as
simple nouns. Evidence for a counter construct argument
includes the frequent reduction of the unstressed head or
attribute as the case may be, e.g. bəs médrəš 'traditional
small synagogue' (< bɛs médrəš < bēθ miðróš), bézdṇ 'traditional
court' (< bɛs dín < bēθ dín). The only syntactic prominence
of the Semitic Component within Yiddish is its representation
in most grammatical word classes (parts of speech).

5.3. Word Classes

The Semitic Component exhibits a number of typical
nominal paradigms. An illustrative corpus of fifteen items

each for two prominent canonical shapes, (C)aC(C)óCə and
agentive C(C)áCC(ə)n is provided in Table 17.   Table 18:
1-15 exemplifies one of the more prominent synthetic verb types
formed in Yiddish by infixation of invariant a between the
first and second radicals of the triconsonantal Semitic root,
to which Germanic Component inflectional endings are suffixed
as appropriate, giving infinitives of the canonical shape
(C)áCCən(ən).   Table 18: 16-30 illustrates one of a number
of analytic verb types in which an invariant Semitic Component
(historically participial) verb is periphrastically conjugated
by the use of Germanic Component auxiliaries.   The canonical
shape illustrated is máC(C)(ə)(C).   Fifteen illustrative items
each are provided for Semitic Component adverbs (Table 19:
1-15) and prepositions (Table 19: 16-30).

5.4.   Morphological Specificities

     Among the formatives extensively employed in Yiddish
to inflect and derive Semitic Component lexical items are
pluralizing -əm (e.g. málbəš 'garment', xávər 'friend', pls.
malbúšəm, xavéjrəm), pluralizing -əs (e.g. dúgmə 'example',
tójvə 'favour', pls. dugmóəs, tójvəs), feminizing -tə (e.g.
xávər 'friend', xázn̩ 'cantor', fes. xávərtə '(girl)friend',
xázn̩tə 'cantor's wife'), abstracting -əs (e.g. gádlən 'braggart',
póšət 'simple', abs. gádləs 'haughtiness', páštəs 'simplicity') and
adverbializing bə- (historically a prefixed preposition; e.g.
kavónə 'intention', šútfəs 'partnership', advs. bəkavónə
'intentionally', bəšútfəs 'jointly'

Table 17:   Sample Nominal Paradigms in the Semitic Component:
Illustrative Corpus

Canonical (C)aC(C)íCe

1. akíre 'barren woman'
2. azhóre 'warning'
3. bakóse 'request'
4. haclíxe 'success'
5. hamóɔe 'new idea, device'
6. hanóxe 'discount; assumption'
7. hasxóle 'beginning'
8. haxbóde 'burden'
9. jabóse 'dry land; mainland'
10. kabíle 'receipt; Kabbalah'
11. kapóre '(rit.) fowl; scapegoat'
12. mapíle 'setback; downfall'
13. matóne 'gift'
14. sakóne 'danger'
15. xarófe 'change of mind, heart'

(Agentive) Canonical C(C)aCC(e)n

16. bádxn '(trad.) entertainer'
17. gádlen 'braggart'
18. dalfn 'poor man'
19. jáxsn 'man of noble descent'
20. kábcn 'pauper'
21. káisn 'man given to anger'
22. lámdn '(trad.) scholar'
23. nádvn '(generous) donor'
24. pázren 'extravagant man'
25. šádxn 'marriage broker'
26. šákren 'liar'
27. stádlen 'intercessor'
28. táfsn 'jailer'
29. táljen 'hangman, executioner'
30. xánfn 'flatterer'

Table 18: Synthetic and Analytic Semitic Component Verbs: Illustrative Corpus

Synthetic: Canonical (C)áCCen(en)

1. áxlen '(con.) eat'
2. bádken(en) '(rit.) inspect'
3. bátlen 'waste time'
4. dársen(en) 'preach; interpret'
5. gánvenen 'steal'
6. hárgenen 'kill'
7. jársenen 'inherit'
8. lákxenen 'snatch; steal'
9. páskenen 'give judgment; decide'
10. páslen 'invalidate; reject'
11. sárfen 'burn'
12. sáskenen '(hum.) drink alcohol'
13. xákrenen (zex) 'philosophize'
14. xánfen(en) 'flatter'
15. xásmenen 'sign'

Analytic: Canonical máC(C)(e)(C)

16. máfsek (zajn) 'interrupt'
17. májrex (zajn) 'speak too long'
18. mákdem (zajn) 'precede'
19. mákped (zajn) 'be exact'
20. mákrev (zajn) 'sacrifice'
21. mámce (zajn) 'invent'
22. mápl (zajn) 'miscarry'
23. másber (zajn) 'explain'
24. máseg (zajn) 'conceive (of)'
25. máskem (zajn) 'agree'
26. másped (zajn) 'eulogize (dead)'
27. másre (zajn) 'warn; admonish'
28. mávxn (zajn) 'distinguish'
29. máxrem (zajn) 'excommunicate'
30. máxrez (zajn) 'proclaim'

Table 19:   Semitic Component Adverbs and Prepositions:
            Illustrative Corpus

Adverbs

1. aváda 'certainly'
2. beféjreš 'explicitly'
3. befrát 'specifically'
4. bekavíne 'intentionally'
5. beméile 'in any case'
6. bexlál 'generally'
7. dávke 'expressly; (as if) in spite'
8. éfšer 'maybe'
9. kemát 'almost'
10. kójdem 'previously'
11. leaxeramáise 'after the event'
12. lehéipex 'on the contrary'
13. lemóšl 'for example'
14. lexatxíle 'initially'
15. mestáme 'probably'

Prepositions

16. axúc 'except'
17. beéjs 'during'
18. beméšex 'in the course of'
19. benegéje 'concerning'
20. bašás 'during'
21. érev 'on the eve of'
22. kenéged 'as opposed to'
23. legába 'in relation to'
24. lekóved 'in honour of'
25. lašém 'for the sake of'
26. letójves 'for the benefit of'
27. máxmes 'because of'
28. mecád 'on the part of'
29. mekójlex 'concerning'
30. (vos iz) šájex 'as for'

5.5. Semantic Characteristics

Nearly the entire corpus of the linguistically codified parts of traditional Jewish religious life characteristic of the Ashkenazi subculture in which Yiddish arose is written, studied or recited from Hebrew or Aramaic texts. Needless to say, nearly all matters and concepts connected with the specificities of Jewish lifestyle are expressed in Yiddish by Semitic Component lexical items, e.g. mícvə 'commandment; good deed', šábəs 'Sabbath; Saturday', tójrə 'Torah, Pentateuch'. There are however a few important items from the religious sphere that entered Yiddish from other sources, e.g. bénčn 'bless; recite grace after meals', gɔt 'God', trɔp 'traditional accents used for the chanting of the Pentateuch and weekly readings from the Prophets' (cf. Latin benedicere, Middle High German got, Greek tropos).

A far more important synchronic consideration from which history may be inferred is the semantic range of the Semitic Component. Far from being limited to religious items and ideas, it encompasses such items as éfšər 'true', məstámə 'probably', pónəm 'face' and šɔjtə 'fool'. Although presented to illustrate other aspects of the Semitic Component, the 135 items provided in Tables 17-19 and 21-23 may also serve to illustrate the semantic diversity of the Semitic Component.

5.6. Phonological Specificities

The most explicit synchronic evidence lending itself
to historical interpretation is provided by the phonology
of the Semitic Component.   In no Yiddish dialect are
there any phonetic realizations exclusive to the Semitic
Component.   All parts of Yiddish share a transcomponental
phonetic inventory, at least with respect to the components
as we have defined them (cf. above §2.4).   In modern Eastern
Yiddish, however, there are features restricted to the
Slavonic element, most notably the series of palatalized
consonants (cf. Bratkowsky 1974).   While the Germanic
and Semitic Components are fully integrated with respect
to segmental phones, they differ markedly in their
prosodic phonology (stress assignment), dynamic synchronic
phonology (component specific rules) and segmental
phonemic distribution.

5.6.1.   Stress Assignment

The Germanic Component in Yiddish, like German,
exhibits root-bound or lexical stress which is, broadly
speaking, phonologically assigned to the first syllable
of most lexical items.   The basic stress rule in the
Germanic Component is then

$V \rightarrow [\text{+stress}] \ / \ \#C_0\underline{\quad}$

as exemplified by the illustrative corpus of fifteen items

in Table 20. Because of the stress assignment rule, the initial syllable retains word level stress notwithstanding inflectional or derivational suffixation engendering syllable addition, as exemplified for the corpus provided in the right hand column of Table 20. The clitic boundary (#) rather than the full word boundary (##) is used in the rule to enable it to account for stressed stem vowels preceded by stressed prefixal clitics. While such stem vowels are generally relegated to secondary stress, they remain stressed with respect to the following syllables. Thus, for example, the primarily stressed á of árbət 'work' may be relegated to secondary stress upon prefixation of a stressed prefix, e.g. ájsàrbətn 'work out', but the basic stress rule continues to apply.

In the Semitic Component, stress is usually strictly phonological and is assigned to the penultimate syllable by

$$\begin{matrix} V \\ [+tense] \end{matrix} \rightarrow [+stress] / \_\_C_o(VC_o)\#\#$$

where the [+tense] constraint precludes the rule from fallaciously stressing reduced vowels and the parentheses allow for the stressing of monosyllables. Semitic Component Stress Assignment is exemplified by fifteen illustrative items in Table 21. In consequence of the rule, suffixation entailing syllable addition engenders a shift in stress to the new penultimate position. In sharp distinction to the Germanic Component pattern, stressed Semitic Component

Table 20: Stress Assignment in the Germanic Component:

$$V \rightarrow [+stress] / \underline{\quad} \#C_0$$

Illustrative Base Corpus		Suffixed Forms	
1.	ále 'all; every(one)'	1.	álemən '(obj.) everyone'
2.	bétlər 'beggar'	2.	bétlərļ '(dim.) beggar'
3.	dríngən 'infer'	3.	dríngņdik 'inferring'
4.	fóigļ 'bird'	4.	féigəlax '(dim.) birds'
5.	gésļ '(dim.) street'	5.	gésələ '(2nd dim.) street'
6.	háintik 'present day'	6.	háintikə '(pl.) present day'
7.	kléjne '(pl.) small'	7.	kléjninkə '(pl. dim.) small'
8.	lóifņ 'run'	8.	lóifņdik 'running'
9.	náriš 'foolish'	9.	náriškait 'folly; trifle'
10.	šrájbər 'writer'	10.	šrájbərł 'graphomaniac'
11.	tépļ 'cup'	11.	tépələ '(dim.) cup'
12.	váklən 'waver'	12.	vákləniš 'inconsistency'
13.	vólkņ 'cloud'	13.	vólkņdik 'cloudy'
14.	jídiš 'Yiddish; Jewish'	14.	jídiškajt 'Jewishness'
15.	zéjgər 'clock'	15.	zéjgərł 'watch'

Table 21: Posttonic Reduction in the Semitic Component:
V → [-tense] / [+stress] Co ___

Surface Form	Gloss	Underlying Form	Evidence
1. ákšn	'stubborn man'	|akšon|	akšónes (abs.)
2. bílbl	'frame-up; calumny'	|bilbul|	bilbúlem (pl.)
3. gánev	'thief'	|ganov|	ganóvem (pl.)
4. gíber	'strong man'	|gibojr|	gebójrem (pl.)
5. kéjver	'grave'	|kejvor|	kvórem (pl.)
6. kórbn	'sacrifice'	|korbon|	korbónes (pl.)
7. méjlex	'king'	|mejlox|	mlóxem (pl.)
8. méjvn	'expert'	|mejvin|	mavínes (abs.)
9. nóged	'rich man'	|nogid|	negídeste (fe.)
10. párcef	'(con.) face'	|parcuf|	parcúfem (pl.)
11. símen	'indication, sign'	|simon|	semónem (pl.)
12. šéjvet	'tribe'	|šejvot|	švótem (pl.)
13. xámer	'donkey; fool'	|xamojr|	xamójram (pl.)
14. xázn	'cantor'	|xazon|	xazónes (abs.)
15. xóxem	'sage; wise man'	|xoxom|	xaxómem (pl.)

vowels are destressed and occasionally reduced to ǝ (and
its allophones — i, I, etc.) upon syllable addition
while reduced vowels emerge as fully stressed vowels or
diphthongs in consequence of being in the new penultimate
syllable.   Thus, for example, the reduced ǝ of xávǝr
'friend' emerges as stressed éj in the plural, xavéjrǝm
while the stressed á of the singular loses stress. This
marked reorganization of word level prosodies applies
equally to words of greater number of syllables, e.g.
mǝxútn 'in-law', pl. maxatónǝm.

5.6.2.   Semitic Component Posttonic Reduction

There can be no doubt that historically speaking,
the reduction of posttonic vowels in the Semitic Component
is a direct result of attractive analogy by the well known
process of historical reduction of unstressed vowels in
Germanic. Now in the synchronic phonology of the Germanic
Component, as indeed in any modern variety of German,
phonetically reduced vowels are nearly always derivable
from likewise reduced vowels on a more abstract level
of morphophonemic or underlying representation.   From the
evidence provided by the modern language, one cannot establish
a unique nonreduced underlying representation.   Thus,
for example, Yiddish ǝ in bétlǝr, íctǝr 'now', kúmǝn 'come'
is synchronically derivable from a likewise reduced segment

in the underlying phonemic inventory of the Germanic
Component.

Due to the Semitic Component rule of Penultimate
Stress Assignment, reduced vowels frequently alternate
with full vowels or diphthongs in suffixed forms (cf.
Table 21). A synchronic offshoot of Penultimate Stress
Assignment in the Semitic Component is then a synchronic
rule of Posttonic Reduction

$$V \rightarrow [-\text{tense}] \, / \, \begin{bmatrix} V \\ +\text{stress} \end{bmatrix} C_o \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$$

as exemplified by an illustrative corpus of fifteen items
in Table 22. The synchronic status of the rule is
attested to by the unique underlying representations
that are determined on the basis of suffixed surface forms.

5.6.3. Systematic Vocalic Alternations in the Semitic
        Component

At this point in our investigation, we must forsake
Standard Yiddish representations which were employed in
Tables 17-22 where the dialects do not diverge with
respect to the phenomena illustrated. In as much as the
dialects of Yiddish diverge radically in their systems
of stressed vocalism (cf. Tables 3-8), the standard language
cannot adequately serve as a model where stressed vocalism
is at issue. We shall use Mideastern Yiddish as a convenient

Table 22: Stress Assignment in the Semitic Component:

$$[\underset{V}{+\text{tense}}] \rightarrow [+\text{stress}] \; / \; \underline{\quad} \; C_o(VC_o)\#\#$$

Illustrative Base Corpus:	Suffixed Forms:
1. álmən 'widower'	1. almóne 'widow'
2. bátlən 'lazy / impractical man'	2. batlónes 'laziness'
3. gázlən 'robber'	3. gazlónəm 'robbers'
4. géjreš 'expulsion'	4. gerúsəm 'expulsions'
5. kámcn 'stingy man'	5. kamcónes 'stinginess'
6. málbeš 'garment'	6. malbúšəm 'garments'
7. párnəs 'community official'	7. parnóse 'livelihood'
8. páxdn 'coward'	8. paxdónes 'cowardliness'
9. ráxmən 'merciful man'	9. raxmónes 'mercy; pity'
10. šábes 'Saturday; Sabbath'	10. sabósəm 'Saturdays; Sabbaths'
11. šóxn 'neighbour'	11. sxéjnes 'vicinity'
12. tálməd 'student'	12. talmíde '(fe.) student'
13. xáləš '(I) faint'	13. xalóšes 'fainting; nausea'
14. xáver 'friend'	14. xavéjrəm 'friends'
15. xólem 'dream'	15. xalójməs 'dreams'

point of departure, and then proceed to take other
representative dialects into account. The Semitic Component
of Mideastern Yiddish exhibits systematic morphophonemic
alternations in which the syllable boundary features open
vs. closed are the conditioning factor.   Mideastern Yiddish
áj, ój and ú in open syllables alternate with ɛ́, ɔ́ and á,
respectively, in closed syllables. These alternations are
exemplified by five illustrative items each in Table 23.   It
would appear from the first and third set that áj ~ ɛ́ and ú ~ á
have become morphologized as plural ~ singular markers, but
other items (e.g. sfɛk sfájkə 'very dubious matter' where ɛ́ ~ áj
in the same phrase; klúvəm 'dogs' ~ kláftə '(fig.) bitch') in which
these two alternations occur, as well as frequent paradigms in
the second set (cf. nos. 7, 9⁻10) demonstrate that the environment
common to all the alternations is the conditioning syllable
boundary. Turning to three other representative Yiddish dialects,
Northeastern, Midwestern and Northwestern Yiddish, we find (Table
24) that they too exhibit allomorphic alternation in the same
lexical items, although the phonemic realizations of the
stressed vowels differ markedly in each dialect. In Northeastern
Yiddish the open vs. closed syllabic alternations are éj ~ ɛ́,
éj ~ ɔ́, ɔ́ ~ á; in Midwestern Yiddish ɛ̄́ ~ ɛ́, ɔ̄́ ~ ɔ́, ū́ ~ á; in
Northwestern Yiddish ɛ́j ~ ɛ́, ɔ́u ~ ɔ́, ɔ̄́ ~ á.

In terms of the systematization of Pan Yiddish vocalism
(cf. above §4.1, Table 1), the Semitic Component
of all known varieties of Yiddish exhibits open vs. closed
syllabic allomorphic alternations in which 22 ~ 21, 42 ~ 41,

Table 23: Systematic Vocalic Alternations in
the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish

I: áj /___$ ~   έ /___C$

1. gájrəm 'proselytes' ~ sg. gεr
2. májsəm 'corpses' ~ sg. mεs
3. nájrəs '(rit.) candles' ~ sg. nεr
4. šájdəm 'ghosts' ~ sg. šεd
5. šájməs 'sacred pages' ~ šεm 'reputation'

II: ɔj /___$ ~   ɔ́ /___C$

6. dɔ́jrəs 'generations' ~ sg. dɔr
7. jɔ́jrəš 'heir' ~ pl. jɔ́ršəm
8. sɔ́jdəs 'secrets' ~ sg. sɔd
9. sɔ́jfər 'scribe' ~ pl. sɔ́frəm
10. sɔ́jxər 'merchant' ~ pl. sɔ́xrəm

III: ú /___$ ~   a /___C$

11. klúləm 'rules' ~ sg. klal
12. ksúvəm 'writings' ~ sg. ksav
13. prútəm 'details' ~ sg. prat
14. psúkəm 'judegments' ~ sg. psak
15. švúxəm 'praises' ~ sg. švax

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Table 24: Systematic Vocalic Alternations in the Semitic Component:
Northeastern, Midwestern and Northwestern Yiddish

Northeastern Yiddish

I: éj/__$ ~ é/__C$
1. séjrem ~ ger
2. méjsem ~ mes
3. néjres ~ ner
4. šéjdem ~ šed
5. šéjmes ~ šem

II: éj/__$ ~ ó/__C$
6. déjreš ~ dor
7. jéjreš ~ jórsim
8. séjdes ~ sod
9. séjfer ~ sófrim
10. séjxer ~ sóxrim

III: ó/__$ ~ á/__C$
11. klójlim ~ klal
12. ksóvim ~ ksav
13. prótim ~ prat
14. psókim ~ psak
15. svóxim ~ svax

Midwestern Yiddish

I: é/__$ ~ é/__C$
1. gérem ~ ger
2. mésem ~ mes
3. néres ~ ner
4. šédem ~ šed
5. šémes ~ šem

II: ó/__$ ~ ó/__C$
6. dóreš ~ dor
7. jóreš ~ jórsem
8. sódes ~ sod
9. sófer ~ sófrem
10. sóxer ~ sóxrem

III: ú/__$ ~ á/__C$
11. klúlem ~ klal
12. ksúvem ~ ksav
13. prútem ~ prat
14. psúkem ~ psak
15. svúxem ~ svax

Northwestern Yiddish

I: éj/__$ ~ é/__C$
1. géjrem ~ ger
2. méjsem ~ mes
3. néjres ~ ner
4. šéjdem ~ šed
5. šéjmes ~ šem

II: óu/__$ ~ ó/__C$
6. dóureš ~ dor
7. jóureš ~ jórsem
8. sóudes ~ sod
9. sóufer ~ sófrem
10. sóuxer ~ sóxrem

III: ó/__$ ~ á/__C$
11. klólem ~ klal
12. ksóvem ~ ksav
13. prótem ~ prat
14. psókem ~ psak
15. svóxem ~ svax

and 12 ~ 11.

5.6.4.   Segmental Distribution

Considered within the framework of the overall system of segmental phonemes within each Yiddish dialect, the alternations 22 ~ 21, 42 ~ 41 and 12 ~ 11 can be seen as the result of a Pan Yiddish rule

$$
\begin{bmatrix} 22 \\ 42 \\ 12 \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 21 \\ 41 \\ 11 \end{bmatrix} \Big/ \underline{\qquad} C\$
$$
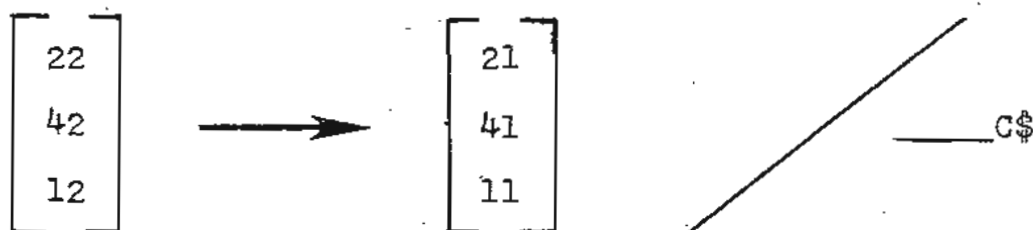
affecting the Semitic Component only.   Evidence of the rule is provided by the general nonoccurrence of vowels 22, 42 and 12 in the Semitic Component in closed syllables. A few anomalous occurrences of these vowels in closed syllabic position are are for the most part semantically restricted (cf. Katz 1978a).   The most prominent lexical items resisting the rule are names of letters of the Yiddish alphabet. The letters ב and ר, (Standard Yiddish beiz and reiš, = [b], [r]) appear with vowel 22 while the letters ו and ת, (Standard Yiddish vov and tof, = [v], [t]) appear with vowel 12.   The exceptions to the nonoccurrence of 22, 42 and 12 in closed syllables are discussed at greater length in Katz (1978a)   in their historical context. At present, the synchronic focus leads us to one key

observation. In the Germanic Component, vowels 22, 42
and 12 occur in both open and closed syllables. Cf. e.g.
Mideastern Yiddish šajn 'beautiful', pl. šájšnə; grɔjs 'large',
pl. grɔjšsə; klur 'clear', pl. klúšrə. Analogously, there
is no restriction on the distribution of these vowels in
other Yiddish dialects. Cf. Northeastern Yiddish šejn, šéjnə;
gréjs, gréjsə; klɔr, klɔ́rə ‖ Midwestern Yiddish šḗ(n), šḗnə;
grōs, grōsə; klūr, klūrə ‖ Northwestern Yiddish šɛjn, šɛjnə;
grɔus, grɔusə; klōr, klōrə. In the Semitic Component,
the oppositions 22 vs. 21, 42 vs. 41 and 12 vs. 11 ——
whatever their concrete phonemic realizations in any given
Yiddish dialect —— are neutralized in closed syllabic
position, phonetically in favour of the local realization
of 21, 41 and 11. In Northeastern Yiddish the mergers
22 and 42 as unitary ej and of 12 and 41 as unitary ɔ have
obscured most of the systemic impact of the process. It is
moreover noteworthy that 42 and 41 are virtually in
complementary distribution in the Semitic Component of Yiddish
dialects. While vowels 21 and 11 occur in open syllables,
41 occurs only anomalously. The nonoccurrence of vowel 41 in
open syllables in the Semitic Component reflects a pre-Yiddish
distribution. Synchronically speaking these are overriding
features of the Semitic Component and the Semitic Component
only in all known varieties of Yiddish with respect to
segmental phonology. 42 and 41 are in complementary
distribution, while the oppositions 22 vs. 21 and 12 vs. 11
are neutralized in closed syllable position. This neutralization
results in the characteristic alternations (Tables 23-24).
These phonological specificities are schematically illustrated
for Mideastern and Northwestern Yiddish in Tables 25 and 26.

Table 25:   Distributional Specificities in the Semitic Component
of Mideastern Yiddish

a_{11} u_{12} $ɔi_{42}$ $ɛ_{21}$ ai_{22}

a_{11} a_{41} $ɛ_{21}$

Open Syllable

Closed Syllable

Table 26: Distributional Specificities in the Semitic Component
of Northwestern Yiddish

Open Syllable

a_{11} $\bar{o}_{12}$

$\underline{a}_{11}$

$\underline{ou}_{42}$ $\underline{a}_{41}$

ε_{21} εi_{22}

$\underline{\varepsilon}_{21}$

Closed Syllable

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5.7. Historical Inferences

The notion of inferring the past from the synchronic state of affairs immediately brings to mind reconstruction. All reconstruction, as Saussure (1916: 305) so rightly emphasizes, entails comparison. In the present chapter we have not compared Semitic Component forms with the cognate Semitic (comparative reconstruction) or with other Semitic Component forms with an eye to recovering an earlier state of affairs (internal reconstruction). We have approached transcomponent reconstruction, as one may call the comparison of genetically unrelated but synchronically fused forms within a fusion language. We have not carried this process to its conclusion in the present chapter. Nor have we provided anything close to a comprehensive synchronic grammar of the Semitic Component. We have merely attempted to provide as briefly as possible a cross section of the Semitic Component for one purpose only. The point of the exercise is to determine whether there is a prima facie case for or against the text theory or continual transmission or a combination of the two. To put it differently, if a linguist wholly unfamiliar with any of the languages cognate with Yiddish were to discover the known varieties of Yiddish on a desolate island, would he or she discern a "minority component" on purely linguistic grounds? Would he or she

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have grounds to presume that this "minority component" entered Yiddish from a vernacular source, that is to say from a language that was at some point in time in societal contact with the "majority component"? Or conversely, would the linguistic evidence point to borrowings from a sacred or liturgical language?

A hypothetical Semitic Component restricted to nouns, wholly inflected and derived by Germanic Component morphological machinery, semantically limited to the religious sphere of life, and an indistinguishable part of Germanic Component phonology would militate powerfully against the possibility of a vernacular source. Diachronic evidence only could then be adduced in support of a vernacular-origin theory (e.g. continual transmission). Although of no syntactic import (§5.2), the Semitic Component does entail a number of word classes (§5.3), its own inflectional and derivational formatives (§5.4) and a wide semantic range (§5.5). None of this proves anything, except that judging synchronically one is compelled to conclude that there is no prima facie case against the notion of a vernacular source, which is left open as a possibility meriting further investigation.

The only true evidence in favour of a theory of vernacular entry is provided by the phonology (§§5.6 — 5.6.4). It would not be very easy to conclude that a minority component in a fusion language possessing its

own stress assignment rule (§5.6.1), the resulting rule
of posttonic reduction (§5.6.2), systematic morphophonemic
alternations unattested in the majority component (§5.6.3) and
a unique distribution of phonemes (§5.6.4) has entered
the fusion language from hallowed texts. Moreover, the
appearance of parallel alternations in the same lexical items
in dialects that are both structurally different and
geographically noncontiguous (cf. Tables 23-24) is
powerful evidence that the items in question originate in
a common protolanguage (cf. above §3.3). This conclusion
is strengthened by the considerable phonetic differences
in the realizations of cognate vowels in the several
varieties. These differences militate against the
possibility of horizontal diffusion through space.

An argument in favour of the text theory in the face
of the empirical evidence of the Synchronic Semitic Component
in the modern language would seek to demonstrate that all the
phonological specificities of the Semitic Component within
Yiddish are derivable from the sacred texts in Hebrew and
Aramaic in use by the Yiddish speaking community. It would
further seek to show that the structural parallelism amidst
differences of concrete realization between the several
dialects could have arisen by parallel acquisitions from
texts in each area.

The next task is then to compare the phonology of the
Semitic Component with that of the forms of Hebrew and
Aramaic in use in the society in which Yiddish developed.

6. The Semitic Component and Ashkenazic

6.1. The Notion Ashkenazic

Parallel with the internal linguistic configurations
observed in other Jewish language communities, derivatives of
Hebrew and of Aramaic etymons continue to survive not only as
synchronically fused components of the fusion language.
They appear in at least two other clearly discernible linguistic
formations. The first of these comprises written Hebrew and
Aramaic on the speech territory of Yiddish. Although not in
use as vernaculars Hebrew and Aramaic continued to be used
extensively for numerous communicative, academic and religious
purposes. They were thus in a manner of speaking in societal
complementary distribution with the spoken language, Yiddish,
and with those functions of writing which came to be associated
with Yiddish (cf. M. Weinreich 1973: I, 251-320; III, 253-331).
In fact one theory of the rise of Yiddish literature views its
growth in terms of the filling of gaps provided by areas not
covered by Hebrew and Aramaic (cf. Shmeruk 1978: 9-24). As
noted above (§2.4), we reject the notion that Hebrew and
Aramaic had fused into a unitary "Hebrew-Aramaic" and contend
that a monograph on the differences maintained between these
two written languages on Yiddish speaking territory will
prove valuable to the study of exotic types of multilingualism.

The researcher must contend with internal Jewish trilingualism
(Yiddish, Hebrew, Aramaic) and overall multilingualism often
entailing knowledge and use of at least one coterritorial
or contiguous non-Jewish language. It is however the second
linguistic formation of Hebrew and Aramaic which is directly
relevant to the issues at stake in the history of the Semitic
Component. While only scholars (a class virtually restricted
to males in the traditional society in which pre-modern Yiddish
developed) actually had occasion to write Hebrew or Aramaic
on Yiddish speaking territory, nearly the entire speech
community of Yiddish participated to some degree in what has
come to be called the reading tradition of a liturgical language
(cf. Morag 1958). Hebrew and Aramaic texts were studied, read,
prayed from and recited from memory. These "uttered" forms
of Hebrew and Aramaic appeared in very frequent settings in
the traditional community.

Our first category (the Semitic Component) corresponds
with M. Weinreich's (1954a: 85-86) merged Hebrew. Our second
proposed conceptual delimitation (written Hebrew and written
Aramaic) and the third (uttered Hebrew and Aramaic) both
correspond with Weinreich's (ibid.) whole Hebrew. While
written Hebrew and Aramaic continued to exhibit obvious
differences in lexicon, morphology and syntax, uttered Hebrew
and Aramaic (Morag's reading tradition) share a unitary
phonological system. We propose to collectively call

uttered forms of Hebrew and Aramaic _Ashkenazic_. The
linguistic term Ashkenazic can be distinguished from the
cultural and historical adjective Ashkenazi (usually
Ashkenazic in North American usage), referring to the
history, territory and culture of the Ashkenazim, the carriers
of the Jewish subculture that arose in the Rhineland around a
millennium ago (cf. M. Weinreich 1964).

Notwithstanding the coterritoriality of Ashkenazic with
the vast historical speech territory of Yiddish (cf. map on p. 67),
and its long history, it has been subjected to a disproportionately
small number of empirical studies. The only detailed monograph
is U. Weinreich's (1960-1961) on internal geolinguistic
differentiation. Treatments and mentions of Ashkenazic are
included in Steinschneider (1845: 29-31), Schreiner (1886: 255-
259), Ember (1903), Idelsohn (1913: 531-532; 697-699), Segal
(1928: 18, 29, 50, 75, 80, 90, 137), Gumpertz (1953: 1-32),
Schramm (1964: 15-30 [cf. Morag 1967]), Altbauer (1968), Morag
(1971), Bin-Nun (1973: 298-301) and Waldman (1975: 1305-1306,
1309).

6.2.   Ashkenazic as a Continuum

The phonology of Ashkenazic is a continuum. At one
end of the continuum, it is identical with the phonology of the
Semitic Component (cf. above §§6.1 — 6.4). This end is
sociologically heterogeneous, covering the pronunciation of
both Talmudic texts by learned males and the prayers of some of
the least educated. The conditioner is the application of
a specific system of diacritics marking vowels and stress

placement in the (largely) consonantal Hebrew or Aramaic
text.   In the first cited case, this is due to the circumstance
that Talmudic texts are not marked by the traditional
system of diacritics.   They constitute part of the
corpus of unpointed texts.   In the second case, the
prayers are indeed pointed, but the least educated tend
to ignore the points in favour of the more familiar
pronunciations prevailing in the Semitic Component of their
Yiddish.   At the other end of the continuum, Ashkenazic
is maximally different from Semitic Component phonology.
It is toward this end of the continuum that Ashkenazic may
be understood in a more restricted sense still as the
pronunciation of pointed texts according to a tradition
affixing a given phonemic value to each diacritic.   The
most frequent   texts read and studied in Ashkenazic are
the Pentateuch and regular readings from the Prophets, parts of
of the Hagiographa (most prominently Psalms) and canonic prayer.

6.3.   The Reading System

The phonology of Ashkenazic is in effect the system
of realizations of graphemes by speakers of Yiddish.   These
graphemes closely corespond to the classic Tiberian system
of vocalization and accentuation of the Old Testament.   The
relation of Tiberian to the Semitic Component will be

considered below (Chapter 9). At present it is the
Ashkenazic realization of the Tiberian system that is at
issue, rather than a reconstruction of the Tiberian system
itself. Of the sixteen Pan Yiddish diaphonemes (cf. Table 1),
all but five (13, 24, 34, 44, 54) regularly participate in the
Ashkenazic of each dialectal area of Yiddish. The most
frequent correspondences between Tiberian vowel graphemes,
Pan Yiddish diaphonemes and three dialects of Ashkenazic are
illustrated in Table 27, where the point of departure is the
diaphoneme. Five illustrative items are provided for each
diaphoneme. The table omits shewa (ə) and hatef qames, which
is virtually unattested in Yiddish. The segments to which
attention is drawn are underscored.

Underlying Table 27 is the assumption that the phonemic
system of Ashkenazic in each dialect area undergoes change in
line with change in Yiddish itself. That is to say that
although a Tiberian grapheme in a certain environment, e.g.
qames in open syllabic position, may give the same Yiddish
diaphoneme in all dialect areas (vowel 12), the realization
of vowel 12 will differ according to the coterritorial dialect
of Yiddish (cf. Tables 3-8). Hence open syllabic qames will
give Northwestern Yiddish ō, Mideastern Yiddish ū/u, Northeastern
Yiddish ɔ, etc. Each of these are of course structurally
disparate on the level of synchronic analysis of each dialect.
The Northwestern ō is merged with vowel 13; the Mideastern ū is
synchronically processed by Birnbaum's Law and shortened to u
preceding labial and velar consonants; the Northeastern ɔ is

Table 27:	Pan Yiddish Diaphonemes Relative to the Ashkenazic Realizations of Tiberian Graphemes

27.1.   Vowel 11 ‖ pathah; hatef pathah:

Mideastern Ashkenazic (MEA)	Northeastern Ashkenazic (NEA)	Northwestern Ashkenazic (NWA)	Gloss
cad	cad	cad	'side'
ganɔv	ganɔv	ganɔv	'thief'
kalu	kalɔ	kalō	'bride'
šabɔs	šabɔs	šabɔs	'Sabbath'
xazir	xazir	xazir	'pig'

27.2.   Vowel 21 ‖ closed syllabic segol; hatef segol:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
ɛdɔjm	ɛdejm	ɛdɔun	'Edom'
ɛmɛs	ɛmɛs	ɛmɛs	'true'
ɛstajr	ɛstejr	ɛstɛjr	'Esther'
ɛvjɔjn	ɛvjejn	ɛvjɔun	'poor man'
hɛspajd	hɛspejd	hɛspɛjd	'mourning'

27.3.   Vowel 31 ‖ closed syllabic hireq:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
micvu	micvɔ	micvō	'commandment'
midbɔr	midbɔr	midbɔr	'desert'
mizrɔx	mizrɔx	mizrɔx	'east'
šimšɔjn	šimšejn	šimšoun	'Samson'
simxu	simxɔ	simxō	'happiness'

27.4.   Vowel 41 ‖ closed syllabic qames:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
dɔm	dɔm	dɔm	'blood'
jɔm	jɔm	jɔm	'sea'
kɔrbɔn	kɔrbɔn	kɔrbɔn	'offering'
xɔxmu	xɔxmɔ	xɔxmō	'wisdom'
xuxɔm	xɔxɔm	xōxɔm	'wise man'

Table 27   (Continued).

27.5.   Vowel 51 ‖ closed syllabic shureq/qibbus:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
rəšis	rəšus	rəšǫs	'authority'
šilxɔn	šulxɔn	sǫlxɔn	'table'
sis	sus	sǫs	'horse'
xicpu	xucpɔ	xǫcpō	'insolence'
zəxis	zəxus	zəxǫs	'merit'

27.6.   Vowel 12 ‖ open syllabic qames:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
almunu	almɔnɔ	almōnō	'widow'
bəruxu	bərɔxɔ	bərōxō	'blessing'
ləvunu	ləvɔnɔ	ləvōnō	'moon'
nəšumu	nəšɔmɔ	nəšōmō	'soul'
punim	pɔnim	pōnim	'face'

27.7.   Vowel 22 ‖ sere:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
bajn	bejn	bɛjn	'son'
najrɔjs	nejrejs	nɛjrɔus	'candles'
najs	nejs	nɛjs	'miracle'
xajt	xejt	xɛjt	'sin'
zajxɛr	zejxɛr	zɛjxɛr	[a]remembrance'

27.8.   Vowel 32 ‖ open syllabic hireq:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
cadīkim	cadikim	cadīkim	'upright men'
mədīnu	mədinɔ	mədīnō	'country'
mī	mi	mī	'who'
nəgīnu	nəginɔ	nəgīnō	'melody'
uvīnī	ɔvinu	ōvīnu	'our father'

Table 27   (Continued)

27.9.   Vowel 42 ‖ holem:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
dɔjr	dejr	dɔur	'generation'
jɔjrajš	jejrejš	jɔurejš	'heir'
šɔjfajt	šejfejt	šɔufejt	'judge'
sɔjf	sejf	sɔuf	'end'
sɔjnaj	sejnej	sɔunεj	'enemy'

27.10.   Vowel 52 ‖ open syllabic shureq/qibbus:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
bəsīlu	bəsulɔ	bəsū̄lō	'virgin'
gəvīrū	gəvurɔ	gəvūrō	'might'
jəšīu	jəšuɔ	jəšūō	'salvation'
məlīxu	məluxɔ	məlūxō	'kingdom'
səīdu	səudɔ	səūdō	'feast'

27.11.   Vowel 25 ‖ open syllabic segol:

MEA	NEA	NWA	Gloss
dejrεx	dεrεx	dērεx	'way'
kejlεv	kεlεv	kēlεv	'dog'
lejxεm	lεxεm	lēxεm	'bread'
šejkεr	šεkεr	šēkεr	'falsehood'
xejsεd	xεsεd	xēsεd	'mercy'

merged with the originally short $\mathfrak{d}_{41}$ and is part of a
vowel system that does not have length as a distinctive
feature.   Such extrapolations of Ashkenazic from the
usual correspondences between Tiberian graphemes in certain
environments and Pan Yiddish diaphonemes to the actual
phonemic system of any variety of Ashkenazic are
on the whole accurate as Ashkenazic does usually follow
change in the vernacular Yiddish.   There are, however,
documentations of exceptions.   As would be a priori
expected, Ashkenazic, a prestigious nonspoken reading
tradition, occasionally tenaciously maintains a realization
obsolete in the Yiddish of the same speakers.   In Southeastern
Yiddish (cf. Table 8),   vowel 11 (Proto Yiddish $\underline{a}$) has
been rounded to $\mathfrak{d}$ in most environments.   The dialect is
in fact known in Yiddish folklore as $\underline{\text{tɔtə-mɔmə}}$ language, after
the Southeastern realizations of the words for 'father' and
'mother' which are $\underline{\text{tátə}}$ and $\underline{\text{mámə}}$ elsewhere.   In the Ashkenazic
of Southeastern Yiddish speakers, this shift has generally
not transpired and the Tiberian grapheme corresponding with
vowel 11, pathah, continues to be realized as $\underline{a}$, and is therefore
merged with Southeastern Yiddish $\underline{a}_{34}$ (e.g. $\underline{\text{hant}}$ 'today', $\underline{\text{van}}$
'wine').   The realization of pathah has thus split from vowel
11 and joined a new diaphoneme, vowel 34, in Southeastern
Yiddish (cf. U. Weinreich 1960-1961: 249-250).   Analogously,
in the Ashkenazic of some speakers of Northeastern Yiddish
(cf. Table 6), vowel 42(/44) retains an $\underline{\text{ɔj}}$ realization, despite
the Northeastern Yiddish merger of 42(/44) with 22(/24) as
unitary $\underline{\text{ej}}_{22/24/42/44}$ (cf. Altbauer 1968).   Bin-Nun (1973:

300) has documented a variety of Yiddish in Siebenbürgen
sharing aj_{22} with Mideastern Yiddish where the local
Ashkenazic realization of sere (the Tiberian grapheme
usually appearing in Ashkenazic with the local reflex of
22) is the more conservative ej. These three
examples of realignments of Tiberian graphemes with new
Yiddish diaphonemes in documented forms of Ashkenazic
demonstrate that the correspondences provided in Table
27 are subject to and can be overriden by local
sociolinguistic forces.

In Biblical texts, the primary stress of each
word is clearly marked. The practice of prayerbooks
varies widely but many mark penultimate stress which
deviates from the more frequent ultimate stress assignment
rule of Tiberian phonology. In the most explicit style
of Ashkenazic, Tiberian stress is adhered to but in the
many varieties along the continuum the pervasive Yiddish
rule of Penultimate Stress Assignment in the Semitic
Component (cf. above §5.6.1) is applied to Ashkenazic.

6.4. The Semitic Component vs. Ashkenazic

Given the phonological specificities of the Semitic
Component vis-à-vis the Germanic Component (§§5.6.1.— 5.6.4)
and the essentials of the vocalism of Ashkenazic (§6.3), we
are now in a position to compare the Semitic Component with
the reading tradition to determine whether the Semitic
Component is wholly derivable from the phonology of Ashkenazic.

6.4.1.   Stress Assignment

In the most explicit form of Ashkenazic, the inherent
stress of pointed texts is adhered to. In the large majority
of lexical items processed in Yiddish by Penultimate Stress
Assignment, Ashkenazic has ultimate stress. Where Ashkenazic
itself has penultimate stress, the Semitic Component and
Ashkenazic agree on stress placement.   An illustrative
corpus of fifteen items is provided in Table 28.   Items
1-10 represent the usual difference between the two, while in
items 11-15, stress is penultimate in both.

6.4.2.   Posttonic Reduction

In explicit forms of Ashkenazic, there is no
application of a rule of Posttonic Reduction.   Vowels are
realized on the basis of the vocalic diacritics in stressed
as well as unstressed syllables. The only reduced vowels
occurring in Ashkenazic are realizations of the grapheme
for ə (mobile shewa), usually ə or I.   An illustrative
corpus of fifteen items, contrasting Semitic Component reduced
vowels with Ashkenazic full vowels, is provided in Table 29.

6.4.3.   Lack of Systematic Vocalic Alternation

The Ashkenazic cognates of Semitic Component
allomorphs exhibiting open vs. closed syllabic alternations
of vowels 22 and 21, 42 and 41, 12 and 11 (cf. above §5.6.3)

Table 28: Stress Assignment: Mideastern Ashkenazic (MEA) vs. Mideastern Yiddish (MEY), Northeastern Ashkenazic (NEA) vs. Northeastern Yiddish (NEY), Northwestern Ashkenazic (NWA) vs. Northwestern Yiddish (NWY)

	MEA vs. MEY	NEA vs. NEY	NWA vs. NWY	Gloss
1.	cədukú ‖ cədúkə	cədokó ‖ cdə́kə	cədōkó ‖ cdɔ́kə	'charity'
2.	gibɔ́jr ‖ gíbər	gibéjr ‖ gíbər	gibɔ́ur ‖ gíbər	'strong man'
3.	kuvɔ́jd ‖ kúvəd	kovéjd ‖ kɔ́vəd	kōvɔ́ud ‖ kɔ́vəd	'honour'
4.	maxašuví ‖ maxšúvə	maxašovó ‖ maxšɔ́və	maxašōvó ‖ maxšɔ́və	'thought'
5.	mɔjšéj ‖ mójšə	mejšɛ́ ‖ méjšə	moušéj ‖ móušə	'Moses'
6.	šulɔ́jm ‖ šúləm	šolejm ‖ šɔ́ləm	šolóum ‖ šɔ́ləm	'peace'
7.	təhilím ‖ thíləm	təhilím ‖ thílim	təhilím ‖ thíləm	'Psalms'
8.	təšivú ‖ tšívə	təšuvó ‖ tšúvə	təšūvó ‖ tšúvə	'repentance'
9.	uvɔ́js ‖ úvəs	ovéjs ‖ óves	ōvóus ‖ óvəs	'Patriarchs'
10.	xerpú ‖ xárpə	xɛrpó ‖ xárpə	xɛrpó ‖ xárpə	'disgrace'
11.	béjgəd ‖ béjgəd	bégəd ‖ bégəd	bégəd ‖ bégəd	'garment'
12.	méjlex ‖ májləx	mélex ‖ méjlex	mélex ‖ méjlex	'king'
13.	réjgə ‖ réjgə	réga ‖ régə	rə́gə ‖ régə	'moment'
14.	sájdər ‖ sájdər	séjdər ‖ séjdər	séjdər ‖ séjdər	'order'
15.	xájlek ‖ xájlek	xéjlek ‖ xéjlek	xéjlek ‖ xéjlek	'part'

Table 29: Posttonic Reduction: Mideastern Ashkenazic (MEA) vs. Mideastern Yiddish (MEY), Northeastern Ashkenazic (NEA) vs. Northeastern Yiddish (NEY), Northwestern Ashkenazic (NWA) vs. Northwestern Yiddish (NWY).

	MEA vs. MEY	NEA vs. NEY	NWA vs. NWY	Gloss
1.	gojrⱡ ‖ gójrⱡ	gejrⱡ ‖ géjrⱡ	gourⱡ ‖ górⱡ	'fate; lot'
2.	jerišu ‖ jeríšə	jerušə ‖ jerúšə	jərūšō ‖ jeróšə	'inheritance'
3.	kalu ‖ kálə	kalə ‖ kálə	kalō ‖ kálə	'bride'
4.	lešojnojs‖lešójines	lešejnejs‖lešéjnəs	ᵈašounɔus‖lešóunəs	'languages'
5.	levunu ‖ levúnə	levonə ‖ levónə	levōnō ‖ levónə	'moon'
6.	mabil ‖ mábⱡ	mabul ‖ mábⱡ	mabol ‖ mábⱡ	'flood'
7.	matunu ‖ matúnə	matónə ‖ matónə	matōnō ‖ matónə	'gift'
8.	nekumu ‖ nekúmə	nekomə ‖ nekómə	nekōmō ‖ nekómə	'revenge'
9.	parnusu ‖ parnúsə	parnosə ‖ parnósə	parnōsō ‖ parnósə	'livelihood'
10.	punim ‖ púnəm	ponim ‖ pónəm	pōnim ‖ pónəm	'face'
11.	šabəs ‖ šábəs	šabəs ‖ šábəs	šabəs ‖ šábəs	'Sabbath'
12.	tipaiš ‖ típəš	tipɛiš ‖ típəš	tipɛiš ‖ típəš	'fool'
13.	xusən ‖ xúsn	xosən ‖ xósn	xōsən ‖ xósn	'bridegroom'
14.	xuxəm ‖ xúxəm	xoxəm ‖ xóxəm	xoxəm ‖ xóxəm	'(iro.) wise man'
15.	zukajn ‖ zúkn	zəkejn ‖ zókn	zōkejn ‖ zókn	'elderly man'

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show no alternation at all or in the case of 12 and 11, a
different alternation.   In conformity with the usual
realizations of the Tiberian graphemes in Ashkenazic (cf.
Table 27), Semitic Component pairs exhibiting 22 ~ 21
alternation are consistently realized as 22 (‖ sere) and
pairs exhibiting 42 ~ 41 alternation are consistently
realized as 42 (‖ holem).   Those items exhibiting 12 ~
11 alternation in the Semitic Component do, however,
alternate in Ashkenazic as well, where the environment is
likewise open vs. closed syllabic position.   The alternation
is however between 12 and 41 rather than between 12 and 11.
The only dialect of Ashkenazic which does not exhibit
alternation is Northeastern.   This is no surprise given the
merger of 12 and 41 as unitary Northeastern Yiddish $\mathfrak{d}_{12/41}$
(cf. Table 6).   Our original base corpus of fifteen
items illustrating the three Semitic Component alternations
within Yiddish (Tables 23-24) is revisited for the Ashkenazic
reading tradition in Table 30.   Cognates of the corpus are
provided in Mideastern, Northeastern and Northwestern
Ashkenazic, which collectively comprise a maximal number
of oppositions.

　　　These salient differences between the Semitic
Component and Ashkenazic are also evident from eighteenth
century Latin letter handbooks which describe both.
Although Christian (1727: 25) transcribes the value of
sere as <ei>, of holem as <au>, and of qames as <o>, the

Table 30: Cognates in Ashkenazic of Semitic Component Sets Exhibiting
Open vs. Closed Syllabic Vocalic Alternation (cf. Tables 23-24)

Mideastern Ashkenazic

I: aj/__$ = aj/__C$
1. gajrim, gajr
2. majsim, majs
3. najrajs, najr
4. šajdim, šajd
5. šajmajs, šajm

II: ɔj/__$ = ɔj/__C$
6. dɔjrajs, dɔjr
7. jɔjrajs, jɔjr(ə)šim
8. sɔjdes, sɔjd
9. sɔjfajr, sɔjf(ə)rim
10. sɔjxajr, sɔjx(ə)rim

III: u/__$ ~ ɔ/__C$
11. k(ə)lulim, k(ə)lɔl
12. k(ə)suvim, k(ə)sɔv
13. p(ə)rutim, p(ə)rɔt
14. p(ə)sukim, p(ə)sɔk
15. š(ə)vuxim, š(ə)vɔx

Northeastern Ashkenazic

I: ej/__$ = ej/__C$
1. gejrim, gejr
2. mejsim, mejs
3. nejrejs, nejr
4. šejdim, šejd
5. šejmejs, šejm

II: ej/__$ = ej/__C$
6. dejrejs, dejr
7. jejrejs, jejr(e)šim
8. sejdejs, sejd
9. sejfejr, sejf(e)rim
10. sejxejr, sejx(e)rim

III: ɔ/__$ = ɔ/__C$
11. k(e)lɔlim, k(e)lɔl
12. k(e)sɔvim, k(e)sɔv
13. p(e)rɔtim, p(e)rɔt
14. p(e)sɔkim, p(e)sɔk
15. š(e)vɔxim, š(e)vɔx

Northwestern Ashkenazic

I: ej/__$ = ej/__C$
1. gejrim, gejr
2. mejsim, mejs
3. nejrous, nejr
4. šejdim, šejd
5. šejmous, šejm

II: ɔu/__$ = ɔu/__C$
6. dourous, dour
7. jourejs, jour(e)šim
8. soudous, soud
9. soufejr, souf(e)rim
10. souxejr, soux(e)rim

III: ō/__$ ~ ɔ/__C$
11. k(e)lōlim, k(e)lɔl
12. k(e)sōvim, k(e)sɔv
13. p(e)rōtim, p(e)rɔt
14. p(e)sōkim, p(e)sɔk
15. š(e)vōxim, š(e)vɔx

body of his dictionary, devoted to the lexicon of the
Semitic Component in Yiddish, generally has <e>, <o> and
<a> respectively, e.g. <Leff> 'heart' (p. 34), <Mess> 'corpse'
(p. 35), <Ness> 'miracle' (p. 36); <Besoll> 'inexpensively'
(p. 30), <Besot> 'secretly' (p. 31), <Soff> 'end' (p. 39);
<Befrat> 'specifically' (p. 31), <Dam> 'blood' (p. 32),
<Jam> 'sea' (p. 33).   Selig (1792: 5) transcribes sere
as <e> (= ē in his orthography in unchecked position), holem
as <au>, qames as <o>. In the body of his dictionary,
however, Semitic Component items cognate with these Ashkenazic
vowels generally have <e> (= ɛ or ḛ in his orthography in
checked position), <o> and <a> respectively, e.g. <Lef> (p.
205); <Mess> (p. 209), <Ness> (p. 218); <besol> (p. 175),
<Sod> 'secret' (p. 225), <Sof> (p. 225);   <Bifrat> (p. 257),
<Dam> (p 169), <Iam> (p. 193).   The documented systematic
differentiation between the Semitic Component and Ashkenazic
was, then, as valid for these varieties of now defunct
eighteenth century varieties of Western Yiddish as for the
modern state of affairs.

6.4.4.   Segmental Distribution

Whereas vowels 22, 42 and 12 are restricted to open
syllabic position in the Semitic Component (cf. above §5.6.4),
only vowel 12 is so restricted in Ashkenazic.   As a result,
a great number of Semitic Component items with vowels 21 and 41
in closed syllabic position are cognate with Ashkenazic forms

displaying 22 and 42.   Moreover, in consequence of the
Ashkenazic alternation of open syllabic 12 with closed
syllabic 41, rather than with closed syllabic 11 as in the
Semitic Component, many Semitic Component items with vowel 11
in closed syllabic position are cognate with Ashkenazic
forms displaying 41.   The first two instances — closed
syllabic Semitic Component 21 and 41 vs. Ashkenazic 22
and 42 — reflect a key difference in the overall segmental
distribution in the synchronic phonology of the two formations.
The third — closed syllabic Semitic Component 11 vs.
Ashkenazic 41 — reflects only an etymological distributional
difference between the two.   Vowel 41 is precluded from open
syllabic position in both.

In terms of Tiberian graphemes these relations might
be reformulated as follows.   In any dialect area of Yiddish,
the Ashkenazic oppositions of sere vs. segol, holem vs. closed
syllabic qames and (open syllabic) qames vs. pathah are
neutralized in favour of the local realizations of segol,
closed syllabic qames and pathah within the Semitic Component.
In Ashkenazic itself, the six vowels retain unique phonetic
representations and qames has split into open vs. closed
syllabic allophones.   These can be called "allophones" only
on an abstract level as Ashkenazic was nobody's native
language, and each of the two is a phoneme in dialects that
have not merged 12 and 41 (as Northeastern Yiddish has).
An illustrative corpus of fifteen items for each of the
set of contrasts between Ashkenazic and the Semitic Component
is provided for the three sample dialects in Tables 31-33.

Table 31: Ashkenazic 22 vs. Semitic Component 21 in Mideastern, Northeastern and Northwestern Ashkenazic and Yiddish

MEA vs. MEY	NEA vs. NEY	NWA vs. NWY	Gloss
bajs din ‖ béz(d)ŋ	bejs din ‖ béz(d)ŋ	bejs din ‖ bésdŋ	'(trad.) court'
gajr ‖ gɛr	gejr ‖ gɛr	gejr ‖ gɛr	'proselyte'
gajt ‖ gɛt	gejt ‖ gɛt	gejt ‖ gɛt	'divorce'
hajn ‖ hɛn	hejn ‖ hɛn	hejn ‖ hɛn	'both [...and]'
xajt ‖ xɛt	xejt ‖ xɛt	xejt ‖ xɛt	'sin'
lajc ‖ lɛc	lejc ‖ lɛc	lejc ‖ lɛc	'joker'
majs ‖ mɛs	mejs ‖ mɛs	mejs ‖ mɛs	'corpse'
milajl ‖ milɛ́l	milejl ‖ milɛ́l	milɛ́jl ‖ milɛ́l	'penultimate'
najr ‖ nɛr	nejr ‖ nɛr	nejr ‖ nɛr	'candle'
najs ‖ nɛs	nejs ‖ nɛs	nejs ‖ nɛs	'miracle'
kajc ‖ kɛc	kejc ‖ kɛc	kejc ‖ kɛc	'end (of diaspora)'
šajd ‖ šɛd	šejd ‖ šɛd	šejd ‖ šɛd	'ghost'
šajm ‖ šɛm	šejm ‖ šɛm	šejm ‖ šɛm	'(good) name'
tajl ‖ tɛl	tejl ‖ tɛl	tejl ‖ tɛl	'mound; ruin'
jajš ‖ jɛš	jejš ‖ jɛš	jejš ‖ jɛš	'entity; there is'

Table 32: Ashkenazic 42 vs. Semitic Component 41 in Mideastern, Northeastern and Northwestern Ashkenazic and Yiddish

	MEA vs. MEY	NEA vs. NEY	NWA vs. NWY	Gloss
1.	bezɔil ∥ bezɔl	bezeil ∥ bezɔl	bezɔul ∥ bezɔl	'inexpensively'
2.	dɔir ∥ dɔr	deir ∥ dɔr	dɔur ∥ dɔr	'generation'
3.	kɔis ∥ kɔs	kɔis ∥ kɔs	kɔus ∥ kɔs	'cup'
4.	lɔit ∥ lɔt	lɔit ∥ lɔt	lɔut ∥ lɔt	'Lot'
5.	mɔiredim ∥ mɔrdem	mɔiredim ∥ mɔrdim	mɔiredim ∥ mɔrdem	'rebels'
6.	kɔil ∥ kɔl	kɔil ∥ kɔl	kɔul ∥ kɔl	'voice'
7.	rɔiv ∥ rɔv	rɔiv ∥ rɔv	rɔuv ∥ rɔv	'majority'
8.	sɔdɔim ∥ zdɔm	sɔdejm ∥ zdɔm	sɔdɔum ∥ sdɔm	'Sodom'
9.	sɔid ∥ sɔd	sɔid ∥ sɔd	sɔud ∥ sɔd	'secret'
10.	sɔif ∥ sɔf	sɔif ∥ sɔf	sɔuf ∥ sɔf	'end'
11.	sɔiferim ∥ sɔfrem	sɔiferim ∥ sɔfrim	sɔuferim ∥ sɔfrem	'scribes'
12.	tehɔim ∥ t(h)ɔm	tehɔim ∥ t(h)ɔm	tehɔum ∥ t(h)ɔm	'abyss'
13.	tɔix ∥ tɔx	tɔix ∥ tɔx	tɔux ∥ tɔx	'essence'
14.	jɔim tɔjv ∥ jɔntef	jɔim tejv ∥ jɔntef	jɔm tɔuv ∥ jɔntef	'holiday'
15.	ɔil ∥ ɔl	ɔil ∥ ɔl	ɔul ∥ ɔl	'burden'

Table 33: Ashkenazic 41 vs. Semitic Component 11 in Mideastern, Northeastern and Northwestern Ashkenazic and Yiddish

	MEA vs. MEY	NEA vs. NEY	NWA vs. NWY	Gloss
1.	dexɔk ‖ dxak	dexɔk ‖ dxak	dexɔk ‖ dxak	'difficulty'
2.	dɔm ‖ dam	dɔm ‖ dam	dɔm ‖ dam	'blood'
3.	kelɔl ‖ klal	kelɔl ‖ klal	kelɔl ‖ klal	'generalization'
4.	kenɔs ‖ knas	kenɔs ‖ knas	kenɔs ‖ knas	'fine, punishment'
5.	kibid ɔv ‖ kibedav	kibud ɔv ‖ kibedav	kibud ɔv ‖ kibedav	'honouring one's father'
6.	mexɔk ‖ mxak	mexɔk ‖ mxak	mexɔk ‖ mxak	'erasure'
7.	mɔn ‖ man	mɔn ‖ man	mɔn ‖ man	'manna'
8.	pegɔm ‖ bgam	pegɔm ‖ bgam	pegɔm ‖ pgam	'defect'
9.	perɔt ‖ prat	perɔt ‖ prat	perɔt ‖ prat	'detail'
10.	pesɔk ‖ psak	pesɔk ‖ psak	pesɔk ‖ psak	'judgment'
11.	šemɔd ‖ šmad	šemɔd ‖ šmad	šemɔd ‖ šmad	'apostasy'
12.	šetɔr ‖ štar	šetɔr ‖ štar	šetɔr ‖ štar	'legal document'
13.	ševɔt ‖ švat	ševɔt ‖ švat	ševɔt ‖ švat	'fifth month'
14.	ševɔx ‖ švax	ševɔx ‖ švax	ševɔx ‖ švax	'praise'
15.	stɔm ‖ stam	stɔm ‖ stam	stɔm ‖ stam	'without a reason'

These specificities of the distribution of phonemes within Ashkenazic are illustrated for Mideastern and Northwestern Yiddish in Tables 34-35. The Ashkenazic distribution contrasts sharply with that of the Semitic Component in each of these areas (cf. above Tables 25-26). Once again, Northeastern Yiddish has obscured some of the differences between Semitic Component and Ashkenazic distribution in consequence of the mergers of 12 and 41 as unitary $a_{12/41}$ and of 22(/24) and 42(/44) as unitary $ej_{22(/24)42(/44)}$.

6.5.   Historical Inferences

As noted in §5.7, the purpose of comparing phonological specificities of the Semitic Component (not shared by the Germanic Component) with the cognate Ashkenazic is to determine to what extent such specificities may derive from the reading tradition of the liturgical language. To the extent that such specificities are congruent with Ashkenazic, the prima facie case in favour of a vernacular origin theory of the Semitic Component provided by these phonological specificities is cancelled. To the extent that Semitic Component phonological features diverging from the Germanic Component are nonderivable from Ashkenazic, the prima facie case stands. Needless to say, each specificity must be considered separately.

Table 34:   Distributional Specificities   of Mideastern Ashkenazic
(cf. Table 25)

Open Syllable	a_{11}	a_{12}	aj_{42}	ej_{25}	aj_{22}
Closed Syllable	a_{11}	a_{41}	aj_{42}	ε_{21}	aj_{22}

Table 35: Distributional Specificities of Northwestern Ashkenazic
(cf. Table 26)

Open Syllable	a_{11}	$\bar{o}_{12}$	ou_{42}	$\bar{e}_{25}$	εi_{22}
Closed Syllable	a_{11}	o_{41}	ou_{42}	ε_{21}	εi_{22}

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Comparison demonstrates that Semitic Component
penultimate stress assignment (§5.6.1), posttonic reduction
(§5.6.2.), systematic vocalic alternations conditioned by
the syllable boundary features open vs. closed (§5.6.3) and
synchronic segmental distribution (§5.6.4) differ
appreciably from the reading tradition.   Ashkenazic exhibits
a largely ultimate accentuation pattern (§6.4.1), fully
oppositional nonreduced vowels in unstressed position (§6.4.2),
the lack of alternation between 22 and 21, 42 and 41 and a
12 ~ 41 alternation rather than a 12 ~ 11 alternation (§6.4.3),
and a segmental distribution differing markedly from that of
the Semitic Component (§6.4.4).   The analogous structural
differences between the Semitic Component in Yiddish and
the Ashkenazic of each dialectal area, coupled with the
evidence of the radically differing phonetic reflexes of
vowels in cognate items, strongly favour a conclusion that
the differences themselves reflect a state of affairs in
a protolanguage.   An argument in favour of the text theory
in the face of the empirically observed differences between
the Semitic Component and the Germanic Component (Chapter 5),
and the Semitic Component and Ashkenazic (Chapter 6) might
seek to investigate the possibility that the unique phonology
of the Semitic Component results from historical Germanic
impact upon an earlier stage of the reading tradition.

The next task then is to compare the phonology of the
Semitic Component and of Ashkenazic with historical evidence
from the Germanic Component and the cognate German.

7. The Semitic Component and Germanic Impact

7.1. The Notion of Transcomponent Reconstruction

The classical nineteenth century comparative model contrasts two (or more) modern or attested languages (or dialects or varieties), A_1 and A_2, and proceeds to reconstruct a unitary protolanguage (or, in weaker versions of the model, a corpus of protoforms) A. By definition, A_1 and A_2 are genetically related, and the positing of reconstructed A helps to uncover and to classify the changes that have resulted in A_1 and A_2. Over the past few decades, the comparative method has been complemented by internal reconstruction (e.g. Marchand 1956; Chafe 1959; Anttila 1973; Kuryłowicz 1973; Austerlitz 1981) which compares two (or more) parts of the synchronic grammar of a single variety, $A_1 A_2$ and proceeds to reconstruct protolanguage A. By definition A_1 and A_2 are relatively homogeneous genetically and are part of a single variety. It has been determined, however, that no language is truly homogeneous genetically and in many the fusion process is especially conspicuous (cf. above §§1.4 — 1.5). For the purposes of historical reconstruction, a fusion language can be defined in terms of the synchronic empirical evidence of multicomponent structure such as would be evident to a descriptive linguist who has no prior knowledge of cognate

languages or diachronic evidence (cf. above §§ 5.1, 5.7).
To the extent that such synchronic differentiation is
discernible, the historical linguist is in a position to
draw the conclusion that fusion has transpired. This
realization can lead to a variety of reconstruction we shall
call transcomponent reconstruction. Transcomponent
reconstruction contrasts two (or more) synchronic components
in a single variety, A_1B_1 and proceeds to reconstruct two
or more distinct protocomponents, A and B. By definition,
A_1 and B_1 are genetically unrelated and are synchronically
fused in a single variety used by a speech community. A
number of issues in the history of the Semitic Component
lend themselves to elucidation by each of these methods and
by combinations, where appropriate, of two or three types
of reconstruction which can be used to check and corroborate
each other. The skeletal procedures of comparative,
internal and transcomponent reconstruction are illustrated
in Table 36.

7.2.   German and Germanic Component Impact

Germanically conditioned changes in the history of
the Semitic Component and of Ashkenazic are not at all likely
to have resulted from direct impact by German. Such changes
can safely be ascribed to the force of the synchronically

Table 36:   Comparative,   Internal   and   Transcomponent   Reconstruction

	Comparative Reconstruction	Internal Reconstruction	Transcomponent Reconstruction
Reconstructed Protoforms	A	A	A B
Modern Language(s)	A_1 A_2	$A_1 A_2$	$A_1 B_1$
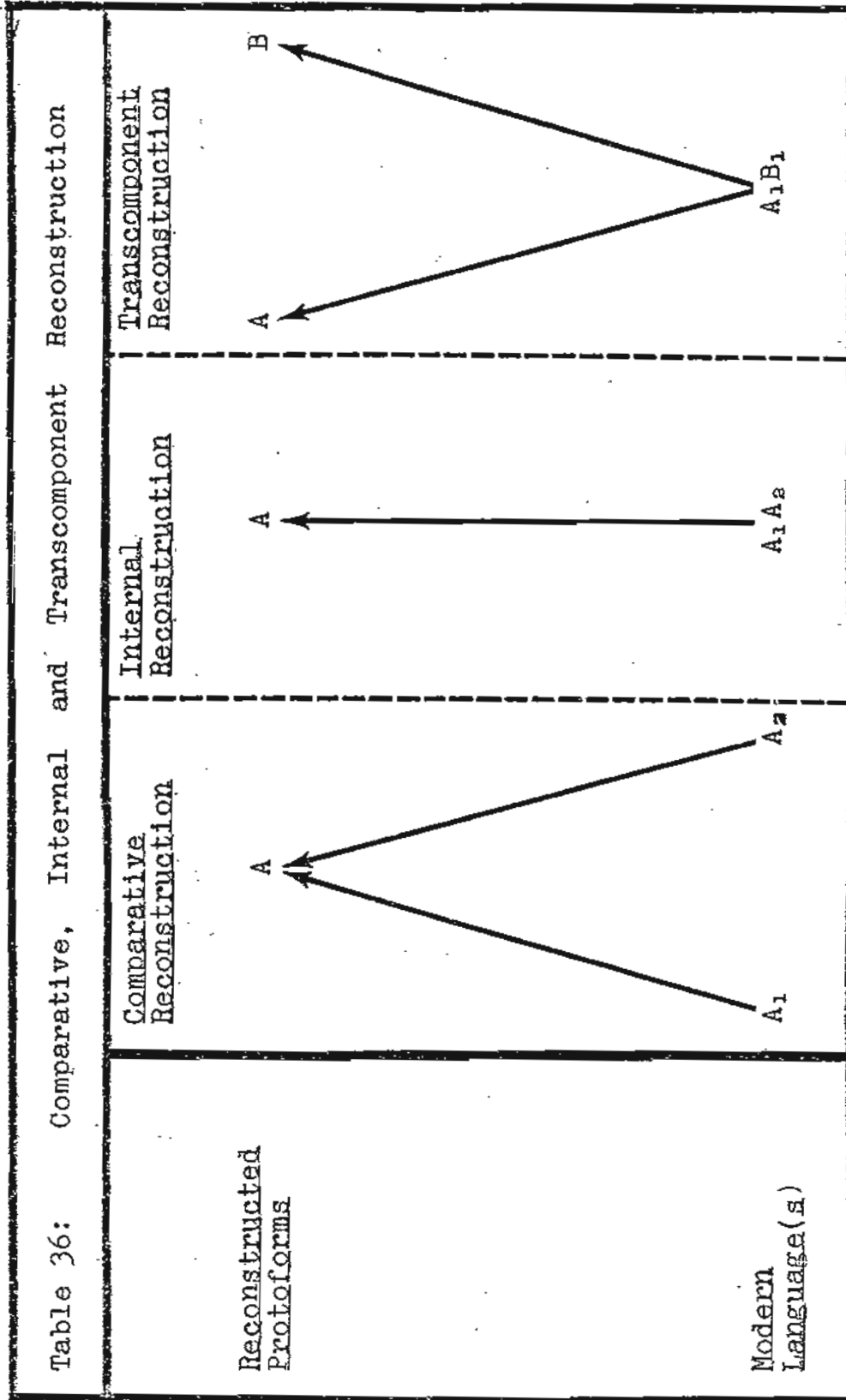
fused Germanic Component within Yiddish upon its sister
Semitic Component and upon the reading tradition.   The
fusion model postulates the entry of Germanic Component
items and features into Yiddish from those limited forms
of German which by reason of contemporality and
coterritoriality could have entered Yiddish.   These
types of German are collectively called determinant
German in the fusion model of the history of Yiddish
(cf. above §1.5).   Having become part of Yiddish, a
linguistic feature of Germanic origin may a priori
easily be extended to the Semitic Component.   This likelihood
is increased considerably by the overwhelming structural
and quantitative predominance of the Germanic Component.
The picture is enriched by the potential influences the
Germanic Component may exert upon the lexicon, semantics
and syntax of written Hebrew and Aramaic (most notably
by calque) and —— of direct concern to us here —— upon
the phonology of Ashkenazic. Finally, the Semitic
Component and Ashkenazic may exert influences upon each
other, with respect to both the phonological realizations
of cognate forms shared by both and with respect to
structural phenomena and synchronic rules.   The most
prominent paths of Germanic impact upon the Semitic
Component and Ashkenazic are illustrated in Table 37.

Table 37: Theoretical Paths of Germanic Impact upon the Semitic Component and Ashkenazic
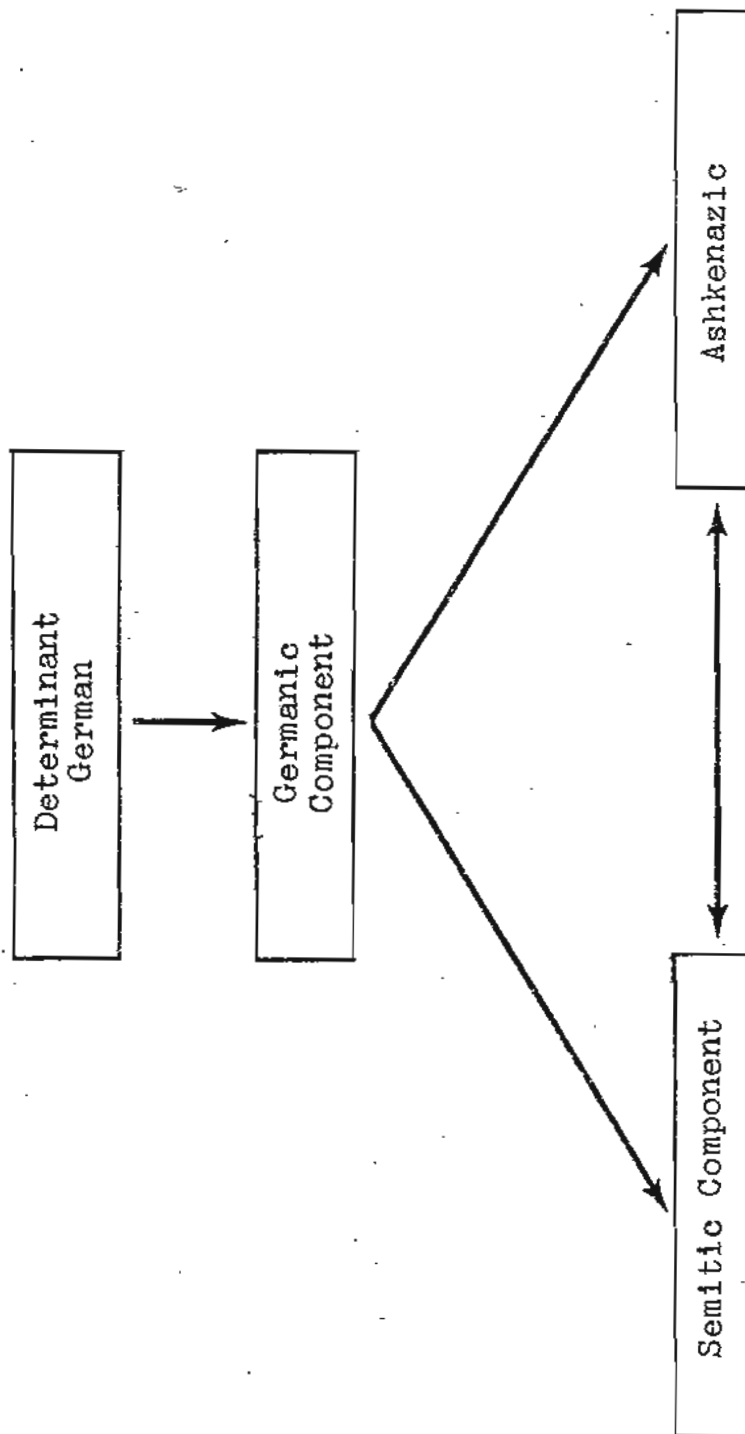
7.3.   Stress Assignment

We have seen that the penultimate stress assignment
rule by which the Semitic Component is processed differs
markedly from both the lexical (or stem initial) stress rule
of the Germanic Component (§5.6.1) and from the largely
ultimate stress pattern of Ashkenazic (§6.4.1).   In fact,
the mystery of Semitic Component stress assignment has been
a contentious one in historical Yiddish linguistics.   A
number of schools of thought have arisen.   Penultimate
Semitic Component stress has been attributed to Germanic
impact (e.g. Saineanu 1889:   56;   Wiener 1894: 178; Sapir
1915:   264-265;   Bin-Nun 1951: 141-142;   1973:   4-5, 262-
267;   Leibel 1965), to an ancient Semitic stress system
differing from the classical Tiberian pattern (e.g. Segal
1928:   75; M. Weinreich 1963-1964:   326-327;   1973: II,
32-34), to Slavonic influence (Tshemerinski 1913: 57) and
to spontaneous development within Yiddish (Jakobson 1953:
75-76).   Solomon A. Birnbaum, who is noted in the field
of Yiddish linguistics for the consistency of his views
on nearly all major issues during his long and creative
career, has nevertheless altered his position markedly on
the question of Semitic Component stress. At first,
Birnbaum (1918:   25) implicitly agreed with the suggestion
that an originally ultimate stress system shifted to a
penultimate system during the history of Yiddish.   He then
reversed himself (1922: 17-18), contending that an ancient
non-Tiberian Semitic stress system is preserved in Yiddish,

a view for which he has been criticized by Feist (1923: 141)
and Bin-Nun (1973: 264). Arguing that penultimate stress
could not have resulted from the influence of a language
that did not itself have such stress (Birnbaum 1929: 274;
1932: 121), Birnbaum (1943: 600) concluded that the shift
"had taken place in the pronunciation of Hebrew long before
Yiddish arose as a language". Having shifted from adherence
to a Germanic origin view to a Semitic origin theory,
Birnbaum has again reconsidered. He still rejects the
notion that a nonrythmic (i.e. lexical) stress sytem could
have effected a shift from one rythmic system to another
(ultimate to penultimate), but concedes that a shift did
transpire during rather than prior to the Yiddish era.
Birnbaum (1979: 66) now considers this shift to be "an
independent [...] development", noting that "how and when
it took place has yet to be determined".

We have proposed (Katz 1980) that comparative and
transcomponent reconstruction can demonstrate that a once
largely ultimate stress system (as in classical Tiberian
and explicit Ashkenazic) did indeed shift to penultimate
during the history of Yiddish at a point in time after
the application of certain vowel shifts. Semitic Component
stress shift may thereby be assigned a position in the
relative chronology of the historical phonology of the
language. The following is a summary of one of the
available proofs. While Germanic Component vowel 21 is
most frequently cognate with closed syllabic Middle High

German $\underline{e}$ and $\underline{\ddot{e}}$, vowel 25 is most frequently cognate with Middle High German $\underline{\ddot{e}}$ in lengthening position, i.e. in stressed open syllables and closed syllabic allomorphs. Like the classical Tiberian vowel segol, Middle High German $\underline{\ddot{e}}$ is thought to have been the graphic representation for open lower-mid $\underline{\varepsilon}$ (cf. Penzl 1957: 471). Now Semitisms with vowel 25 can safely be assumed to have undergone lengthening as part of the same development — Open Syllable Lengthening — which characterizes the Pan Yiddish split of Proto Yiddish $*\underline{\varepsilon}_{21/25}$ into $*\underline{\varepsilon}_{21}$ and $*\underline{\bar{e}}_{25}$ (cf. above §4.3; Table 11). Indeed, Semitic Component 25 appears exclusively in stressed open syllabic position. There are however appearances of vowel 21 in the same environment. This is a mystery, as these instances of 21, cognate with Ashkenazic segol and hatef segol, should likewise have been lengthened at that point in the Old Yiddish period at which Open Syllable Lengthening

$$\underset{[+\text{stress}]}{V} \rightarrow [+\text{long}] \ / \ \underline{\quad\quad}\$$$

entered the synchronic phonology of Yiddish. The problem resolves itself upon comparison with cognate forms in Ashkenazic. Semitic Component 25 is cognate with stressed open syllabic segol, while 21 is cognate with unstressed hatef segol (a virtual allograph of segol) or segol. Items 1-5 in Table 38 exemplify the first category (vowel 25) while items 6-10 exemplify the second (vowel 21) in Mideastern and Northwestern Yiddish. Northeastern Yiddish evidence cannot

Table 38: Evidence of Historical Stress Shift in the Semitic Component: Vowels 21 and 25 in Open Syllabic Position and their Cognates in Ashkenazic

	Mideastern Yiddish	Mideastern Ashkenazic	Northwestern Yiddish	Northwestern Ashkenazic	Gloss
1.	béjged	béjged	béged	bḗged	'garment'
2.	déjrex	déjrex	dérex	dḗrex	'way'
3.	kéjrṇ	kéjren	kérṇ	kḗren	'(monetary) principal'
4.	réjga	réjga	réga	rḗga	'moment'
5.	téjva	téjva	téva	tḗva	'habit'
6.	édəm	edójm	édəm	edójum	'Edom'
7.	élel	elíl	élel	elúl	'12th month'
8.	émer	emójr	émer	emòur	'portion of Leviticus'
9.	émes	emés	émes	emés	'true'
10.	hétər	hetáir	hétər	hetéir	'rabbinical permission'

productively be included in the work at hand because of
the merger of 21 and 25 as unitary Northeastern Yiddish $\varepsilon_{21/25}$
(cf. Table 6). It is obvious that stress was still
ultimate in items 6-10 at the time Open Syllable Lengthening
applied, rendering such items immune to Lengthening, part of
the structural description of which is the [+stress]
condition. Semitic Component stress therefore had to
have shifted from ultimate to penultimate sometime after
the application of lengthening. The proof may also be
phrased comparatively with reference to Tiberian vowels
rather than their Ashkenazic reflexes. Where Tiberian
has stressed $\acute{\varepsilon}$ in open syllables, Yiddish has vowel 25.
Where Tiberian has $\breve{\varepsilon}$ or ε in unstressed position in open
or secondarily open syllables, Yiddish has vowel 21.
The Tiberian Hebrew cognates of items 1-5 in Table 38
are b́éɣɛδ, dérɛx, qérɛn, réɣaʕ, tévaʕ. Items 6-10
correspond with classical ʔɛ̆δóm, ʔɛ̆lúl, ʔɛ̆mór, ʔɛ̆méθ,
hɛttér. In cases such as the last cited item, the
syllable was closed in Tiberian but opened in Ashkenazic
as well as in the Semitic Component due to degemination.

From a typological perspective, it is noteworthy
that the attractive force of Germanic initial stress
resulted in a collapse of Ashkenazic ultimate and penultimate
stress into a unitary system of penultimate stress which
is curiously enough more prefectly phonological than its

antecedents, Tiberian and Ashkenazic, which both exhibit a minority of penultimately stressed paradigms. Germanic impact upon a Semitic system has resulted in the rise of a new system that is neither Germanic nor Semitic, but uniquely Yiddish. From the diachronic perspective, however, any prima facie evidence for a vernacular origin of the Semitic Component deriving from synchronic differences between the stress system of the Semitic Component and that of the German Component and Ashkenazic, is rendered untenable. The apparent nonderivability of Semitic Component stress from the two possible sources available to it during the history of Yiddish —— the Germanic Component and Ashkenazic —— vanishes upon closer diachronic inspection. No evidence is provided for either major theory of the origin of the Semitic Component. Nevertheless, the reconstruction of the origin of the Semitic Component stress system does have significance for determining the age of Semitisms with vowels 21 and 25, and there is of course no good reason to assume items with these vowels to be a priori younger or older than items with any other vowels. These items were obviously in Yiddish during the application of Open Syllable Legnthening, which is the oldest known sound shift in the history of Yiddish (cf. above §4.3). Germanists date open syllable lengthening to the period between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, with chronological variations according to region (cf. Paul 1975: 52; Penzl 1975: 114-115).

7.4.   Posttonic Reduction

Because Germanic impact upon an ultimate-penultimate
stress system resulted in a more purely phonological
penultimate system, Semitic Component stress shifts to
the new penultimate position upon syllable addition (cf.
Table 21).   As a result, reduced vowels processed synchronically
by Posttonic Reduction frequently alternate with fully
oppositional nonreduced vowels in suffixed forms.   This in
turn has led to the survival of Posttonic Reduction in the
dynamic phonology of the modern Semitic Component.   It is
an irony of history that no trace of such a synchronic rule
remains in the Germanic Component.   Nevertheless, this
phonological specificity too, like Stress Assignment, is an
example of a case where interaction between determinant A
(the pre-Yiddish largely ultimate Tiberian stress system)
and component B (the Germanic Component within Yiddish)
has resulted in a new feature in component A which differs
from both its major sources.   There can be no doubt that
the Semitic Component acquired Posttonic Reduction as a
direct result of the impact of the Germanic Component.   In
sharp distinction to Open Syllable Lengthening, the
acquisition of the reduction rule does not lend itself to
any relative chronological datings of the presence of Semitisms
in the language.   It is most easily extended by analogy
at any point in time.   Cf. modern American Yiddish méksikə
'Mexico', šikágə 'Chicago' and substandard Anglicisms such
as hépə 'happy' and víndə 'window'.   Although differing
notably from the Germanic Component (§5.6.2) as well as from

Ashkenazic (§6.4.2), the synchronic application of
Posttonic Reduction, like Penultimate Stress Assignment
is cancelled as an argument in favour of vernacular
origin of the Semitic Component.

7.5.   Systematic Vocalic Alternation and Segmental
        Distribution

The salient alternations between open syllabic
22, 42 and 12 with closed syllabic 21, 41 and 11 in the
Semitic Component of all known varieties of Yiddish
(§5.6.3) and the resulting specificities of segmental
distribution (§5.6.4) diverge from the stressed vowel
system of the Germanic Component as well as from
Ashkenazic (§§ 6.4.3 — 6.4.4).   Unlike penultimate
stress (§7.3) and posttonic reduction (§7.4), these
alternations do not appear as morphophonemic alternants
in any known variety of German.   Nevertheless, there
is here too the theoretical possibility that some earlier
Germanic development may have caused the stressed vowel
system of the Semitic Component to differ so radically
from both the Germanic Component and Ashkenazic.   In
fact, standard theory in the field of Yiddish linguistics
considers these alternations to have arisen in consequence
of the application of Open Syllable Lengthening in German
and the Germanic Component (cf. above §4.3; Table 11).
Now we have seen that the split of Proto Yiddish $*\varepsilon_{21/25}$

into Old Yiddish $*\varepsilon_{21}$ and $*\bar{\underline{e}}_{25}$ is a direct result of
Open Syllable Lengthening in German. Besides resulting
in the rise of diaphoneme 25 (cf. Table 1.12) within
Yiddish, and applying equally to the Semitic Component
(cf. Table 38.1-5), this split also transpired in
Ashkenazic (cf. Table 27.11). Vowel 25, however, does
not participate in any of the characteristic morphophonemic
alternations in the Semitic Component. It is vowel 22
with which 21 alternates (cf. Tables 23.1-5, 24.1-5).
The only other case of lengthening evident from internal
Yiddish evidence is that of Proto Yiddish $*\underline{a}_{11/13}$ into
Old Yiddish $*\underline{a}_{11}$ and $*\bar{\underline{a}}_{13}$.

The origin of the stressed vowel system of the
Semitic Component thus remains the key problem in any
effort to determine whether the Semitic Component could
have phonologically resulted from Germanic impact upon
the reading tradition or Semitisms gleaned from the
reading tradition. This issue will be discussed in
detail in Chapter 9. But first we shall review the
dominant theory in the field concerning the vocalic
history of the Semitic Component.

8.   Major Theories of Semitic Component Vocalism

8.1.   Theoretical Framework

The minimal history of observations, explanations
and theories that have been put forward concerning the
origins and development of the stressed vowel system of
the Semitic Component in Yiddish can be viewed against
a background of available theories and methods on the
one hand, and available data on the other.   From the
theoretical perspective, pre-nineteenth century scholars
were hardly in a position to systematically postulate
genetic relationships on the basis of consistent
regularities in interlanguage correspondences and produce
verifiable hypotheses of historical change.   Before the
rise of the comparative method, the notion of regarding
two or more cognate languages as equally legitimate
derivatives of some unattested protolanguage was very
rarely encountered and never carried to practical fruition.
It is therefore no surprise that pre-nineteenth century
scholars who did deal with Semitic Component vocalism
restricted their observations to atomistic comparisons
between individual Semitic Component features and those
of cognates known to them in Hebrew and Aramaic.   For
European Christian Hebraists, the standard pronunciation
of Hebrew was a close approximation of that employed by

Sephardi Jewry, the Jews of pre-expulsion Iberia and their progeny throughout southern Europe. Paralleling the proposed terminological distinction of Ashkenazi vs. Ashkenazic (§6.1), the phonological system of the reading tradition of the Sephardim may be called Sephardic, while adjectival Sephardi may be reserved for the history, territory and culture of the Jewish subculture of Sepharad wherever transplanted geographically. Christian scholars familiar with variants of Sephardic were in a position to compare features of Ashkenazic and of the Semitic Component with those of Sephardic. Christian Hebraists, however, did not take an academic interest in determining the origins or development of Semitic Component or Ashkenazic vocalism. Their concerns were either descriptive or normative. The phonology of Sephardic has enjoyed a social prestige for centuries as the more elegant, correct and original of the two. The lack of interest in Ashkenazic has been compounded by social prejudices against it and has hampered premodern investigation.

As for the data base, premodern scholars were in fact in a position of access to the vowel systems of the Semitic Component, Ashkenazic and Sephardic. Although German speaking Hebraists were doubtlessly in a position to compare the vowel systems of the Germanic Component in Yiddish and of cognate German with these, there is no evidence that they did so. Finally, and very significantly, they did not have access to pre-Ashkenazic and pre-Sephardic Hebrew and Aramaic

vowel systems which were rediscovered by scholars only in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

A comparative account must take into reckoning at least six categories of vowel systems:

(a)   the Semitic Component

(b)   Ashkenazic

(c)   The Germanic Component

(d)   various stages of determinant German

(e)   Sephardic

(f)   pre-Ashkenazic/Sephardic Hebrew vowel systems

The last category, upon closer inspection, expands to include at least three basic types of Northwest Semitic vowel systems attested from the late first millennium — Tiberian, Palestinian and Babylonian.

8.2.   Premodern Notes and Comments

Scattered contrasts between certain realizations of Ashkenazic and those of (Christian) Sephardic were made by Haselbauer (1742: 243), Tirsch (1782: 5-6) and Selig (1792: 5, 19-22), among others.   More detailed and better exemplified comparisons were drawn by Wagenseil (1699: 82-83, 85) and Schudt (1714-1718: II, 285).   Wagenseil, comparing a moderately explicit form of Ashkenazic (processed, however, by Semitic Component Penultimate Stress Assignment), with the variety of Christian Sephardic known to him exemplifies

the differing stress and five segmental differences.
Wagenseil's observations, in his own orthography, are
summarized in Table 39 where one of his examples for each
contrast is also supplied.   Schudt selects the Semitic
Component rather than Ashkenazic as his point of departure
for his own comparison with Sephardic.   His observations
and examples are summarized in Table 40.   Leaving aside
these writers' notes concerning stress (Tables 39.1, 40.1),
posttonic reduction (Table 40.2), consonantal differences
(Tables 39.6, 40.6) and a Semitic Component diaphoneme,
vowel 34, resulting from earlier hiatus itself brought
about by loss of pharyngeal ꜥ (Table 40.5), we find that
Wagenseil's and Schudt's comparisons point to at least
five differences between the Semitic Component and
Ashkenazic on the one hand, and varieties of Christian
Sephardic on the other.   These are Semitic Component /
Ashkenazic ē/ɛj vs. Christian Sephardic ɛ/ē, ɔu vs. o/ō,
ō vs. a/ā, ī vs. i and ū vs. u.   Our phonemic interpretations
of Wagenseil's and Schudt's graphemes can of course be no
more than tentative.   We are guided by their German based
orthography and our knowledge of later Western Yiddish
realizations (cf. above Tables 3-5).   In terms of the
diaphonemic system of Pan Yiddish vocalism, Semitic Component
and Ashkenazic vowels 22, 42, 12, 32, and 52 —— all long
vowels —— differ from their Sephardic counterparts in
cognate lexical items.   Needless to say, premodern
scholars were unable to extend their observations of phonetic

Table 39: Summary of Wagenseil's (1699) Comparative Observations
on Ashkenazic and Christian Sephardic Phonology

	Ashkenazic	Sephardic	Example Cited	Gloss
	Penultimate Stress	Ultimate Stress		
1.			<Kósev> vs. <Kotév>	'writer'
2.	<eê>	<e>	<Beês> vs. <Beth>	'name of the letter [b]'
3.	<o>	<a>	<Tómar> vs. <Tamar>	'Palmtree'
4.	<î>	<i>	<Schîn> vs. <Schîn>	'name of the letter [š]'
5.	<û>	<u>	<Kûf> vs. <Kûf>	'name of the letter [k] (<[q])'
6.	<s>	<t>	<Bâs> vs. <Bât>	'daughter'

Table 40: Summary of Schudt's (1714-1718) Comparative Observations
          on the Semitic Component and Christian Sephardic Phonology

	Semitic Component	Sephardic	Example Cited	Gloss
1.	Penultimate Stress	Ultimate Stress	<Bsúleh> vs. <Betuláh>	'virgin'
2.	Posttonic Reduction	No Reduction	<Brógeh> vs. <Beragáh>	'blessing'
3.	<au>	<o>	<Maúsche> vs. <Moschéh>	'Moshe/Moses'
4.	<o>	<a>	<Me[s]chóres> vs. <Mescharet>	'servant'
5.	<ei>	<aa>	<Jeikef> vs. <Jaakof>	'Jacob'
6.	<s>	<t>	<Chósen> vs. <Chatan>	'bridegroom'

differences between individual realizations to a systematic
contrast of entire phonemic systems.

8.3.   Data Base

It will facilitate discussion of the rise and
development of standard theory and its variants if at
the outset, the most important vowel systems and
phonemic interpretations of vowel grapheme systems are
schematically presented.   Different scholars have taken
various systems from the repertoire as a basis for their
theories.   Using the correspondences between classical
Tiberian vowel graphemes and Pan Yiddish diaphonemes (Table
27), the vowel systems of the Ashkenazic of the major
dialect areas of Yiddish (Tables 3-8) can be worked out.
Nevertheless, in the interest of greater clarity, the
Ashkenazic vowel systems of our three sample dialects
(which collectively represent a maximal number of historical
and synchronic oppositions), Mideastern Ashkenazic,
Northeastern Ashkenazic and Northwestern Ashkenazic, are
schematically illustrated in Tables 41-43.   The name of
the relevant Tiberian grapheme is subscripted to each
vowel phoneme provided under   the numbered diaphoneme.
The vowel systems of the Semitic Component of each of
these areas are similarly illustrated in Tables 44-46.
As can be a priori expected, the graphemic vowel system

Table 41: Mideastern Ashkenazic Vocalism

$i_{32/52}$
(hireq/shureq/qibbus)

$i_{31/51}$
(hireq/shureq/qibbus)

ej_{25}
(open syllabic segol)

ε_{21}
(closed syllabic segol)

aj_{22}
(sere)

a_{11}
(pathah)

$\bar{u}_{12}$
(open syllabic qames)

u_{12}
(open syllabic qames)

$ɔj_{42}$
(holem)

$ɔ_{41}$
(closed syllabic qames)

Table 42:   Northeastern Ashkenazic Vocalism

$i_{31/32}$
(hireq)

$u_{51/52}$
(shureq/qibbus)

$ej_{22/42}$
(sere/holem)

$e_{21/25}$
(segol)

$ɔ_{12/41}$
(qames)

a_{11}
(pathah)

Table 43:   Northwestern   Ashkenazic   Vocalism

$\bar{\imath}_{32}$
(hireq)

i_{31}
(hireq)

$\bar{e}_{25}$
(open syllabic segol)

εj_{22}
(sere)

ε_{21}
(closed syllabic segol)

$\bar{u}_{52}$
(shureq/qibbus)

o_{51}
(shureq/qibbus)

$\bar{o}_{12}$
(open syllabic qames)

$u\mathfrak{I}_{42}$
(holem)

$\mathfrak{I}l_{4c}$
(closed syllabic qames)

a_{11}
(pathah)

Table 44: Vocalism of the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish

$i_{32/52}$
(hireq/shureq/qibbus)

$i_{31/51}$
(hireq/shureq/qibbus)

ej_{25}
(open syllabic segol)

ε_{21}
(closed syllabic segol/sere)

$\bar{u}_{12}$
(open syllabic qames)

u_{12}
(open syllabic qames)

$ɔj_{42}$
(open syllabic holem)

$ɔ_{41}$
(closed syllabic holem;
closed syllabic qames)

(formerly unstressed closed syllabic qames)

aj_{22}
(open syllabic sere)

a_{11}
(pathah; closed syllabic qames)

Table 45: Vocalism of the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish

$i_{31/32}$
(hireq)

$u_{51/52}$
(shureq/qibbus)

$ej_{22/42}$
(open syllabic sere/holem)

$\varepsilon_{21/25}$
(segol; closed syllabic sere)

$\mathfrak{I}_{12/41}$
(open syllabic qames;
closed syllabic holem;
closed syllabic qames)

formerly unstressed closed syllabic qames

a_{11}
(pathah; closed syllabic qames)

Table 46: Vocalism of the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish

i_{32}
(hireq)

i_{31}
(hireq)

$\bar{e}_{25}$
(open syllabic segol)

εj_{22}
(open syllabic sere)

ε_{21}
(closed syllabic segol/sere)

$\bar{u}_{52}$
(shureq/qibbus)

o_{51}
(shureq/qibbus)

$\bar{o}_{12}$
(open syllabic qames)

ou_{42}
(open syllabic holem)

$\mathfrak{o}_{41}$
(closed syllabic holem;
formerly unstressed closed syllabic qames)

a_{11}
(pathah; closed syllabic qames)

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of a reconstructed language is subject to varying interpretation
by different scholars. There are at least three major
phonological interpretations of the classical system of vowel
diacritics codified by the Tiberians on the western shores of
the Sea of Galilee in the late first millennium. In the
discussion that follows, we shall be concerned with the system
of stressed vowel phonemes. Interpretations of shewa and the
three ultrashort or hatef vowels will be disregarded.

One interpretation assumes a virtually perfect one-to-
one correspondence between grapheme and phoneme and posits
seven vowel colours —— and no length distinctions ——
corresponding with the seven vowel graphemes (regarding shureq
and qibbus as allographs). The seven vowel system is posited
by the best known of the Tiberians, Aaron ben Moshe Ben-Asher
(cf. Baer and Strack 1879: 11-12). It is illustrated in Table
47. It was espoused by some of the most luminous Hebrew
grammarians of medieval Sepharad, including Abraham Ibn-Ezra
in the twelfth century (cf. Ibn-Ezra 1546: 134), and is
accepted by some modern scholars (e.g. Schramm 1964: 29).

The second version of Tiberian vocalism, by far the
most popular among scholars for a number of centuries, is the
Kimchian system, thought to have been first posited explicitly
by Joseph Kimchi (Qimḥi). It was elaborated by his sons Moshe
and David Kimchi in twelfth and thirteenth century Spain
(cf. M. Kimchi [1509-1518: 11], D. Kimchi 1532: [86], 1545:
48a; Hirschfeld 1926: 79, 82; Waldman 1975: 1308). David
Kimchi's Mikhlol was highly influential upon the development

Table 47:   The Seven Vowel Interpretation of Tiberian Vocalism

i (hireq)		u (shureq/qibbus)
e (sere)		o (holem)
ε (segol)		ɔ (qames)
	a (pathah)	

of sophisticated study of Hebrew by Christian European scholars (cf. Loewe 1971: 16) and it is little wonder that the Kimchian version has itself acquired near-classical status. Disregarding contextual lengthenings, the Kimchis posit a ten vowel system comprising five vowel qualities distinguished by the feature [+length]. It is illustrated in Table 48. From the perspective of the history of graphemics, it is noteworthy that the Kimchis saw fit to frame highly specific phonological environments to account for the positing of multiple vowels to correspond with single diacritics which they regarded as multivalent. The charge that the Kimchian system lacks historical linguistic validity has been effectively challenged in recent decades. Chomsky, who originally ascribed the Kimchian system to "the influence of the Latin languages employed in the Provence" (1952: 31), retracts this view (1977: 177, xxvii) in light of the impressive metrical and philological evidence adduced by Bendavid (1958). It would appear that the Kimchis had recourse to an older tradition as the actual Sephardic in use in medieval Spain did not apparently distinguish vowel quantity (cf. Garbell 1954: 693-694).

A third interpretation, favoured by many modern scholars, combines the four degrees of opening of the seven vowel version (Table 47) — distinguishing e and o from ε and a — with the length feature, although there is difference of opinion on both the phonological status of length and the degree to which the graphemes were intended to mark length (cf. Philippi 1897: 40; Kautzsch 1910: 40; Bauer and Leander 1922: 167-169; Malone 1978). A version of the "qualitative-quantitative" interpretation of Tiberian vocalism is illustrated in Table 49.

Table 48: The Kimchian Interpretation of Tiberian Vocalism

ī
(hireq)

ū
(shureq [/qibbus])

i
(unstressed closed syllabic hireq)

u
(unstressed closed syllabic
qibbus [/shureq])

ē
(sere)

ō
(holem)

e
(segol)

o
(unstressed closed syllabic qames)

ā
(qames [except in unstressed closed
syllabic position])

a
(pathah)

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Table 49: The Qualitative-Quantitative Interpretation of Tiberian Vocalism

ī (hireq)	ū (shureq [/qibbus])
i (unstressed closed syllabic hireq)	u (unstressed closed syllabic qibbus [/shureq])
ē (sere)	ō (holem)
ε (segol)	ɔ̄ (qames [except in unstressed closed syllabic position])
a (pathah)	ɔ (unstressed closed syllabic qames)

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, the supralinear Babylonian pointing system was discovered and toward its end the supralinear "Palestinian" pointing system came to light. We consider the term _pointing_ _system_ more appropriate than the usually encountered "vocalization system" which can easily lead to confusion between the relevant system of graphemes on the one hand, and the actual vowel system underlying it on the other. It is of course the vowel systems which are of paramount interest in the work at hand, rather than the graphemes. In presenting the genetic correspondences between the Babylonian and Palestinian vowels **and** their Tiberian counterparts, we shall continue to use the standard names of the Tiberian diacritics. This is done partly as a matter of convenience, as the Tiberian names are the most familiar. Methodologically it also has the advantage of using the system with the maximal number of oppositions as a point of departure. The subscripting of Tiberian vowel diacritic names is not intended to imply in any way the derivation of the other systems from Tiberian. The Babylonian system has but one grapheme corresponding to Tiberian pathah and segol, having merged historical ε and a (cf. Pinsker 1863; Morag 1972: 30-34). It is illustrated in Table 50. The Palestinian system represents a continuum of systems. At the maximal end of the continuum, it is virtually identical with the Tiberian system, differing

Table 50:   The Babylonian Vowel System

i
(hireq)

u
(shureq; qibbus)

e
(sere)

o
(holem)

ε/a
(segol/pathah)

ɔ
(qames)

only in the shapes and positions of the actual graphemes.
At the phonologically minimal end, it is a five vowel system
displaying unitary symbols for cognate Tiberian sere/segol
and qames/pathah. In many manuscripts, there are
Palestinian symbols corresponding with each Tiberian
nonreduced vowel but the confusion in their use demonstrates
that the system does not distinguish upper mid from lower
mid vowels.   The Palestinian vowel system has a unitary
phoneme /e/ corresponding with both sere and segol, unitary
/a/ corresponding with Tiberian qames (except in unstressed
closed syllabic position) and unitary /o/ corresponding
with Tiberian holem and unstressed closed syllabic qames
(cf. Kahle 1922, 1930; Revell 1970: 101, 102-103, 109-121;
Morag 1972: 34-41; Harviainen 1977: 102-104).   Now this
five vowel system is characteristic of nearly all of Sephardic
(with the exception of learned pronunciations deliberately
distinguishing vowel length in the Kimchian grammatical
tradition).   It is also characteristic of manuscripts which
use sublinear Tiberian graphemes but confuse sere with segol
and qames with pathah thereby demonstrating lack of phonological
opposition between the members of each pair.   Allony's
(1964: 143) name for this type of pointing system, the
"Palestinian-Tiberian" system, has gained considerable
acceptance (e.g. Morag 1965: 209; Eldar 1976: 42).   The
five vowel system characteristic of the Palestinian pointing
system, the reading tradition of Sephardic and the Palestinian-
Tiberian pointing system, is illustrated in Table 51.

Table 51: The Vocalism of Sephardic and of the Palestinian and Palestinian-Tiberian Pointing Systems

i
(hireq)

u
(shureq/qibbus)

e
(sere/segol)

o
(holem; unstressed closed syllabic qames)

a
(qames/pathah)

8.4. Development of Standard Theory

8.4.1. The Preconfiguration Theory

The premodern popular notion that Sephardic is somehow more correct and a better representation of the classical state of affairs than Ashkenazic began to give way to critical reexamination in the course of the nineteenth century. S.D. Luzzatto (1833: 92) and S.L. Rappoport (1836: 63) both rejected the sociologically motivated value judgments of most of their predecessors and accorded equal legitimacy to both of the major European reading traditions of Hebrew and Aramaic. They were interested in historical explanation rather than evaluation and put forward the preconfiguration theory which seeks to account for the differences in the reading traditions in terms of disparate geographical origin. The preconfiguration theory ascribes Sephardic to the reading tradition of Babylonia and Ashkenazic to that of Palestine. It continues to win the support of a small number of modern scholars (e.g. Chomsky 1957: 112-113). Nevertheless, it has been wholly overshadowed by the variants of what we shall call the standard theory of the history of Semitic Component and Ashkenazic vocalism.

8.4.2. The Lebensohnian Theory

The approach that has been espoused, developed and

modified by nearly all Yiddish and Hebrew scholars who
have dealt with the issue is the product of the thinking
of Hebrew poet and grammarian Avraham Dov-Ber Lebensohn,
who is known in Hebrew literature as Adam Hakohen (Adam
being a Hebrew acronym for Avraham Dov-Ber Mikhalishker,
after his native Lithuanian village Mikhalishek). Lebensohn's
(1874: 19-25) treatment suffers from quite a few prelinguistic
notions, including value judgments (he regards Sephardic
as correct, Ashkenazic as a corruption) and fanciful
interpretations (he considers diphthongs to be in violation
of the spirit of the Torah which disapproves of the
mixing of species). Nevertheless, his remarks constitute
the first application of the comparative method to the
problems at hand.

Lebensohn bases his reconstruction upon four vowel
systems: Ashkenazic (presumably his native Northeastern
variety; cf. Tables 31-33, 45), the Semitic Component (cf.
Tables 31-33, 45), the Kimchian system (cf. Table 48) which
he calls "Sephardic" and regards as such without investigating
the extent to which Sephardim distinguish length in their
reading tradition, and finally the German Component (cf. Tables
1, 6). Comparing Ashkenazic with Sephardic (the empirical
differences between Sephardic (cf. Table 51) and the Kimchian
system are not directly at issue), Lebensohn notes that
Ashkenazic differentiates systematically between the realizations
of sere and segol, holem and qames qatan (i.e. unstressed

closed syllabic qames), and qames and pathah by differing
vowel qualities. In terms of the present system, the
differences are 22 (sere) vs. 21/25 (segol), 42 (holem)
vs. 41 (qames qatan) and 12 (qames) vs. 11 (pathah). In
Sephardic each of these three pairs (sere/segol, holem/qames
qatan, qames/pathah) has a unitary vowel colour as its
realization (e, o, a). Lebensohn then goes on to observe
that the concrete realization of the long member of each
pair in Ashkenazic (sere, holem, qames) is identical with a
German Component vowel. He theorizes that "Ashkenazic"
was in fact once "Sephardic", i.e. was once a five vowel colour
system, and that the qualitative differences between each
of the pairs in question of Tiberian graphemes represent
a conscious effort on the part of Ashkenazim to distinguish
the members of each pair, an undertaking which involved
dipping into German Component vocalism for a concrete
realization. The primeval vowel system from which Ashkenazic
arose would look very much like the Kimchian system, where
the five Sephardic vowel qualities are further distinguished
by the feature of length. Lebensohn did not content himself
with this conclusion but carried his investigation a stage
further by including the evidence of the Semitic Component in
Yiddish. In a large number of lexical items, the Tiberian
pairs sere/segol, holem/qames qatan and qames/pathah are
indeed merged in Yiddish. Cf. e.g. Pan Yiddish lec 'joker',

mɛs 'corpse', šɛd 'ghost' (sere) merged with the vowel in
éfšər 'maybe', éstər 'Esther', évjən 'pauper' (segol);
Pan Yiddish kɔs 'cup', sɔd 'secret', sófrəm 'scribes' (holem)
merged with ɔ in kórbm 'sacrifice', órlə 'foreskin',
xóxmə 'wisdom' (qames qatan); Pan Yiddish klal 'rule',
prat 'detail', švax 'praise' (qames) merged with the vowel in
bátlən 'lazy, impractical person', gánəv 'thief', šábəs
'Sabbath' (pathah). Lebensohn theorizes that the types
lɛc/mɛs/šɛd (sere appearing as segol), kɔs/sɔd/sófrəm
(holem appearing as qames qatan) and klal/prat/švax (qames
appearing as pathah) are remnants in the spoken language of
an earlier stage of Ashkenazic in which its vowel system
was identical with that of Sephardic (plus the Kimchian
length distinctions). The sere/segol, holem/qames qatan
and qames/pathah oppositions that are evident in the Semitic
Component are explained as conformizations with the reading
tradition of pointed texts for which purpose the oppositions
were introduced. Lebensohn's theory suffers from a lack
of supporting evidence demonstrating an erstwhile switch
from a Sephardic type system and from an inability to explain
why some Semitic Component items conform with
Sephardic while others are in accord with the local reading
tradition of Ashkenazic. The very notion that Ashkenazic
is a later development emerging from a preexisting Sephardic
had been previously hinted at, at least with respect to qames
and pathah (Luzzatto 1841: 37; Oppenheim 1872; cf. Yalon

1930: 204; 1942: 26) but the idea had not been
developed. Shulman (1898: 42) rejected Lebensohn's
ideas on the development of Ashkenazic, but accepted that
the "Sephardic" items in the Semitic Component represent
an older layer in the language. Ayzenshtat (1908: 89)
concurred with Lebensohn but was unable to provide new
evidence. The Lebensohnian theory was however
destined to be developed from two separate quarters: firstly
by Yiddish scholars comparing the Semitic Component with
the Germanic Component within Yiddish and secondly, by Hebrew
scholars studying medieval Ashkenazi Hebrew and Aramaic
manuscripts.

8.4.3. Corroborative Germanic Evidence

Serious evidence in support of Lebensohn first came
to light in 1913 with the publication in Vilna of Sh.
Niger's Pinkes, the literary and linguistic collection which
marked the rise of modern Yiddish linguistics in Eastern
Europe. In it both Tshemerinski (1913: 61-63) and Veynger
(1913: 79-81) deal with the mysterious "Sephardic" forms in
Yiddish. Tshemerinski was apparently the first to have
framed the conditioning phonological environment which
delimits the "Sephardic" types from the "Ashkenazic" types
within the Semitic Component — the syllable boundary
features open vs. closed. The Sephardic types occur in
closed syllabic position while the Ashkenazic types occur
in open syllabic position (cf. above Tables 23-24). Comparing

this environment with the lengthening of Germanic Component short vowels in stressed open syllables (cf. above §4.3), Tshemerinski concluded that a unitary sound shift emanating from the Germanic Component had processed originally short e, o and a vowels (as indeed in Sephardic) giving rise to the Semitic Component long vowels in open syllables and the characteristic alternations on the morphophonemic level where morphs exhibit open vs. closed syllabic allomorphs. There is one substantive difference between the implied scenarios of Lebensohn and Tshemerinski. Where the theoretical Lebensohnian theory reconstructs a ten vowel Kimchian system as the point of departure, the actual corroborative Germanic Component evidence leads to a reconstructed five vowel Sephardic type system. It was, after all, the Middle High German short vowels in stressed open syllabic position which were lengthened. Lebensohn would probably have argued, had he confronted the problem, that the already long (Kimchian) Semitic Component vowels merely underwent qualitative shift in line with that undergone by Germanic Component long and lengthened vowels.

In the same Vilna Pinkes, Veynger formulated open syllable lengthening in a far more coherent and elegant way than Tshemerinski whose presentation is confusing and betrays lack of linguistic training (cf. Borokhov 1913b). Still, Veynger (1913: 71) credits Tshemerinski in a footnote with having apprised him of the open vs. closed syllabic environment for the purported shift from Sephardic to

Ashkenazic. Open syllable lengthening has won wide support
from modern Yiddish linguistics as the explanation for
the modern vocalism of the Semitic Component (cf. Birnbaum
1934: 28-29, 60; 1979: 60-65; M. Weinreich 1973: II,
20-21, 124, 334, 352-354).

8.4.4. Corroborative Hebrew Manuscript Evidence

Just as Germanic Component linguistic evidence came
to light in support of Lebensohn's underlying assumptions about
the vocalism of the Semitic Component, philological support
for his views of the development of Ashkenazic surfaced in
the course of the study of pointing systems of early
Ashkenazi Hebrew manuscripts. It was Yalon who effectively
pioneered the study of Hebrew pointing in Ashkenaz with an
eye toward discovering and systematizing pointings which
deviate from standard Tiberian ("Tiberian" referring of
course to the system, rather than to individual items
attested in the Tiberian Old Testament). Such deviations
represented for Yalon hard evidence of the pronunciation
of liturgical Hebrew and Aramaic at the time of writing.
The most systematic deviations from standard Tiberian that
Yalon discovered in pre-fourteenth century Hebrew manuscripts
from the Ashkenazi territory are the utter confusion of
sere with segol and of qames with pathah (given the small
functional load and the allophonic status of qames qatan and
the frequent marking of holem by consonantal grapheme waw, it
is hardly surprising that the confusion of holem with qames

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qatan is less frequent in these manuscripts). Yalon's
conclusion: "Sephardic" (i.e. a five vowel system
conforming with Sephardic) was used in the reading
tradition of Ashkenaz until (roughly) the fourteenth
century when the conscious conformization process of
Hebrew scribes with the Tiberian standard becomes
increasingly effective   (cf. Yalon 1930: 204-205; 1937-
1938: 62-66; 1938-1939: 11;   1942). Like Lebensohn
before him, Yalon (1937-1938: 63;   1942: 27; 1964: 19)
considers the "Sephardisms" in the modern Semitic Component
to be remnants of the primeval Ashkenazi reading tradition
which preceeded the secondary rise of Ashkenazic. Further
investigations of Hebrew manuscripts in medieval Ashkenaz
have corroborated Yalon's findings (cf. Klar 1951: 75;
Bet-Arye 1965: 34-37, 102; Eldar 1976; 1978: 16-32).

8.4.5. Proposed Scenarios

There are several factors common to all versions of
standard theory: firstly that both the Semitic Component
and Ashkenazic were originally characterized by five vowel
colours only; secondly, that the latter day increased
number of oppositions known in Ashkenazic represents a
secondary development, due either to Germanic lengthening
of vowels in strèssed open syllables, or to the process
of conformization to Tiberian in the pointing tradition, or
to both; that the morphophonemic alternations in the
Semitic Component are the effect of open syllable lengthening,

a rule obtained from the congruent Germanic development.
Within this framework there are different views and
differing placements of emphasis on the how and why of
a number of these hypothesized developments. Lebensohn,
concerned primarily with Ashkenazic, saw a quantity-
distinguishing system shifting to a quality-distinguishing
system as a conscious normative effort, and used the
"Sephardisms" within the Semitic Component as comparative
evidence of what he considered to be survivals of the
pre-Ashkenazic state of affairs. Tshemerinski and Veynger,
concerned exclusively with the Semitic Component, saw
originally short vowels in open syllables being lengthened
under Germanic impact. This left open the question of
how Ashkenazic comes to have long vowels (a cover term for
long vowels and diphthongs) in closed syllables as well
(cf. Tables 27, 30-33), specifically the problem of
acquisition of long diaphonemes (22, 42 and 12) as realizations
of sere, holem and qames (the problem of the Ashkenazic
split of qames merits separate attention). Bin-Nun (1973:
298-299) proposes that the normalization of Ashkenazic was
effected on the basis of the most frequent realizations.
Birnbaum (1979: 60) argues more plausibly that those forms
felt to be more "correct" (i.e. offering a better one-to-one
correspondence between grapheme and phoneme) were standardized.
Thus, Bin-Nun and Birnbaum would have it that the newly
acquired lengthened realizations of sere, holem and qames
in open syllabic position in the Semitic Component were

normatively transferred to all occurrences of these vowel graphemes in pointed texts.

On the one hand, the evidence for the Lebensohnian theory seems too good to be true. The Germanic evidence is consistent with the Hebrew manuscript evidence. On the other, this leaves room for debate within the Lebensohnian theory as to which of the factors was paramount. There is also room for discussion of the causality of the shifts in question, at least with respect to the changeover to the Tiberian standard in the pointing tradition (Germanically conditioned sound shifts would be understood to have occurred through the usual mechanism of sound change). Yalon (1942: 26) has regarded the changeover in the actual pronunciation to Ashkenazic to have resulted from Germanic impact. He is followed in this assumption by Morag (1971: 130) and Eldar (1976: 48). Eldar (1978: 45) insists that the switchover to standard Tiberian pointing and to Ashkenazic pronunciation be considered as wholly separate events, the first emanating in his view from the wish of Ashkenazi scribes to emulate the prestigious norm of Tiberian pointing used in Sepharad; the second from Germanic sound change.

The most complex scenario has been proposed by Max Weinreich (1954a: 93-99; 1963-1964: 325-326; 1973: II, 31-32). Weinreich, concurring with his predecessors as to the existence of a primeval five vowel system, proposes that both the switch to standard Tiberian pointing

and to the pronunciation of Ashkenazic are due to the
"Babylonian Renaissance". According to Weinreich, teachers
from Babylonia, trained in the tradition of Tiberian,
transplanted both pointing system and pronunciation to
Ashkenaz where the foreign teachers succeeded in changing
the entire course of the phonological development of
Ashkenazic. Weinreich's theory has been severely
criticized (cf. Susskind 1965: 10-11; Morag 1971: 1128-
1130; Bin-Nun 1974: 315; Eldar 1976: 47-48). Compounding
the lack of any hard evidence and the unnecessary
complexity (Tiberian to Ashkenaz via Babylonia), the
"Renaissance" seems to serve as a panacea for Weinreich
for all open problems in the phonological history of the
Semitic Component, including the ü realization of qibbus
(1963-1964: 235; 1973: II, 12, 18, 275), the ö realization
of qibbus (1963-1964: 235; 1973: II, 10, 19), penultimate
stress (1963-1964: 326-327; 1973: II, 32-33), the ø realization
of shewa (1963-1964: 327; 1973: II, 35-36), the
realignment of the sibilants (1963-1964: 328-329; 1973: II,
36-38) and differentiation of historical h and ḥ (1973: II,
40). While the "Renaissance" accounts for the pointing and
phonology of Ashkenazic for Weinreich, the development of
long vowels in the Semitic Component is attributed to the
conditioned lengthening in stressed open syllables (1973:
II, 124) under Germanic impact, although here too the
"Renaissance" is cited as a contributory factor (1973: II,
274).

9.   Reconstruction of Semitic Component Vocalism

9.1.   Methodology

The comparative method is frequently the most viable
and reliable means by which to unravel the history of sound
changes in a language. The case of the vocalism of the
Semitic Component in Yiddish is a notable exception. In fact,
the key problem in the development of Semitic Component
vocalism is the need to determine from which Northwest
Semitic vowel system it derives (cf. §8.3).   Methodologically,
the multiplicity of candidate systems renders any conclusions
drawn from comparison of any of these systems with the
Semitic Component blatantly circular. Any historical
linguist trained in the comparative tradition can easily
posit sound changes necessary to derive Semitic Component
vocalism from any of the candidate systems (cf. Tables 47-51).
By so doing, he proves nothing concerning genetic relationship
between the system and that of the documented Semitic
Component.

We propose, therefore, in the first instance to
take no note either of the known Northwest Semitic vowel
sytems or of the theories proposed and accepted by modern
Yiddish and Hebrew scholarship (cf. §8.4).   The case seems
to be a situation where internal reconstruction can most
profitably be used not as the corroborative check upon the

comparative method it is most often thought to be or as a last option to be kept in reserve for use with genetic isolates. Semitic Component vocalism may lend itself to analysis by internal reconstruction as a primary method. After considering the results of "pure" internal reconstruction (§9.2), making absolutely no reference to cognates, findings will be modified in accordance with the evidence of "limited" comparative reconstruction (§9.3), taking into account only those features upon which all of the candidate systems are in agreement. The joint evidence of internal and limited comparative reconstruction will then be subjected to corroborative tests by transcomponent reconstruction (§9.4), a method especially well suited to fusion languages such as Yiddish (cf. above §7.1). The degree of unilinear development from Proto Yiddish is examined in §9.5, with special reference to the problem of a Proto Semitic Component. Conclusions on the segmental and dynamic phonology of the Proto Semitic Component are put forward in §9.6. Finally, an outline of the phonological history of the Semitic Component is proposed with reference to historical inferences concerning the origins, age and history of Yiddish (§9.7).

9.2.   Internal Reconstruction

Because of the salient systematic vocalic alternations in the Semitic Component of all Yiddish dialects (42 ~ 41, 22 ~ 21, 12~ 11), the problem of its primeval vowel system

is ideally suited to internal reconstruction. The obvious
conditioning factor —— the syllable boundary features
open vs. closed —— immediately suggests either of two
alternatives. Given that diaphonemes 42, 22 and 12 have
long or diphthongized reflexes in Yiddish dialects, while
41, 21 and 11 have short reflexes, the alternations lend
themselves to reconstruction by one of two historical shifts,
Open Syllable Lengthening or Closed Syllable Shortening,
both of which make good sense on universal phonetic grounds
of isochronic tendencies. Examining the synchronic
distribution of diaphonemes within the Semitic Component,
we have determined (cf. §5.6.4) that short vowels occur
in both open and closed syllables while long vowels are
restricted to open syllabic position (with the exception
of a handful of lexical items —— primarily the names of
the letters of the Yiddish alphabet —— which exhibit
long vowels in closed syllables). Coupling the synchronic
segmental distribution of phonemes in the Semitic Component
of any Yiddish dialect with the evidence of the alternating
forms, we are left with two possible scenarios. If the
alternations are to be explained by Open Syllable Lengthening,
it would then be apparent that a protosystem comprising five
vowels only had "expanded" in consequence of Open Syllable
Lengthening into the documented systems wherein long vowels
are restricted to open syllables (the structural description
of the rule) and alternate with short vowels wherever
morphological paradigms exhibit open vs. closed syllabic

allomorphs. This hypothesis is wholly congruent with standard theories in the field (§8.4).

An alternative hypothesis, espousing Closed Syllable Shortening, would posit a protosystem comprising both long and short vowels in open syllables processed by the shortening rule. This scenario would serve equally well to explain the alternations as well as the distributional absence of long vowels in closed syllables, as they will have met the structural description of Closed Syllable Shortening and been processed by the rule.

The solution of Open Syllable Lengthening vs. Closed Syllable Shortening can therefore serve a far wider purpose than merely explaining the alternating forms. The correct solution can help determine the structure of the proto vocalism of the Semitic Component. This structure, in turn, will help enable us to determine which if any of the candidate Semitic vowel systems resembled the actual system from which the Semitic Component system sprang. Finally, any light shed upon this last problem may well be one of the few shreds of hard evidence regarding the origin and age of the Semitic Component generally.

The procedure we shall follow entails examining each pair of vowels separately in each of the three representative dialects we have been citing (Mideastern, Northeastern and Northwestern Yiddish). We shall cite three

sample lexical items illustrating each vowel. The same
treatment will then be accorded to nonalternating occurrences
of the same vowels in both open and closed syllables. The
veracity of each of the candidate rules —— Open Syllable
Lengthening and Closed Syllable Shortening —— will be put
to the test by examining the consequence of application
to nonalternating forms. In the interests of clarity and
economy, each candidate rule will be put through these
tests in tables provided for each vowel in each dialect.

9.2.1. Vowels 41 and 42

Open Syllable Lengthening (41 → 42 /__$) is examined
for Mideastern Yiddish in Table 52. In line with the
synchronic approach inherent in any internal reconstruction,
we are, to be exact, testing not protoforms per se but
experimental synchronic underlying representations. These
are enclosed in vertical bars (| |). In drawing historical
conclusions from the internal evidence, we need only
conceptually replace the vertical bars with asterisks (*)
to mark reconstructed forms (a step which also entails
a number of phonetic adjustments not relevant to the issues
of historical phonology at hand). Now we note that Open
Syllable Lengthening correctly generates Mideastern Yiddish
dójrəs 'generations', jójrəš 'heir' and sójdəs 'secrets' from
the experimental underlying morphophonemic representations
|dó$rəs|, |jó$rəš| and |só$dəs| where the syllable boundary ($)

Table 52: Experimental Rule: 41 → 42 / ___ \$ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish ($\mathfrak{d}_{41}$ vs. $\mathfrak{d}\text{:}_{42}$)

Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	alternating			nonalternating			
	42 / ___ \$	41 / ___ C\$		42 / ___ \$	42 / ___ C\$	41 / ___ C\$	41 / ___ \$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|dɔ́j\$rəs|	|dɔr|		|gɔ́j\$ləm|	-------	-------	|ɔ́r\$le|
	|jɔ́j\$rəš|	|jɔ́r\$šəm|		|mɔ́j\$re|	-------	-------	|kɔ́r\$bṇ|
	|sɔ́j\$dəs|	|sɔd|		|šɔ́j\$ta|	-------	-------	|xɔ́x\$me|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	⟶						
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[dɔ́j́rəs]	[dɔr]		[gɔ́jləm]	-------	-------	[ɔ́rle]
	[jɔ́jrəš]	[jɔ́ršəm]		[mɔ́re]	-------	-------	[kɔ́rbṇ]
	[sɔ́jdəs]	[sɔd]		[šɔ́jta]	-------	-------	[xɔ́xme]

triggers Open Syllable Lengthening. Closed syllabic
Mideastern Yiddish ɔ₄₁ is left untouched by the rule, hence
d̲ɔ̲r̲ 'generation' j̲ɔ̲́r̲š̲ə̲m̲ 'heirs' and s̲ɔ̲d̲ 'secret', derived
synchronically from underlying |dɔr|, |jɔ́r$šəm| and |sɔd| where
C$ blocks Lengthening.   Let us now turn to nonalternating
occurrences of vowels 41 and 42 in this dialect. Setting
out three sample lexical items for each vowel in each
environment, we find (to the right of the wavy line in Table
52) that vowel 42 occurs only in open syllables while vowel
41 occurs only in closed syllables.   The distribution of
these two vowels in nonalternating forms is then identical
with their distribution in the alternating forms. This
distribution is complementary. No evidence is therefore
evident with respect to the veracity of the proposed rule.
Let us now examine Closed Syllable Shortening as a hypothesis
for explaining the 41/42 alternations. Shortening is subjected
to the same treatment in Table 53, where d̲ɔ̲r̲, j̲ɔ̲́r̲š̲ə̲m̲ and s̲ɔ̲d̲
are correctly generated from the experimental underlying
morphophonemic representations |dɔjr|, |jɔ́jr$šəm| and |sɔjd|
where C$ triggers Shortening. Open Syllabic Mideastern
Yiddish ɔj₄₂ is left untouched by the rule, hence d̲ɔ̲́j̲r̲ə̲s̲,
j̲ɔ̲́j̲r̲ə̲š̲, s̲ɔ̲́j̲d̲ə̲s̲. Because of the complementation of vowels
41 and 42 in the Semitic Component, both Lengthening and
Shortening serve equally well to derive alternating forms
from experimental underlying representations.   This holds
true for Northeastern Yiddish (Table 54) where Lengthening

Table 53: Experimental Rule: $42 \rightarrow 41$ / ___ C\$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (2.1_{42} vs. 2_{41})

Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	alternating		nonalternating			
	42 / ___ \$	41 / ___ C\$	42 / ___ \$	42 / ___ C\$	41 / ___ \$	41 / ___ C\$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|dój\$res|	|dɔjr|	|gój\$lem|	---------	---------	|ór\$le|
	|jój\$reš|	|jój\$r\$sem|	|mój\$re|	---------	---------	|kór\$bp|
	|sój\$des|	|sɔjd|	|šój\$te|	---------	---------	|xóx\$me|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[dój\$res]	[dɔr]	[gój\$lem]	---------	---------	[ór le]
	[jój\$reš]	[jóršem]	[mój\$re]	---------	---------	[kírbə]
	[sój\$des]	[sɔd]	[šój\$te]	---------	---------	[xóxme]

Table 54: Experimental Rule: 41 → 42 / ___ $ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish (a₄₁ vs. e₄₂)

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	42 / ___ $	41 / ___ C$	42 / ___ $	42 / ___ C$	41 / ___ $	41 / ___ C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|dí$res|	|dɔr|	|géj$lem|	--------	--------	|ɔ́r$le|
	|jɔ́$reš|	|jɔ́r$šəm|	|méj$reʃ|	--------	--------	|kɔ́r$bə|
	|sɔ́$des|	|sɔd|	|šéj$te|	--------	--------	|xɔ́x$me|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	⟶					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[déjres]	[dɔr]	[géjlem]	--------	--------	[ɔ́rle]
	[jéjreš]	[jɔ́ršəm]	[méjre]	--------	--------	[kɔ́rbə]
	[séjdes]	[sɔd]	[šéjte]	--------	--------	[xɔ́xme]

derives <u>déjrəs</u>, <u>jéjrəš</u> and <u>séjdəs</u> from |dó\$rəs|, |jó\$rəš| and |só\$dəs|, leaving |dɔr|, |jór\$šəm| and |sɔd| untouched while Shortening (Table 55) derives <u>dɔr</u>, <u>jór̆šəm</u> and <u>sɔd</u> from |dejr|, |jéjr\$šəm| and |sejd|, leaving |déj\$rəs|, |jéj\$rəš̆| and |séj\$dəs| untouched. The same relations can be gleaned from the evidence of Northwestern Yiddish (Tables 56, 57) where vowel 42 is realized as ɔu, 41 with the Pan Yiddish ɔ. In consequence of the complementation of vowels 41 and 42 in the Semitic Component of all Yiddish dialects, internal reconstruction is useless as a means of determining whether Lengthening or Shortening has transpired in the history of Yiddish.

9.2.2. Vowels 21 and 22

Turning to the ɛ vowels, we find that the distribution of vowels 21 and 22 is happily noncomplementary in nonalternating forms. Using Mideastern Yiddish, once again, as our point of departure, we note (Table 58) that Open Syllable Lengthening correctly derives <u>lájcəm</u> 'jesters', <u>májsəm</u> 'corpses' and <u>š̆ájdəm</u> 'ghosts' from |lɛ́\$cəm|, |mɛ́\$səm| and |š̆ɛ́\$dəm|, leaving |lɛc|, |mɛs| and |š̆ɛd| untouched. Turning now to the nonalternating forms to the right of the wavy line, we note that vowel 21 occurs in both open and closed syllables. The open syllabic occurrences meet the structural description of the rule and are therefore

Table 55: Experimental Rule: $42 \rightarrow 41$ / ___ C$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish ($eɪ_{42}$ vs. $ɔ_{41}$)

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	42 / ___ $	41 / ___ C$	42 / ___ $	42 / ___ C$	41 / ___ C$	41 / ___ $
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|déj\$res|	|dejr|	|géj\$lem|	---------	---------	|ór\$le|
	|jéj\$reš|	|jéjr\$šem|	|méj\$re|	---------	---------	|kór\$bp|
	|séj\$des|	|sejd|	|šéj\$te|	---------	---------	|xóx\$me|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	→					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[déjres]	[dor]	[géjlem]	---------	---------	[órle]
	[jéjreš]	[jórǧem]	[méjre]	---------	---------	[kórbp]
	[séjdes]	[sod]	[šéjte]	---------	---------	[xóxme]

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Table 56: Experimental Rule: 41 → 42 / ___ \$ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish (24₄₁ vs. 24₄₂)

Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	alternating		nonalternating			
	42 / ___ \$	41 / ___ C\$	42 / ___ \$	42 / ___ C\$	41 / ___ \$	41 / ___ C\$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|dó\$res|	|dɔr|	|góu\$lem|	-------	-------	|ór\$le|
	|jó\$reš|	|jór\$šem|	|móu\$rə|	-------	-------	|kír\$bṇ|
	|só\$des|	|sɔd|	|šóu\$te|	-------	-------	|xóx\$me|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	→					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[dóːres]	[dɔr]	[góulem]	-------	-------	[órle]
	[jóːreš]	[jóršem]	[móurə]	-------	-------	[kórbṇ]
	[sóːdes]	[sɔd]	[šóute]	-------	-------	[xóxme]

Table 57: Experimental Rule: $42 \rightarrow 41 /$ ___ $C\$$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish (Ωu_{42} vs. Ω_{41})

	alternating		nonalternating			
	$42 /$ __ $\$$	$41 /$ __ $C\$$	$42 /$ __ $\$$	$42 /$ __ $C\$$	$41 /$ __ $C\$$	$41 /$ __ $\$$
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution						
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|dóu\$res| |jóu\$reš| |sóu\$des|	|dour| |jóur\$sem| |soud|	|góu\$lãm| |móu\$re| |sóu\$te|	------ ------ ------	------ ------ ------	|sr\$le| |kór\$bn| |xóx\$me|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening		→→→				
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[dóures] [jóureš] [sóudes]	[dor] [jóršem] [sod]	[góulem] [móure] [šóute]	------ ------ ------	------ ------ ------	[órle] [kórbn] [xóxme]

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Table 58: Experimental Rule: 21 → 22 / ___ $ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (e_{21} vs. ai_{22})

Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	alternating		nonalternating			
	22 / ___ \$	21 / ___ C\$	22 / ___ \$	22 / ___ C\$	21 / ___ \$	21 / ___ C\$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|léé¢cəm|	|lɛc|	|bráj¢re|	----------	|é¢lel|	|éf¢ser|
	|méé¢sem|	|mes|	|magáj¢fe|	----------	|é¢mes|	|és¢tər|
	|šéé¢dəm|	|šéd|	|máj¢le|	----------	|hé¢tər|	|év¢jən|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	→				→	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[lájcəm]	[lɛc]	[brájre]	----------	•[ájlel]	[éfšer]
	[májsəm]	[mes]	[magájfe]	----------	•[ájməs]	[éstər]
	[šájdəm]	[šéd]	[májle]	----------	•[hájtər]	[évjən]

processed. Open Syllable Lengthening, processing |é$ləl| 'twelfth month of the Jewish calendar', |é$məs| 'true; truth;' and |hé$tər| '(rabbinical) permission', generates spurious •áiləl, •ájməs, •hájtər (the black circle is used to mark spurious forms; the asterisk is thereby reserved for reconstructed forms which are at any rate not meant to be spurious). Open Syllable Lengthening is therefore a spurious rule in the synchronic phonology of the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish. Reexamining its synchronic failure from a diachronic point of view (or, symbologically speaking, replacing → by >), it is evident that had the alternations arisen due to open syllable lengthening, non-alternating *éləl, *éməs, *hétər would surely have been processed together with *lécəm, *mésəm, *šédəm. One would not, presumably, wish to make the untenable claim that Open Syllable Lengthening processed only alternating forms.

Closed Syllable Shortening is examined with respect to the same corpus in Table 59. Taking vowel 22 as underlying, Shortening correctly derives lɛc 'jester', mɛs 'corpse' and šɛd 'ghost' from |lajc|, |majs| and |šajd|. Crossing over to nonalternating forms, we find that unlike Lengthening, Shortening generates no spurious forms. Closed syllabic vowel 22 forms cannot be spuriously processed by Shortening because such forms do not occur — as is of course to be expected if the rule is valid. Any such forms will have been processed and appear in the surface guise of vowel 21.

Table 59: Experimental Rule: 22 → 21 / ___ C\$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (a$_{22}$ vs. ɛ$_{21}$)

	alternating		nonalternating			
	22 / ___ \$	21 / ___ C\$	22 / ___ \$	22 / ___ C\$	21 / ___ \$	21 / ___ C\$
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution						
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|láj\$cəm|	|lajc|	|bráj\$rə|	————	|é\$lel|	|ér\$šər|
	|máj\$səm|	|majs|	|magáj\$fə|	————	|ə\$məs|	|əs\$tər|
	|šáj\$dəm|	|šajd|	|máj\$lə|	————	|hé\$tər|	|év\$jən|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening						
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[lájcəm]	[lec]	[brájrə]	————	[élel]	[éršər]
	[májsem]	[mes]	[magájfə]	————	[émes]	[éstər]
	[šájdəm]	[šəd]	[májlə]	————	[hétər]	[évjən]

Turning to our other sample Yiddish dialects, we
find the same relations obtaining. In Northeastern
Yiddish, Open Syllable Lengthening, while correctly
deriving alternating léjcim, méjsim, šéjdim from proposed
underlying |lɛc|, |mɛs|, |šɛd| (Table 60), derives spurious
nonalternating •éilǝl, •éjmǝs, •héjtǝr. Closed Syllable
Shortening (Table 61) correctly derives vowel 21 in lɛc,
mɛs, šɛd from |lejc|, |mejs|, |šejd|. It derives no spurious
forms amongst nonalternating items because there are, as will
be expected, no paradigmatic occurrences of vowel 22 in closed
syllabic position. Once again, internal reconstruction
proves Shortening to be the correct explanation for the
alternating forms. Turning finally to Northwestern Yiddish
(Table 62), we find that Lengthening, while correctly
deriving léjcǝm, méjsǝm, šéjdǝm from |lέ$cǝm|, |mέ$sǝm| and
|šέ$dǝm|, spuriously generates •éjlǝl, •éjmǝs and •héjtǝr.
Closed Syllable Shortening (Table 63), while correctly
deriving alternating vowel 21 surface forms from underlying
22, generates no spurious nonalternating forms.

9.2.3. Vowels 11 and 12

Repeating the procedure for the third alternating
pair of Semitic Component diaphonemes, vowels 11 and 12, we
happily find, once again, that nonalternating forms are not
in complementary distribution. Once again, the

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Table 60: Experimental Rule: 21 → 22 / ___ $ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish (ε_{21} vs. $e\mathfrak{z}_{22}$)

	alternating			nonalternating		
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	22 / ___ $	21 / ___ C$	22 / ___ $	22 / ___ C$	21 / ___ $	21 / ___ C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|léjcɪm| |méjsɪm| |šéjdɪm|	|lɛc| |mɛs| |šɛd|	|bréj\$rə| |magéj\$fe| |méj\$lel|	--------- --------- ---------	|éj\$lel| |éj\$mes| |héj\$ter|	|éf\$šer| |és\$ter| |év\$jen|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	————————————▶				————————————▶	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[léjcɪm] [méjsɪm] [šéjdɪm]	[lɛc] [mɛs] [šɛd]	[bréjrə] [magéjfe] [méjle]	--------- --------- ---------	•[éjlel] •[éjmes] •[héjter]	[éfšer] [éster] [évjen]

Table 61: Experimental Rule: 22 → 21 / ___ C\$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish (ej_{22} vs. e_{21})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	22 / ___ \$	21 / ___ C\$	22 / ___ \$	22 / ___ C\$	21 / ___ \$	21 / ___ C\$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|léj\$cim| |méj\$sim| |šéj\$dim|	|lejc| |mejs| |šejd|	|bréj\$re| |magéj\$fre| |méj\$le|	-------- -------- --------	|é\$lel| |é\$mes| |hé\$ter|	|éf\$šer| |és\$ter| |év\$jen|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	→→→→→					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[léjcim] [méjsim] [šéjdim]	[lec] [mes] [šed]	[bréjre] [magéjfe] [méjle]	-------- -------- --------	[élel] [émes] [héter]	[éfšer] [éster] [évjen]

Table 62: Experimental Rule: $21 \rightarrow 22 /$ ___ $\$$ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish (ϵ_{21} vs. ϵ_{22})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	22 / __ $\$$	21 / __ C$\$$	22 / __ $\$$	22 / __ C$\$$	21 / __ $\$$	21 / __ C$\$$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|léʃcem| |méʃsem| |šéʃdem|	|lɛc| |mɛs| |šed|	|bréjʃre| |magéjʃfe| |méjʃle|	------ ------ ------	|éʃlel| |éʃmas| |héʃter|	|éfʃser| |ésʃter| |évʃjen|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	⟶				⟶	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[léjcem] [méjsem] [šéjdem]	[lɛc] [mɛs] [šed]	[bréjre] [magéjfe] [méjle]	------ ------ ------	•[éjlel] •[éjmes] •[héjter]	[ɛfʃɛr] [ɛstər] [ɛvjen]

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Table 63: Experimental Rule: 22 → 21 / ___ C$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish ($\epsilon 1_{22}$ vs. ϵ_{21})

	alternating		nonalternating			
	22 / ___ $	21 / ___ C$	22 / ___ $	22 / ___ C$	21 / ___ $	21 / ___ C$
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution						
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|léj$cəm|	|lejc|	|bréj$rə|	----------	|é$lel|	|éf$šer|
	|méj$səm|	|mejs|	|magéj$fə|	----------	|é$məs|	|és$tər|
	|šéj$dəm|	|šéjd|	|méj$lə|	----------	|hé$tər|	|év$jən|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	→					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[léjcəm]	[lɛc]	[bréjrə]	----------	[élel]	[éfšar]
	[méjsəm]	[mes]	[magéjfə]	----------	[émes]	[éstər]
	[šéjdəm]	[šed]	[méjlə]	----------	[hétər]	[évjən]

noncomplementation is of great value in exposing the spurious rule. Open Syllable Lengthening (Table 64) correctly derives Mideastern Yiddish klúləm 'rules', prútəm 'details' and švúxəm 'praises' from |klá$ləm|, |prá$təm| and |švá$xəm| (where the syllable boundary triggers the rule), leaving closed syllabic |klal| 'rule', |prat| 'detail' and |švax| 'praise' untouched. Again, it is amongst the nonalternating forms that the rule fails by deriving spurious •avúdə 'certainly', •kúlə 'bride' and •múkə 'blow' from |avá$də|, |ká$lə| and |má$kə| where $ triggers Lengthening. Closed Syllable Shortening (Table 65) correctly derives klal, prat and švax from |klul|, |prut| and |švux|, leaving |klú$ləm|, |prú$təm| and |švú$xəm| untouched. Amongst the nonalternating forms, Closed Syllable Shortening achieves descriptive adequacy by deriving no spurious forms. We conclude once again that the alternations result from Closed Syllable Shortening in the synchronic phonology of the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish. Interpreting the result diachronically, we conclude that at some point in the history of the language, stressed vowels in closed syllables were processed by Shortening.

These results are corroborated by repetition of the experiment for Northeastern and Northwestern Yiddish. In the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish, Open Syllable Lengthening (Table 66) derives spurious •avódə, •kólə and

Table 64: Experimental Rule: $11 \rightarrow 12 / \text{___} \$$ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (a_{11} vs. $\bar{u}/u_{12}$)

	alternating		nonalternating		
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	12 / ___ $	11 / ___ C$	12 / ___ $	12 / ___ C$	11 / ___ C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|klá$lem\| \|prá$tam| |švá$xem|	|klal| |prat| |švax|	|kú$ved\| \|lú$šṇ| |šú$lem|	|avá$de\| \|ká$le| |má$ke|	|mál$ke\| \|náf$ke| |sam|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	→		------ ------ ------	→	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[klúlem] [prútem] [švúxem]	[klal] [prat] [švax]	[kúved] [lúšṇ] [šúlem]	•[avúde] •[kúle] •[múke]	[málke] [náfke] [sam]

Table 65: Experimental Rule: l2 → l1 / ___ C\$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish ($\bar{u}/u_{12}$ vs. a_{11})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	l2 / ___\$	l1 / ___C\$	l2 / ___\$	l2 / ___C\$	l1 / ___\$	l1 / ___C\$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representation	|klú\$lem| |prú\$tem| |švú\$xem|	|klul| |prut| |švux|	|kú\$ved| |lú\$šṇ| |šú\$lem|	-------- -------- --------	|avá\$de| |ká\$le| |má\$ke|	|mál\$ke| |náf\$ke| |sam|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	→					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[klúlem] [prútem] [švúxem]	[klal] [prat] [švax]	[kúved] [lúšṇ] [šúlem]	-------- -------- --------	[aváde] [kále] [máke]	[málke] [náfke] [sam]

Table 66: Experimental Rule: $l1 \rightarrow l2 / \underline{\quad} \$$ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish (a_{11} vs. a_{12})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	$l2 / \underline{\quad}\$$	$l1 / \underline{\quad}C\$$	$l2 / \underline{\quad}\$$	$l2 / \underline{\quad}C\$$	$l1 / \underline{\quad}\$$	$l1 / \underline{\quad}C\$$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|klá\$lim| |prá\$tim| |švá\$xim|	|klal| |prat| |švax|	|kó\$ved| |ló\$šn| |šó\$lem|	------ ------ ------	|avá\$de| |ká\$le| |má\$ke|	|mál\$ke| |náf\$ke| |sam|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	⟶				⟶	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[klílim] [prótim] [švóxim]	[klal] [prat] [švax]	[kóved] [lóšn] [šólem]	------ ------ ------	•[avóde] •[kóle] •[móke]	[málke] [náfke] [sam]

•mŏkə, while Closed Syllable Shortening (Table 67) accounts
for the alternations while deriving only correct nonalternating
forms. Analogously, Lengthening generates spurious
Northwestern Yiddish •avŏdə, •kŏlə and •mŏkə (Table 68)
while Shortening (Table 69) correctly accounts for both
the alternating and nonalternating forms.

9.2.4. The High Vowels (31/32; 51/52)

Our discussions throughout have focused on the nonhigh
vowels only. This limitation has been dictated by the
circumstances of the Semitic Component high vowels. While
the members of the three nonhigh pairs, 41/42, 21/22 and 11/12
are distinguished by sharp qualitative differences in all known
varieties of Yiddish, the phonetic distinctions between 31 and
32 (the Proto Yiddish i vowels) and between 51 and 52 (the
Proto Yiddish u vowels) have been levelled in some areas (most
prominently in Northeastern Yiddish which does not distinguish
phonemic quantity). But even in other varieties of Yiddish,
where 31 and 51 have generally remained distinct from 32 and
52 respectively, Semitic Component paradigms exhibiting
open vs. closed syllabic allomorphs have often been subject
to analogical levelling in both possible directions (in favour
of short 31 and 51 or of long 32 and 52), blurring erstwhile
alternation. Thus, for example, while Mideastern Yiddish

Table 67: Experimental Rule: l2 → l1 / ___C\$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish (a_{12} vs. a_{11})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	l2 / ___\$	l1 / ___C\$	l2 / ___\$	l2 / ___C\$	l1 / ___\$	l1 / ___C\$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|kló\$lim|	|klol|	|kó\$vəd|	----------	|avá\$də|	|mál\$kə|
	|pró\$tim|	|prot|	|ló\$šn|	----------	|ká\$lə|	|náf\$kə|
	|švó\$xim|	|švox|	|šó\$ləm|	----------	|má\$kə|	|sam|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening						
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[klólim]	[klal]	[kóvəd]	----------	[avádə]	[málkə]
	[prótim]	[prat]	[lóšn]	----------	[kálə]	[náfkə]
	[švóxim]	[švax]	[šóləm]	----------	[mákə]	[sam]

Table 68: Experimental Rule: $11 \rightarrow 12$ / ___ $\$$ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish (a_{11} vs. $\breve{a}_{12}$)

	alternating		nonalternating			
	12 / ___ $\$$	11 / ___ C$\$$	12 / ___ $\$$	12 / ___ C$\$$	11 / ___ $\$$	11 / ___ C$\$$
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution						
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|káá$\$$lem|	|klal|	|kóó$\$$ved|	--------	|avá$\$$de|	|mál$\$$ke|
	|práá$\$$tem|	|prat|	|lóó$\$$šn̩|	--------	|ká$\$$le|	|náf$\$$ke|
	|šváá$\$$xem|	|švax|	|šóó$\$$lem|	--------	|mä$\$$ke|	|sam|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	→				→	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[klṓlem]	[klal]	[kṓved]	--------	•[avṓde]	[málke]
	[prṓtem]	[prat]	[lṓšn̩]	--------	•[kṓle]	[náfke]
	[švṓxem]	[švax]	[šṓlem]	--------	•[mṓke]	[sam]

Table 69: Experimental Rule: $12 \to 11$ / ___ C$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish ($\bar{o}_{12}$ vs. a_{11})

	alternating		nonalternating			
	12 / ___ $	11 / ___ C$	12 / ___ $	12 / ___ C$	11 / ___ $	11 / ___ C$
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution						
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|klṓ$lem\| \|prṓ$tem| |švṓ$xem|	|klṓl| |prōt| |švōx|	|kṓ$ved\| \|lṓ$šṇ| |šṓ$lem|	------- ------- -------	|avá$de\| \|ká$le| |má$ke|	|mál$ke\| \|náf$ke| |sam|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	⟶					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[klṓlem] [prṓtem] [švṓxem]	[klal] [prat] [švax]	[kṓved] [lṓšṇ] [šṓlem]	------- ------- -------	[aváde] [kále] [máke]	[málke] [náfke] [sam]

exhibits $I_{32} \sim i_{31}$ in dīnəm 'laws' ~ din 'law', Northwestern
Yiddish has apparently levelled the alternation in favour of
vowel 32, hence Northwestern Yiddish dín, dínəm. Nevertheless,
internal reconstruction can still be applied on a limited
basis for any Yiddish dialect exhibiting residual alternation.
Aside from the reduced number of sample dialects, it will not
prove in any case possible to provide the same three lexical
items as an illustrative corpus for more than a single
variety of Yiddish.

9.2.41. Vowels 31 and 32

In Mideastern Yiddish (Table 70), Open Syllable
Lengthening correctly derives dínəm 'laws', jədídəm 'friends'
and jərídəm 'fairs; carnivals' from experimental underlying
|dí$nəm|, |jədí$dəm| and |jərí$dəm|. Again, the rule is
proved spurious when applied to nonalternating forms. It
processes |ní$də| 'menstruous woman', |ší$kər| 'drunk' and
|sí$bə| 'reason; cause' (where $ meets the structural
description of the rule), generating spurious Mideastern
Yiddish •nídə, •síkər and •síbə. Applying Closed Syllable
Shortening to the same corpus, we find (Table 71) that
in addition to correctly deriving din 'law', jədíd 'friend'
and jəríd 'fair; carnival', the rule accounts adequately
for the nonalternating forms.

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Table 70: Experimental Rule: 31 → 32 / ___ $ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (L_{31} vs. L_{32})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	32 / ___ $	31 / ___ C$	32 / ___ $	32 / ___ C$	31 / ___ $	31 / ___ C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|dif$nem\| \|jədif$dəm| |jərif$dəm|	|din| |jədfd| |jərfd|	|bəkíf$es\| \|tfif$se| |xsíf$me|	------ ------ ------	|nif$de\| \|šíf$kər| |sif$be|	|bfif$bł\| \|mfid$bər| |sim$xe|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	→				→	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[dífnəm] [jədfdəm] [jərfdəm]	[din] [jədfd] [jərfd]	[bəkífes] [tfíse] [xsíme]	------ ------ ------	•[níde] •[šíkər] •[síbe]	[bfłbł] [mídbər] [sfmxe]

Table 71: Experimental Rule: $32 \rightarrow 31 /$ ___ C$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (I_{32} vs. i_{31})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	32 / ___ $	31 / ___ C$	32 / ___ $	32 / ___ C$	31 / ___ $	31 / ___ C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|daf\$nem|	|din|	|bəkf\$es|	----------	|nf\$de|	|bfl\$bl|
	|jedf\$dəm|	|jedfd|	|tfi\$sə|	----------	|sf\$kər|	|mid\$bar|
	|jərf\$dəm|	|jərfd|	|xsf\$me|	----------	|sf\$bə|	|sfm\$xe|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	⟶					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[dfnem]	[din]	[bəkfes]	----------	[nfde]	[bflbl]
	[jedfdəm]	[jedfd]	[tfisə]	----------	[šfkər]	[midbər]
	[jərfdəm]	[jərfd]	[xsfme]	----------	[sfbə]	[sfmxe]

9.2.42. Vowels 51 and 52

Mideastern Yiddish gífə 'per se; proper', míməm 'blemishes' and zxísəm 'merits' alternate systematically with gif 'body', mim 'blemish' and zxis 'merit'. Open Syllable Lengthening (Table 72), regarding the i₅₁ forms as underlying, correctly processes experimental |gí$fə|, |mí$məm| and |zxí$səm|, where $ meets the structural description of the rule, deriving surface gífə, míməm and zxísəm. Lengthening leaves closed syllabic gif, mim and zxis untouched. Turning now to the distribution of nonalternating forms, it is evident that the pattern is identical with that obtaining for 21/22 and 11/12. Open syllabic Mideastern Yiddish i is indeed processed by Lengthening, deriving spurious •jərí̆šə 'inheritance', •ší̆təf 'partner' and •xípə 'wedding canopy' from |jərí$šə|, |ší$təf| and |xi$pə| where $ meets the structural description of the rule. Turning now to Closed Syllable Shortening (Table 73), we find that gif, mim, and zxis are correctly derived from |gīf|, |mīm| and |zxīs|, where C$ meets the structural description of Shortening, leaving gífə, míməm and zxísəm untouched. In as much as vowel 52 does not occur paradigmatically in closed syllabic position in Mideastern Yiddish, no spurious forms are generated by Shortening. The same relations obtain in Northwestern Yiddish (Tables 74, 75) where vowel 51 appears as o, 52 as ū. Open Syllable Lengthening, while correctly deriving sūsəm 'horses',

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Table 72: Experimental Rule: 51 → 52 / ___ $ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (L_{51} vs. L_{52})

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	52 / ___ $	51 / ___ C$	52 / ___ $	52 / ___ C$	51 / ___ $	51 / ___ C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|gíf$fe\| \|mf$mǝm| |zxf$sem|	|gif| |mim| |zxis|	|así$se\| \|melf$xe| |xavrf$se|	--------- --------- ---------	|jerf$se\| \|ší$tǝf| |xí$pe|	|gfz$me\| \|metfš$teš| |xíc$pe|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	————————————▶				————————————▶	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[gífe] [mímem] [zxísem]	[gif] [mim] [zxis]	[asíse] [melíxe] [xavríse]		•[jeríse] •[šítef] •[xípe]	[gízme] [metíšteš] [xícpe]

Table 73 : Experimental Rule: 52 → 51 / ___C$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Mideastern Yiddish (i$_{52}$ vs. í$_{51}$)

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	52 / ___$	51 / ___C$	52 / ___$	52 / ___C$	51 / ___$	51 / ___C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|gíf$fe\| \|mí$mem| |zxí$sem|	|gif| |mím| |zxis|	|asíf$se\| \|melíf$xe| |xavríf$se|	-------- -------- --------	|jeríf$se\| \|ší$tef| |xí$pe|	|gíz$me\| \|metíš$taš| |xíc$pe|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening	⟶					
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[gífe] [mímem] [zxísem]	[gif] [mim] [zxis]	[asíse] [melíxe] [xavríse]	-------- -------- --------	[jeríše] [šítef] [xípe]	[gízme] [metíštaš] [xícpe]

Table 74: Experimental Rule: $51 \rightarrow 52$ / ___ \$ (Open Syllable Lengthening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish (a_{51} vs. $\bar{u}_{52}$)

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	52 / ___ \$	51 / ___ C\$	52 / ___ \$	52 / ___ C\$	51 / ___ \$	51 / ___ C\$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|só\$sem| |xó\$\$sem| |zexó\$sem|	|sos| |xoš| |zexós|	|asú\$se| |melú\$xe| |xavrú\$se|	---------- ---------- ----------	|jəró\$se| |šó\$tef| |xó\$pe|	|góz\$me| |matóš\$teš| |xóc\$pe|
Applicability of Open Syllable Lengthening	$\longrightarrow$				$\longrightarrow$	
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[súsem] [xúšsem] [zexúsem]	[sos] [xoš] [zexós]	[asúse] [melúxe] [xavrúse]	---------- ---------- ----------	•[jərúše] •[šútef] •[xúpe]	[gózme] [matóšteš] [xócpe]
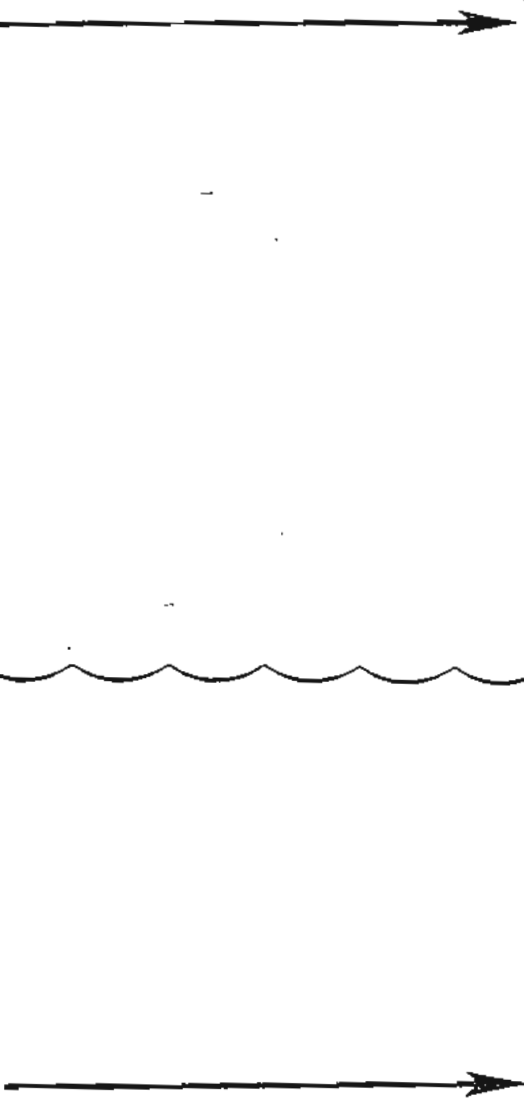
xū̌šəm 'senses' and zəxū̌səm from |só$səm|, |xó$šəm| and
|zəxó$səm|, spuriously derives •jərū̌šə, •šū̌təf and •xū̌pə
from |jəró$šə|, |šó$təf| and |xó$pə| where $ meets the
structural description of Lengthening.   Closed Syllable
Shortening (Table 75) accounts adequately for both
alternating and nonalternating forms.

9.2.5.   Results of Internal Reconstruction

        Open Syllable Lengthening and Closed Syllable
Shortening prove to be equally adequate in deriving correct
surface forms in alternating 41 ~ 42, 21 ~ 22, 11 ~ 12, 31 ~
32 and 51 ~ 52.   That is to say, there is no empirical
difference in adequacy between the two rules. If Lengthening
is applied, then underlying 41, 21, 11, 31 and 51 are posited
for open syllabic members of each pair. They are processed
by the rule, giving surface 42, 22, 12, 32 and 52 respectively.
If Shortening is posited, then underlying 42, 22, 12, 32 and
52 are regarded as underlying in the closed syllabic member of
each pair.   They are processed by Shortening, giving surface
41, 21, 11, 31 and 51 respectively.

        There is a sharp difference in adequacy with respect
to the application of each candidate rule to nonalternating
forms, with the exception of vowels 41 and 42 where
complementation renders internal reconstruction vacuous.
In all other pairs (21/22, 11/12, 31/32, 51/52), i.e. wherever

Table 75: Experimental Rule: 52 → 51 / ___ C$ (Closed Syllable Shortening) in the Semitic Component of Northwestern Yiddish (ū₅₂ vs. o₅₁)

	alternating		nonalternating			
Synchronic (Paradigmatic) Distribution	52 / ___ $	51 / ___ C$	52 / ___ $	52 / ___ C$	51 / ___ $	51 / ___ C$
Experimental Underlying Morphophonemic Representations	|sū́$sem\| \|xū̌$sem| |zexū́$sem|	|sūs| |xūš| |zexūs|	|asū́$se\| \|melū́$xe| |xavrū́$se|	--------- --------- ---------	|jeró$se\| \|šó$taf| |xó$pe|	|góz$me\| \|metós$teš| |xóc$pe|
Applicability of Closed Syllable Shortening						
Derived Surface Broad Phonetic Representations	[sū́sem] [xū́šem] [zexū́xem]	[sos] [xoš] [zexós]	[asū́se] [melū́xe] [xavrū́se]	--------- --------- ---------	[jaróšə] [šótaf] [xóx]	[gózmə] [matóštəš] [xócpə]

the language provides evidence, Open Syllable Lengthening
processes short vowels in open syllables, deriving spurious
long vowels in open syllables.   Closed Syllable Shortening
cannot derive spurious short vowels in closed syllables
because potential input to the rule — long vowels in closed
syllables, do not paradigmatically occur.   Synchronically
speaking, Closed Syllable Shortening meets both descriptive
and explanatory adequacy.   Descriptively, Shortening
accounts for the alternations while deriving only correct
surface representations in both alternating and nonalternating
forms.   Moreover, the rule explains the nonoccurrence of
long vowels in closed syllabic position on the surface: any
such underlying occurrences (for which we will, synchronically
speaking, have evidence only for alternating forms where
open syllabic allomorphs provide evidence for a unique
underlying representation) will have been processed by the
rule.   Interpreting the evidence diachronically, Closed
Syllable Shortening appears to be the only possible historical
explanation for both the alternations and the nonoccurrence
of long vowels in closed syllables.   Proto Semitic Component
vowels 12, 22, 32, 42 and 52 were all processed by Shortening
in closed syllables.   In the modern language, the alternations
between open and closed syllabic allomorphs serve to preserve
closed syllabic long vowels on the underlying level of
representation.   On a strictly synchronic intrasystemic
basis (i.e. with no reference to Ashkenazic, cf. above §6.4.4),

nonalternating closed syllabic short vowels can only be
derived fron underlying short vowels as the closed syllabic
merger of both series of vowels is virtually complete.

Internal reconstruction, in summary, provides
a solution opposite to that espoused by all established
theories in the field which are in agreement on the
historicity of Open Syllable Lengthening (cf. §8.4).

9.3.   Limited Comparative Reconstruction

The next step is to confront the results of internal
reconstruction with "safe" comparative reconstruction, that
is to say, comparative reconstruction making use only of
nondisputed data.   In the work at hand, this means ignoring
the vocalic system per se of any of the candidate Northwest
Semitic systems (cf. §8.3). There are, however, two
crucial phonological features common to all these systems.
These are stress assignment and consonantal gemination. By
including evidence of these two features in a comparative
survey with the Semitic Component, a corrective can be
introduced to the results of internal reconstruction.
The thirty most important correspondences between Semitic
Component vocalism and that of Classical Tiberian, taking
into account stress differences and gemination, are illustrated
by three representative items each in Table 76. The vocalism
provided is that of one version of the qualitative-quantitative

interpretation of Tiberian vocalism (cf. Table 49). We
cannot stress too strongly that the vocalic values assumed
by this interpretation have no bearing in the limited
comparative reconstruction to be undertaken. They are
provided for convenience only, and can be replaced by the
values posited by any of the other systems. Thus for
example, the three items cited in Table 76.1 might equally
be rendered wad$dá?j, kal$lí, mak$kó (cf. Table 47); wad$dá?j,
kal$lá, mak$ká (cf. Table 48); wad$dá?j, kal$lá, mak$ká (cf.
Table 51). It is stress and gemination that are at issue.

9.3.1. Correctives to Internal Reconstruction

Reexamination of the results of internal reconstruction
in light of classical gemination and stress, results in the
withdrawal of a number of the conclusions reached. The
evidence of vowels 41 and 42 (Tables 52-57) proved of no
value because of the synchronic complementary distribution
of the two in the Semitic Component of each known Yiddish
dialect. Comparing the evidence of vowels 21 and 22 (Tables 58-63)
with their classical counterparts (Table 76.5,6,8,21), we find
that noncomplementation is, historically speaking, a mirage.
Open Syllable Lengthening, as in the Germanic Component from
which the rule would have been taken according to the adherents
of standard theory, applied only in stressed open syllables.
Now the syllables with vowel 21 in Pan Yiddish éləl, éməs,

Table 76: Representative Comparative Prosodic Structure Sets:
The Semitic Component in Yiddish (SC) vs. Classical Tiberian (CT)

C O N T E N T S :

Historically
Short Vowels
Vowel 11.....76.1-4
Vowel 21.....76.5-8
Vowel 31.....76.9-11
Vowel 41.....76.12-15
Vowel 51.....76.16-18

Historically
Long Vowels
Vowel 12.....76.19-20
Vowel 22.....76.21-22
Vowel 32.....76.23-24
Vowel 42.....76.25-26
Vowel 52.....76.27

Historical Short
Vowels Subject to
Early Lengthening
Vowel 13b.....76.28
Vowel 25 .....76.29

Historical Diphthongs
Vowel 34(/24).....76.30

76.1 SC stressed open syllabic vowel 11 ‖ CT unstressed closed syllabic pathah:

MEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
avá$de	avá$de	wad$dáʔi	'certainly'
ká$la	ká$la	kal$lṓ	'bride'
má$ke	má$ke	mak$kṓ	'plague; blow'

Table 76 (Continued)

76.2 SC stressed open syllabic vowel 11 ‖ CT unstressed open syllabic ḥatef pathaḥ:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
xáš̱mer	xáš̱mer	xáš̱mer	ḥăš̱mór	'(fig.) donkey; fool'
xáš̱nake	xáš̱nake	xáš̱nake	ḥăš̱nukú	'Chanuka festival'
xáš̱zer	xáš̱zer	xáš̱zer	ḥăš̱zír	'pig; pork; mean man'

76.3 SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 11 ‖ CT stressed/unstressed closed syllabic pathaḥ:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
máḻke	máḻke	máḻke	maḻkó	'queen'
náf̱ke	náf̱ke	náf̱ke	náf̱qá	'prostitute'
sam	sam	sam	sam	'poison'

76.4 SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 11 ‖ CT stressed closed syllabic qames:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
klal	klal	klal	kelál	'rule'
prat	prat	prat	parát	'aspect; detail'
švax	švax	švax	ševáḥ	'praise'

Table 76   (Continued.)

76.5   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 21 ‖ CT unstressed closed syllabic segol:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
hé$$sə(bet)	hé$$sə(bet)	hé$$sə(bet)	hes$$sév	'ritual seat'
hé$tər	hé$tér	hé$tér	het$tér	'permission'
hé$zək	hé$zək	hé$zék	hez$zéq	'damage'

76.6   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 21 ‖ CT unstressed open syllabic hatef segol:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
é$dəm	é$dəm	é$dəm	ʔĕ$ðóm	'Edom'
é$ləl	é$ləl	é$ləl	ʔĕ$lúl	'12th month'
é$ləl	é$məs	é$məs	ʔĕ$méθ	'true; truth'

76.7   SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 21 ‖ CT unstressed closed syllabic segol:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
éf$$sər	éf$$sər	éf$$sər	ʔef$$sòr	'maybe'
és$tər	és$tər	és$tər	ʔes$tér	'Esther'
év$jən	év$jən	év$jən	ʔev$jón	'pauper'

Table 76 (Continued)

76.8 SC stressed closed syllable vowel 21 || CT stressed closed syllable qames:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
leɛ	leɛ	lɛɛ	lɛ̄ɛ̄	'joker'
mɛs	mɛs	mɛs	mɛ̃θ	'corpse'
šɛd	šɛd	šɛ̃d	šɛ̄d	'ghost'

76.9 SC stressed open syllable vowel 31 || CT unstressed closed syllable hireq:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
ni$də	ni$də	ni$də	nid$də	'menstruous woman'
ši$kər	ši$kər	ši$kər	šik$kōr	'drunkard'
si$bə	si$bə	sf$bə	sib$bə	'reason'

76.10 SC stressed closed syllable vowel 31 || CT unstressed closed syllable hireq:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
bfl$bḷ	bfl$bḷ	bfl$bḷ	bil$būl	'frame-up'
mid$bar	mid$bar	mid$bar	mid$bōr	'desert'
sim$xe	sim$xe	sfm$xe	sim$hɔ́	'party'

Table 76 (Continued)

76.11 SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 31 || CT stressed closed syllabic hireq:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
din	din	din (~din)	din	'law'
jedíd	jedíd	jedíd	jedíd	'friend'
jarfíd	jarfíd	jarfíd	járfíd	'fair'

76.12 SC stressed open syllabic vowel 41 || CT unstressed closed syllabic qames:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
xó$ge	xó$ge	xó$ge	hog$gó	'non-Jewish holiday'

76.13 SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 41 || CT unstressed closed syllabic qames:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
kór$bn	kór$bn	kór$bn	qor$bón	'sacrifice'
ór$le	ór$le	ór$le	9or$lé	'foreskin'
xóx$me	xóx$me	xóx$me	hex$mé	'wisdom'

Table 76 (Continued)

76.14 SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 41 ‖ CT stressed closed syllabic holem:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
dōr	dɔr	dɔr	dōr	'generation'
kōs	kɔs	kɔs	kōs	'cup'
sōd	sɔd	sɔd	sōd	'secret'

76.15 SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 41 ‖ CT unstressed holem preceding disputed shewa:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
ór$xem	ór$xim	ór$xem	ʔō$rəhín / ʔōr$hím	'guests'
šōf$tem	šōf$tim	šóf$tem	šō$fětím / šóf$tim	'judges'
sóf$rem	sóf$rim	sóf$rem	sō$fěrím / sōf$rím	'scribes'

Table 76   (Continued)

76.16   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 51 ∥ CT unstressed closed syllabic shureq/qibbus:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
jɛrí$šə̌	jɛrú$šə	jɛró$šə	jɛrúš$šə́	'inheritance'
ší$təf	šú$təf	šó$təf	šút$tə́f	'partner'
xí$pe	xú$pe	xó$pe	hup$pə́	'canopy'

76.17   SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 51 ∥ CT unstressed closed syllabic shureq/qibbus:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
gíz$me	gúz$me	góz$me	guz$mə́	'exaggeration'
matíš$təš	matúš$təš	matúš$təš	mɛtuš$tə̌š	'confused'
xíc$pe	xúc$pe	xóc$pe	hus$pə́	'insolence'

76.18   SC stressed closed syllabic vowel 51 ∥ CT stressed closed syllabic shureq:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
gíf	guf	góf	gúf	'body'
mím	mum	mom	mūm	'blemish'
zxís	zxus	zɛxós	zɛxū̃θ	'merit'

Table 76   (Continued)

76.19   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 12 ‖ CT unstressed open syllabic qames:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
kú$ved	kó$ved	kó$ved	kōvōd	'honour'
lí$šn	lí$šn	ló$šn	lōšōn	'language'
šú$lem	šó$lem	šó$lem	šɔ$lōm	'peace'

76.20   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 12 ‖ CT stressed open syllabic qames:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
li šmú	li šmó	li šmó	li šamá	'for its own sake'

76.21   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 22 ‖ CT unstressed open syllabic sere:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
brái$re	bré$re	bré$re	berēšrá	'choice'
mačái$fe	mačé$fe	mačé$fe	maggēšfɔ	'plague'
maj$le	mej$le	mej$le	mēlɔ	'in any case'

76.22   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 22 ‖ CT stressed open syllabic sere:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
paj	pej	pej	pē	'the letter [p]'
faj	fej	fej	fē	'the letter [f]'

Table 76 (Continued)

76.23   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 32 || CT unstressed open syllabic hireq:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
bəki$əs	bəki$əs	bəki$əs	bəqi$?üə	'expertise'
tfi$sə	tfi$sə	tfi$sə	təfi$sɔ̃	'jail'
xsi$mə	xsi$mə	xsi$mə	hãɛi$mɔ̃	'signature'

76.24   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 32 || CT stressed open syllabic hireq:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
çvi	çvi	çvi	səvi̥	'Zevi [proper forename]'

76.25   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 42 || CT unstressed open syllabic holem:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
gɔ́.j$rḷ	géj$rḷ	góu$rḷ	gɔ̄$rɔ̄l	'destiny; fate'
mɔ́j$rə	méj$rə	móu$rə	mō$rɔ̃	'fear'
šɔ́j$tə	šéj$tə	šóu$tə	šō$té	'fool'

Table 76 (Continued)

76.26   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 42 || CT' stressed open syllabic holem:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
óiǰ$šer	éjǰ$šer	óuǰ$šer	góǰ$šer	'wealthy man'
rój$šəm	réj$šəm	róu$šəm	ró$šem	'(great) impression'
xój$šex	xéj$šex	xóu$šex	hó$šex	'(great) darkness'

76.27   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 52 || CT unstressed open syllabic shureq/qibbus:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
asf$sə	asú$sə	asú$sə	ʔəsú$θə	'Bless you! [upon sneezing]'
melí$xe	malú$xe	malú$xe	melú$xɔ	'government; kingdom'
xavrí$sə	xavrú$sə	xavrú$sə	havrú$θɔ	'Talmudic study group; gang'

76.28   SC stressed open syllabic vowel 13b || CT stressed open syllabic pathah:

MEY	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
jərisəlá$jem	jərušɔlá$jem	jərušɔlá$jim	jərušɔlá$jim	'Jerusalem'
ná$xes	ná$xes	ná$xes	ná$haθ	'satisfaction'
pá$xed	pá$xed	pá$xed	pá$had	'fear'

Table 76 (Continued)

76.29 SC stressed open syllabic vowel 25 || CT stressed open syllabic segol:

MEX	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
béj$ged	béj$ged	bē$ged	bé$yeđ	'garment'
réj$ge	ré$ge	rā$ge	ré$yaʕ	'moment'
téj$ve	té$ve	tē$ve	té$vaʕ	'habit; nature'

76.30 SC stressed open syllabic vowel 34 (~ 24) || CT intervocalic ʔ and ʕ:

MEX	NEY	NWY	CT	Yiddish Gloss
dá$ge	dáj$ge	déj$ge	daʔăḡâ	'worry'
mã$le	maj$le	méj$le	maʕălâ	'virtue; advantage'
šã$le	šáj$le	šéj$le	šeʔēlâ	'(traditional) question requiring juridical ruling'
		(~ sã$le)		

hétər may indeed be stressed and open in all known varities
of Yiddish. Taking into account the prosodic structure of
the classical forms (Table 76.5,6) we find that all three
were originally unstressed and would have been immune to
Early Lengthening in the history of Yiddish (§4.3; Table 11)
at which time stress had not yet shifted to penultimate
position (§7.3; Table 38). The relevant syllable in the
third cited item was originally closed and was opened
secondarily in the history of Yiddish in consequence of
consonantal degemination. Proceeding to vowels 11 and
12 (Tables 64-69), we find that the classical cognates
of avádə, kálə and mákə (Table 76.1) are both unstressed
and in closed syllables, i.e. doubly immune to lengthening,
and historically speaking, in perfect complementary distribution
with vowel 12. Open Syllable Lengthening is only
coincidentally spurious in the synchronic phonology of the
modern Semitic Component because of historical stress shift
and degemination. Analogously, the spurious forms derived
via Open Syllable Lengthening amongst the high vowels (Tables
70-75) are cognate with unstressed closed syllabic classical
forms (cf. Table 76,9,16). The entire evidence of internal
reconstruction is thus rendered untenable because on purely
internal evidence, one is not in a position to reconstruct
sound shifts which have left no trace within the system of
the analyzed language (stress shift and degemination).

Nevertheless, we do not consider the procedure to have been a waste. To the contrary, the disconfirmation of the results of the internal reconstruction undertaken itself leads us to vital new questions that must be confronted in any comprehensive solution of the history of Semitic Component vocalism. Inherent in the procedure of internal reconstruction followed was the comparison of vowels participating in alternations with the same vowels in open and closed syllables in nonalternating forms. The inherent limitation of the method is that the possibility of a third relevant vowel is not considered. Now the prosodic comparison undertaken (which nullified the internal results) showed that the vowels synchronically in stressed open syllabic position were, in the classical language, in unstressed syllables, in closed syllables or both. This leads us to a new way of determining whether vowels 42, 22 and 12 in alternating (and nonalternating) forms are the result of Open Syllable Lengthening. Let us seek to determine whether vowels identical with vowels 41, 21 and 11 in the classical language (although not necessarily identical with them in Yiddish) occur in (originally) stressed open syllables, and if they do, let us follow their fate in the Semitic Component of the several Yiddish dialects.

9.3.2. Vowels 41 and 42

Vowel 41 occurs in the Semitic Component in stressed open syllabic position in one known lexical item only ——

xógə 'non-Jewish holiday', but the Classical Tiberian cognate

is ḥɔgŝgố, and once again, the cognate classical vowel is

neither in stressed nor in open syllabic position (cf. Table

76.12). All other occurrences of vowel 41 in the Semitic

Component are in closed syllables (Table 76.13-15). Those

closed syllabic instances of Semitic Component 41 cognate

with Classical Tiberian unstressed holem before disputed

shewa (and which can, therefore, be interpreted in Classical

Hebrew as being in open or closed syllables) would have

been immune to Lengthening because they lacked stress which

is just as vital a part of the structural description of

Lengthening as is open syllabic position (cf. Table 76.15).

The important point is that Semitic Component vowel 41 is

never cognate with any stressed open syllabic Classical

Hebrew vowel which would have been vulnerable to Lengthening.

Limited comparative evidence therefore fails to confirm or

to disconfirm Open Syllable Lengthening with respect to

vowel 41.

9.3.3. Vowels 21, 22 and 25

Vowel 21 in Semitic Component stressed open syllabic

position is cognate with Tiberian unstressed open syllabic

hatef segol (a virtual allograph of segol). Unlike the various

cognates of vowel 41, stressed open syllabic segol does indeed

occur in Tiberian. It constitutes a breakthrough for the

reconstruction of the relevant protovowels. Now Tiberian
stressed open syllabic segol is cognate with neither 21 nor
22 but with Pan Yiddish vowel 25, a diaphoneme resulting
from Germanic Component Open Syllable Lengthening (cf. §4.3;
Table 11).   According to the accepted theories, which
insist that   originally the Semitic Component was
characterized by five short vowels which then underwent
lengthening, all three diaphonemes, 21, 22 and 25, would
ultimately result from a unitary Proto Yiddish */ẽ/ phoneme
as illustrated in Table 77. In following through the
position maintained by standard theory in an attempt to
confirm or disconfirm, we have framed the environments
from which each of the three diaphonemes result from the
presumed unitary Proto Yiddish */ẽ/.   Working from the
correspondences between vowels 21, 22 and 25 and the
prosodic structure of their classical cognates (Table 76.5-
8, 21-22, 29) it is readily determined that vowel 21 (Pan
Yiddish ɛ) results in closed syllables (e.g. éfšər 'maybe',
šɛd 'ghost' [alternating with plural MEY šájdəm ‖ NEY šéjdim ‖
NWY šéjdəm with vowel 22]) and originally unstressed open and
closed syllables (e.g. éməs 'true'; hétər 'rabbinical
permission'); vowel 22 in open syllables regardless of original
stress (e.g. MEY brájrə 'choice', sájfər '(traditional) book' ‖
NEY bréjrə, séjfər ‖ NWY bréjrə, séjfər); vowel 25 in
originally stressed open syllables (e.g. MEY réjgə 'moment' ‖

Table 77: Experimental Sound Shift: Open Syllable Lengthening of a Unitary Proto Yiddish */ẽ/ in the Semitic Component

*/ẽ/

Vowel 21 (Pan Yiddish ɛ) in closed syllables & originally unstressed open and closed syllables
e.g. éfsər, ǎed, émaɛ, hétər

Vowel 22 (MEY aj NEY ej ‖ NWY ej) in open syllables
e.g. MEY brájrə, sájfər
NEY bréjrə, séjfər
NWY brɛ́jrə, sɛ́jfər

Vowel 25 (MEY ej ‖ NEY ɛ ‖ NWY ǟ) in stressed open syllables
e.g. MEY réjgə
NEY rɛ́gə
NWY régə
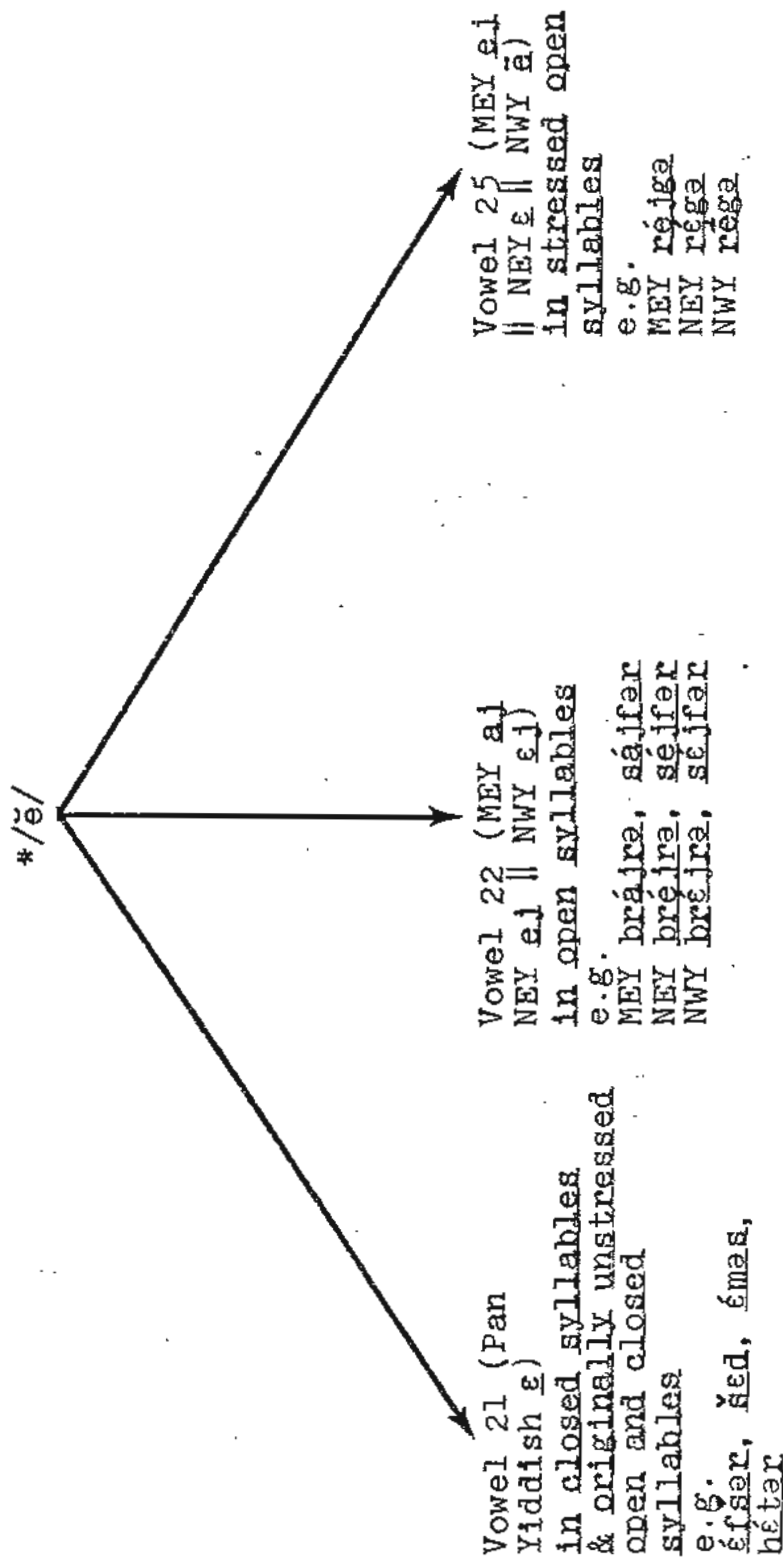
NEY régə ‖ NWY régə). Turning from this general statement to a proposed sound shift in the more narrow sense of the term, including isolated environments, we will be able to test its viability. The two most obvious possibilities are illustrated in Table 78. The first is a hypothesis that original */ĕ/ is processed by Lengthening and becomes vowel 22 in all open syllables. This shift clearly fails to account for the data. Although it correctly leaves closed syllabic éfšər, šɛd, hétər untouched and correctly gives MEY brájrə, sájfər ‖ NEY bréjrə, séjfər ‖ NWY bréjrə, séjfər, it also produces spurious MEY •ájməs, •rájgə ‖ NEY •éjməs, •réjgə ‖ NWY •éjməs, •réjgə. Discarding this possibility, we proceed to examine its opposite number, Open Syllable Lengthening of an original */ĕ/ to vowel 25 (Table 78, column 2). This shift correctly leaves closed syllabic éfšər, šɛd, hétər untouched, and correctly gives MEY réjgə ‖ NEY régə ‖ NWY régə. It also produces spurious MEY •éjməs, •bréjrə, •séjfər ‖ NEY •brérə, •séfər ‖ NWY •éməs, •brérə, •séfər (Northeastern Yiddish has fewer spurious forms because the dialect has merged vowels 21 and 25 as unitary Northeastern Yiddish $\varepsilon_{21/25}$). Trying to salvage standard theory by further specifying the environment with respect to (original) stress assignment is equally futile. The four most salient possibilities within this more specific framework are

Table 78:   Consequences of General Open
Syllable Lengthening of Unitary */ĕ/

1. */ĕ/ > Vowel 22 in (all) open syllables	2. */ĕ/ > Vowel 25 in (all) open syllables
ɛ́fšər, šɛd, hétər	ɛ́fšər, šɛd, hétər
MEY •áiməs NEY •éiməs NWY •ɛ́iməs	MEY •éiməs NEY éməs NWY •éməs
MEY brájrə NEY bréjrə NWY bréjrə	MEY •bréjrə NEY •brérə NWY •brérə
MEY sájfər NEY séjfər NWY séjfər	MEY •séjfər NEY •séfər NWY •séfər
MEY •rájgə NEY •réjgə NWY •réjgə	MEY réjgə NEY régə NWY régə

illustrated in Table 79.   Column 1 illustrates */ĕ/ > vowel
22 in stressed open syllables, which gives spurious •brérə
(Proto */ĕ/ would escape Lengthening because of the originally
ultimate stress assignment; cf. Table 76.21) and spurious
MEY •rájgə ‖ NEY •réjgə ‖ NWY •réjgə. Column 2 examines
the consequences of */ĕ/ > vowel 25 in stressed open syllables,
which gives spurious •brérə and MEY •séjfər ‖ NEY •séfər ‖
NWY •séfər.   Attempting to restrict the rule to originally
unstressed syllables (not a very likely alternative on phonetic
grounds), Column 3 tests */ĕ/ > vowel 22 in originally
unstressed syllables, giving spurious MEY •ájməs, •séfər,
•régə ‖ NEY •ájməs, •séfər ‖ NWY •ájməs, •séfər, •régə.
Finally, */ĕ/ > vowel 25 in unstressed open syllables is
examined in Column 4 and is found to give spurious MEY •éjməs,
•bréjrə, •séfər, •régə ‖ NEY •brérə, •séfər ‖ NWY •ēməs,
•brĕrə, •séfər, •régə.

Any number of additional routes could be dreamed
up (e.g. Proto */ĕ/ > gives 25 in originally stressed open
syllables, vowel 22 in originally unstressed open syllables)
but the exercise would be equally futile and there is really
no point in carrying out additional experiments on the
fallacious sound shift espoused by standard theory. It is
far more interesting to examine the logical fallacy of the
standard opinion.   The only way to derive three distinct
reflexes (vowels 21, 22 and 25) from a unitary protovowel

Table 79: Logical Alternatives and Practical Consequences of Limited Open Syllable Lengthening of a Unitary Proto Yiddish */ẽ/ in the Semitic Component

1. */ẽ/ > Vowel 22 in stressed open syllables	2. */ẽ/ > Vowel 25 in stressed open syllables	3. */ẽ/ > Vowel 22 in originally unstressed open syllables	4. */ẽ/ > Vowel 25 in originally unstressed open syllables
éfšǝr, šēd, héter	éfšǝr, šēd, héter	éfšǝr, šēd, héter	éfšǝr, šēd, héter
émes	émes	MEY •ájmes NEY •éjmes NWY •éjmes	MEY •éjmes NEY •émes NWY •émes
•brére	•brére	MEY brájre NEY bréjre NWY bréjre	MEY •brájre NEY •bréjre NWY •brére
MEY sájfǝr NEY séjfǝr NWY séjfǝr	MEY •séjfǝr NEY •séfǝr NWY •sáfǝr	•séfer	•séfer
MEY •rájgǝ NEY •réjgǝ NWY •réjgǝ	MEY réjgǝ NEY réžgǝ NWY régǝ	MEY •régǝ NEY •régǝ NWY •régǝ	MEY •régǝ NEY •régǝ NWY •régǝ

is to demonstrate differences in conditioning environments
relatable to distinct reflexes.   This could not be attained
in the case at hand because of double overlap of environment
(single overlap would, of course, be sufficient to disconfirm
the derivation of all three vowels from a single source).   The
double overlap is illustrated in Table 80 by the two wavy
lined boxes.   The first overlap is that of the originally
unstressed open syllabic environment, shared by the types
Pan Yiddish émǝs (vowel 21) and MEY brájrǝ ‖ NEY bréjrǝ ‖
NWY bréjrǝ (vowel 22).   The second encompasses the
originally stressed open syllabic environment, shared by
the types MEY sájfǝr ‖ NEY séjfǝr ‖ NWY séjfǝr (vowel 22)
and MEY réjgǝ ‖ NEY régǝ ‖ NWY régǝ (vowel 25).

The only possible explanation is that vowels 21, 22
and 25 stem from two distinct protovowels, one of which
was subject to lengthening in a specified environment.   The
obvious candidate is vowel 21 which was processed by
Lengthening to vowel 25 in stressed open syllables.   The
proposed scenario is illustrated in Table 81. Vowel 21/25
results from Proto Yiddish *e which was lengthened in stressed
open syllables to 25 (hence MEY réjgǝ ‖ NEY régǝ ‖ NWY régǝ)
and remained e (21) in all other positions (hence Pan Yiddish
éfšǝr, šad, émǝs, bétǝr). Vowel 22 results from Proto Yiddish
*ē, an originally long vowel which underwent various phonetic
changes in various dialects but which was never subjected to
phonemic split (hence MEY brájrǝ, sájfǝr ‖ NEY bréjrǝ, séjfǝr ‖

Table 80: The Fallacy of Open Syllable Lengthening of a Unitary Proto Yiddish */è/ in the Semitic Component

Environment:	(originally) closed syllables (Vowel 21)	originally unstressed open syllables (Vowel 21)	(any) open syllables (Vowel 22)	stressed open syllables (Vowel 25)
Representative Semitic Component Types (Mideastern, Northeastern and Northwestern Yiddish)	éfsər, šéd, héter	émäs (originally unstressed)	brájrə ‖ bréjrə ‖ bréjrə (originally unstressed)	
			sájfər ‖ séjfər ‖ séjfər (originally stressed)	réjgə ‖ réjgə ‖ régə régə (originally stressed)

Table 81:   Proposed Scenario: Two Proto Yiddish ɛ Phonemes

*ẽ ⟶ Vowel 22

in (all) open
syllables
e.g. MEY brájrə,
sájfer || NEY
brejrə, séjfer ||
NWY bréjrə,
séjfer

*ɛ

Vowel 25

in stressed open
syllables (via Open
Syllable Lengthening)
e.g. MEY réjgə || NEY
réjgə || NWY régə

Vowel 21

in closed
syllables & originally
unstressed open syllables
e.g. éfser, sed,
émes, héter
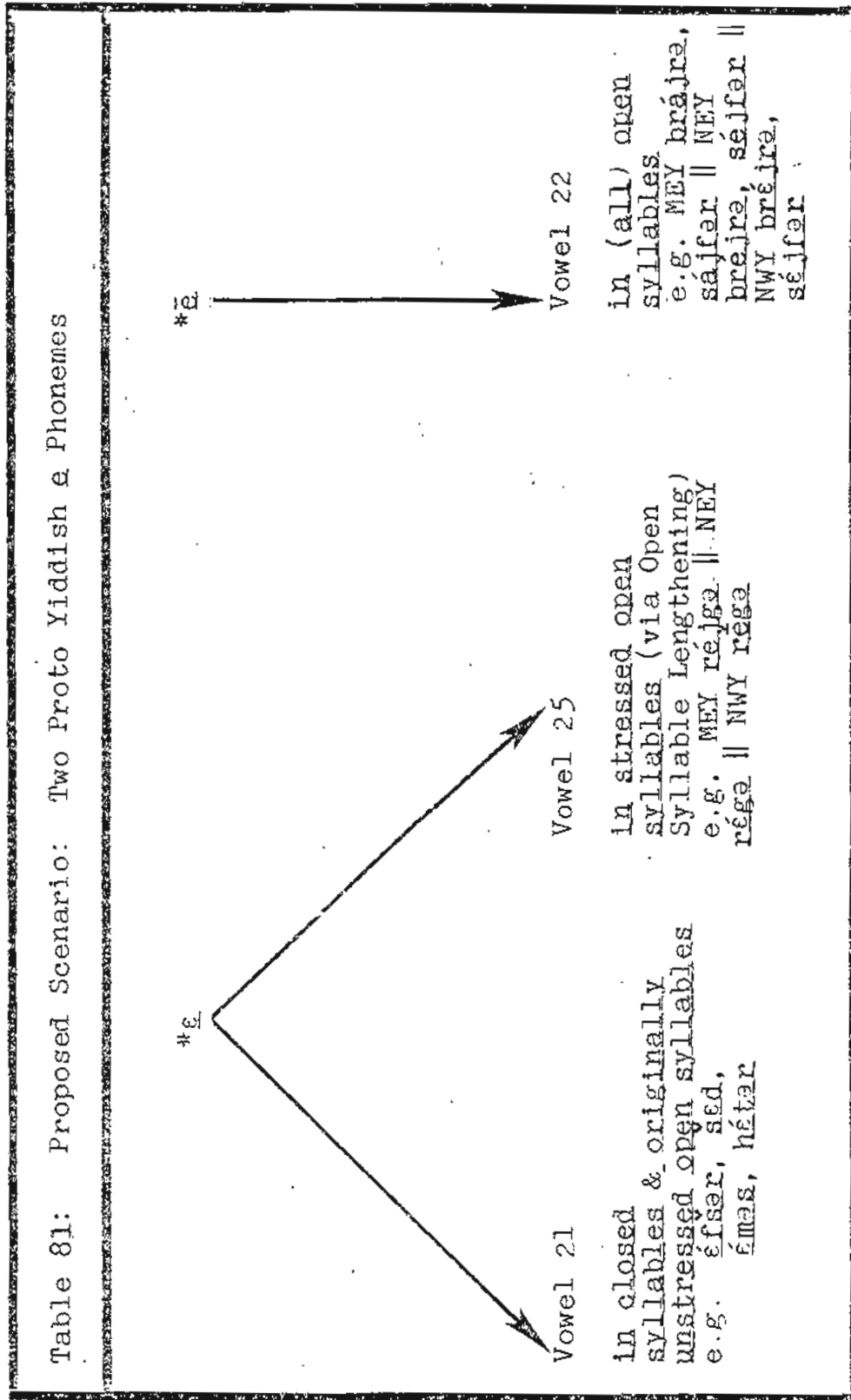
NWY bréjrə, séjfər). The effects of the proposed scenario,
along with the relevant conditioning environments, are
sketched in Table 82.

To sum up, the Semitic Component e vowels cannot
derive from a five vowel system of the Sephardic or
Palestinian variety (cf. Table 51). They derive from a
system which distinguished two e phonemes. Whether these
were distinguished by quality alone (e vs. ɛ) as in the
seven vowel interpretation of Tiberian vocalism (Table 47),
by quantity alone (é vs. ĕ) as in the Kimchian version
of Tiberian (Table 48) or by both (ē vs. ɛ) as in the
qualitative-quantitative interpretation (Table 49) is not
particularly important from a phonological point of view
where the fact of opposition is the only relevant matter.
If a choice is to be made, however, we prefer the
qualitative-quantitative version which is more in accord
with the phonological history of Yiddish dialects and parallel
Germanic developments. Besides disproving the Sephardic type
protosystem espoused by standard theory, reconstruction
further disconfirms the possibility of a Babylonian-like
system (Table 50). No known variety of Yiddish exhibits
a merger of a and a phonemes. Having reduced the number
of possibilities with respect to the mid front vowels, let
us turn to the mid back and low vowels.

Table 82: Effects of the Proposed Scenario

1. *ɛ̣ > Vowel 25 [i.e. is processed by Open Syllable Lengthening] in originally stressed open syllables	2. *ɛ̣ > Vowel 21 [i.e. remains short] in all other positions	3. *ạ̄ > Vowel 22 [i.e. remains long] in (all) open syllables
MEY réjgə NEY régə NWY régə	Pan Yiddish éčšer, šed, émeṣ, héter	MEY brájrə, sájfer NEY bréjrə, séjfer NWY hréjrə, séjfer

9.3.4. Vowels 11, 12 and 13b

Vowel 11 in Semitic Component stressed open syllabic position is cognate with Tiberian unstressed closed syllabic pathah (Table 76.1), and with Tiberian unstressed open syllabic hatef pathah (Table 76.2). Like stressed open syllabic segol, stressed open syllabic pathah occurs in Tiberian, once again affording us the opportunity of following its development in Yiddish with an eye toward comparison with the more common reflexes of qames and pathah in Yiddish. Unlike stressed open syllabic segol, the reflexes of stressed open syllabic pathah do not coincide entirely (i.e. geographically and phonologically) with those of any one Germanic Component vowel. For the sake of clarity, Germanic Component vowel 13 (cf. above Table 1.11), giving Southwestern and Midwestern (collectively Southern Western) Yiddish $\bar{a}$ (merged with Western Yiddish $\bar{a}_{24/44}$), Mideastern Yiddish u, Northeastern Yiddish $\flat$ and Northwestern Yiddish $\bar{q}$ (the latter three merged with the local reflexes of vowel 12) may be renamed vowel 13a. Semitic Component reflexes of lengthened a vowels may be called vowel 13b. In dialects other than Southern Western Yiddish, Germanic Component vowel 13a was rounded to Old Yiddish $*\bar{o}_{13a}$ and developed thereafter in complete unison with vowel 12 with which it merged. Semitic Component vowel 13b —— cognate with stressed open syllabic pathah ——

remained identical with vowel 13a only on the territory of
Southern Western Yiddish where 13a never rounded and therefore
never merged with 12 (hence Southern Western Yiddish $\bar{a}_{13ab/24/44}$).
In Northwestern Yiddish 13b retained its unrounded quality
(while 13a merged with 12) giving Northwestern Yiddish $\bar{a}_{13b/24/44}$.
In the greater part of Eastern Yiddish (including Northeastern,
Southeastern and the more easterly portions of Mideastern Yiddish)
Semitic Component vowel 13b lost length and remerged with its
etymon, vowel 11. In an area roughly congruent with Congress
Poland, vowel 13b retains length, appearing as $\bar{a}$, merged with
Mideastern Yiddish $\bar{a}_{34}$ (e.g. $n\bar{a}n$ 'nine', $v\bar{a}n$ 'wine'). Needless
to say, our reconstruction can proceed using evidence from
those areas where 13b retains an identity separate from the
other two vowels under consideration —— 11 and 12. Two
of our three sample dialects, Mideastern and Northwestern
Yiddish, meet this criterion but for the sake of consistency
all three will be used to support the representation of the
diaphoneme. Note that Mideastern Yiddish is used in this
section in the more restricted sense of the territory
of Congress Poland and especially of its more westerly regions.

According to accepted theory, which insists that
the Semitic Component was originally characterized by five
short vowels which secondarily underwent lengthening, all
three diaphonemes, 11, 12 and 13b, would ultimately result from
a unitary Proto Yiddish */$\breve{a}$/ phoneme as illustrated in Table

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83.   Once again, it is necessary,   in order to follow
through the position maintained by standard theory, to frame
the environments from which each of the three diaphonemes
are presumed to result from a unitary Proto Yiddish */ã/.
Working from the correspondences between vowels 11, 12
and 13b and the prosodic structure of their classical
cognates (Table 76.1-4, 19-20, 28), it is readily determined
that vowel 11 (Pan Yiddish a, except in Southeastern Yiddish
where it has been rounded in most environments to ɔ, merging
with vowel 41; cf. above Table 8) results in closed syllables
(e.g. málkə 'queen', prat 'detail' [alternating with plural MEY
prútəm ‖ NEY prótim ‖ NWY prótəm with vowel 12]) and
originally unstressed open and closed syllables (e.g. xázər
'pig', avádə 'certainly'); vowel 12 in open syllables regardless
of original stress (e.g. MEY šúləm 'peace', lišmú 'for itself' ‖
NEY šáləm, lišmó ‖ NWY šóləm, lišmó) vowel 13b in originally
stressed open syllables (e.g. MEY páxəd 'fear' ‖ NEY páxəd ‖
NWY páxəd). Turning from this general statement to a proposed
sound shift in the more narrow sense of the term, once again
including isolated environments, we will be able to test its
viability.   The two most obvious possibilities are
illustrated in Table 84. The results encountered are
analogous to those obtained from application of the same
procedure to vowels 21, 22 and 25 (§9.3.3). Application
of */ã/ > vowel 12 in open syllables (Table 84, column 1),
while correctly leaving malkə, prat and avádə untouched, and

Table 83: Experimental Sound Shift: Open Syllable Lengthening of a
Unitary Proto Yiddish */ã/ in the Semitic Component

*/ã/

Vowel 11 (MEY ‖ NEY ‖
NWY a)
in closed syllables
& originally unstressed
open & closed syllables
e.g.
málke, prat,
xázer, aváde

Vowel 12 (MEY u ‖ NEY
a ‖ NWY ō)
in open syllables
e.g.
MEY gúlem, líšmú
NEY gálem, líšmǫ
NWY gōlem, líšmǫ

Vowel 13b (MEY ā ‖
NEY a ‖ NWY ā)
in stressed open
syllables
e.g.
MEY páxed
NEY páxed
NWY páxed
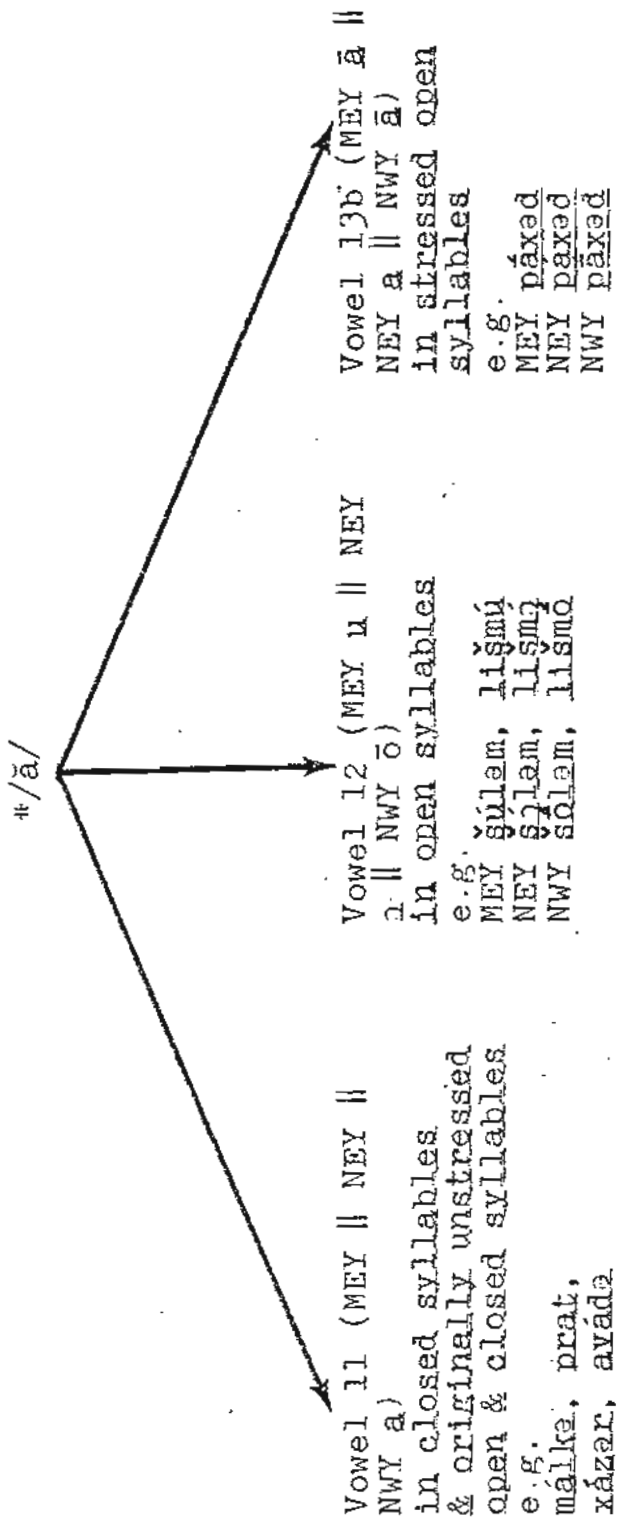
Table 84: Consequences of General Open Syllable Lengthening of Unitary */ǎ/	
1. */ǎ/ > Vowel 12 in (all) open syllables	2. */ǎ/ > Vowel 13b in (all) open syllables
málkə, prat, avádə	málkə, prat, avádə
MEY •xúzər NEY •xɔ́zər NWY •xózər	MEY •xázər NEY xázər NWY •xázər
MEY šúləm NEY šɔ́ləm NWY šóləm	MEY •šáləm NEY •šáləm NWY •šáləm
MEY lišmú NEY lišmɔ́ NWY lišmó	MEY •lišmá NEY •lišmá NWY •lišmá
MEY •púxəd NEY •pɔ́xəd NWY •póxəd	MEY páxəd NEY páxəd NWY páxəd

correctly giving MEY šúləm, lišmú ‖ NEY šôləm, lišmó ‖ NWY šôləm, lišmô, also produces spurious MEY •xúzər, •púxəd ‖ NEY •xôzər, •pôxəd ‖ NWY •xôzər, •pôxəd. Its opposite number, application of */ă/ > vowel 13b in open syllables (Table 84, column 2), while leaving málkə, prat and aváda untouched, and correctly giving MEY páxəd ‖ NEY páxəd ‖ NWY páxəd, generates spurious MEY •xázər, •šáləm, •lišmá ‖ NEY •šáləm, •lišmá ‖ NWY •xázər, •šáləm, •lišmá. Here again, trying to salvage standard theory by further specifying the environment with respect to (original) stress assignment is equally futile. The four most salient possibilities are illustrated in Table 85. Column 1 illustrates */ă/ > vowel 12 in stressed open syllables, which gives spurious •šáləm (Proto */ă/ would escape Lengthening because of the originally ultimate stress assignment; cf. Table 76.19) and spurious MEY •púxəd ‖ NEY •púxəd ‖ NWY •pôxəd. Column 2 examines the consequences of */ă/ > vowel 13b in stressed open syllables, giving spurious •šáləm and MEY •lišmá ‖ NEY •lišmá ‖ NWY •lišmá. Restricting the sound shift to unstressed syllables, column 3 examines */ă/ > vowel 12 in unstressed open syllables, which gives spurious •lišmá and MEY •xúzər, •páxəd ‖ NEY •xôzər ‖ NWY •xôzər, •páxəd. Finally, column 4 disconfirms */ă/ > vowel 13b in (originally) unstressed open syllables, which gives •lišmá and MEY •xázər, •šáləm, •páxəd ‖ NEY •šáləm ‖ NWY •xázər, •šáləm, •páxəd.

Table 85: Logical Alternatives and Practical Consequences of Limited Open Syllable Lengthening of a Unitary Proto Yiddish */ă/ in the Semitic Component

1. */ă/ > Vowel 12 in stressed open syllables	2. */ă/ > Vowel 13b in stressed open syllables	3. */ă/ > Vowel 12 in originally unstressed open syllables	4. */ă/ > Vowel 13b in originally unstressed open syllables
málke, prat, aváde	málke, prat, aváde	málke, prat, aváde	málke, prat, aváde
xázer	xázer	MEY •xízer NEY •xázer NWY •xázer	MEY •xázer NEY xázer NWY •xázer
•šálem	•šálem	MEY šúlem NEY sólem NWY sólem	MEY •šálem NEY •šálem NWY •šálem
MEY lišmí NEY lišmó NWY lišmo	MEY •lišmá NEY •lišmá NWY •lišmá	•lišmá	•lišmá
MEY •píxed NEY •píxed NWY •póxed	MEY páxed NEY páxed NWY páxed	MEY •páxed NEY páxed NWY •páxed	MEY •páxed NEY páxed NWY •páxed

Rather than construct further spurious sound shifts, we turn to determining the fallacy of standard theory. It is, in fact, the same fallacy encountered above with respect to vowels 21, 22 and 25 (§9.3.3). There is a double overlap of environment, illustrated by the two wavy line boxes in Table 86. The environment of xázǝr (originally unstressed open syllabic) overlaps completely with that of MEY šúlǝm ‖ NEY šólǝm ‖ NWY šōlǝm. That of MEY lišmú ‖ NEY lišmó ‖ NWY lišmō (originally stressed open syllabic) overlaps with that of MEY páxǝd ‖ NEY páxǝd ‖ NWY páxǝd.

The only possible explanation is that vowels 11, 12 and 13b stem from two protovowels, one of which was subject to lengthening. Naturally the candidate for lengthening is that vowel for which lengthening can be posited as a shift conditioned by a definable environment. The proposed scenario is illustrated in Table 87. Proto Yiddish $*a_{11/13}$ underwent lengthening to vowel 13 (13a in the Germanic Component, 13b in the Semitic Component) in stressed open syllables, and remained short (vowel 11) in all other environments. Vowel 12 was long and has remained long. The effects of the proposed scenario, using protovowels and specified conditioning environments as the point of departure, are illustrated in Table 88.

Table 86: The Fallacy of Open Syllable Lengthening of a Unitary
Proto Yiddish */ā/ in the Semitic Component

Environment:	(originally) closed syllables (Vowel 11)	originally unstressed open syllables (Vowel 11)	(any) open syllables (Vowel 12)	stressed open syllables (Vowel 13b)
Representative Semitic Component Types (Mideastern, Northeastern and Northwestern Yiddish)	málke, mrat, aváde	xázer (originally unstressed)	šúlem ‖ šôlem ‖ šólem (originally unstressed)	
			lišmú ‖ lišmô ‖ lišmô lišmô (originally stressed)	páxed ‖ páxed ‖ páxed páxed (originally stressed)

Table 87:   Proposed Scenario: Two Proto Yiddish a/ɔ Phonemes:

*a

Vowel 11

in closed syllables &
originally unstressed
open syllables
e.g. málkə, prat,
avadə, xázər

Vowel 13b

in stressed open
syllables (via Open
Syllable Lengthening)
e.g. MEY páxəd ‖
NEY páxəd ‖ NWY
páxəd

*ɔ̃

Vowel 12

in (all) open
syllables,
e.g. MEY súləm,
lišmí ‖ NEY šóləm,
lišmə̀ ‖ NWY sóləm,
lišmɔ̀
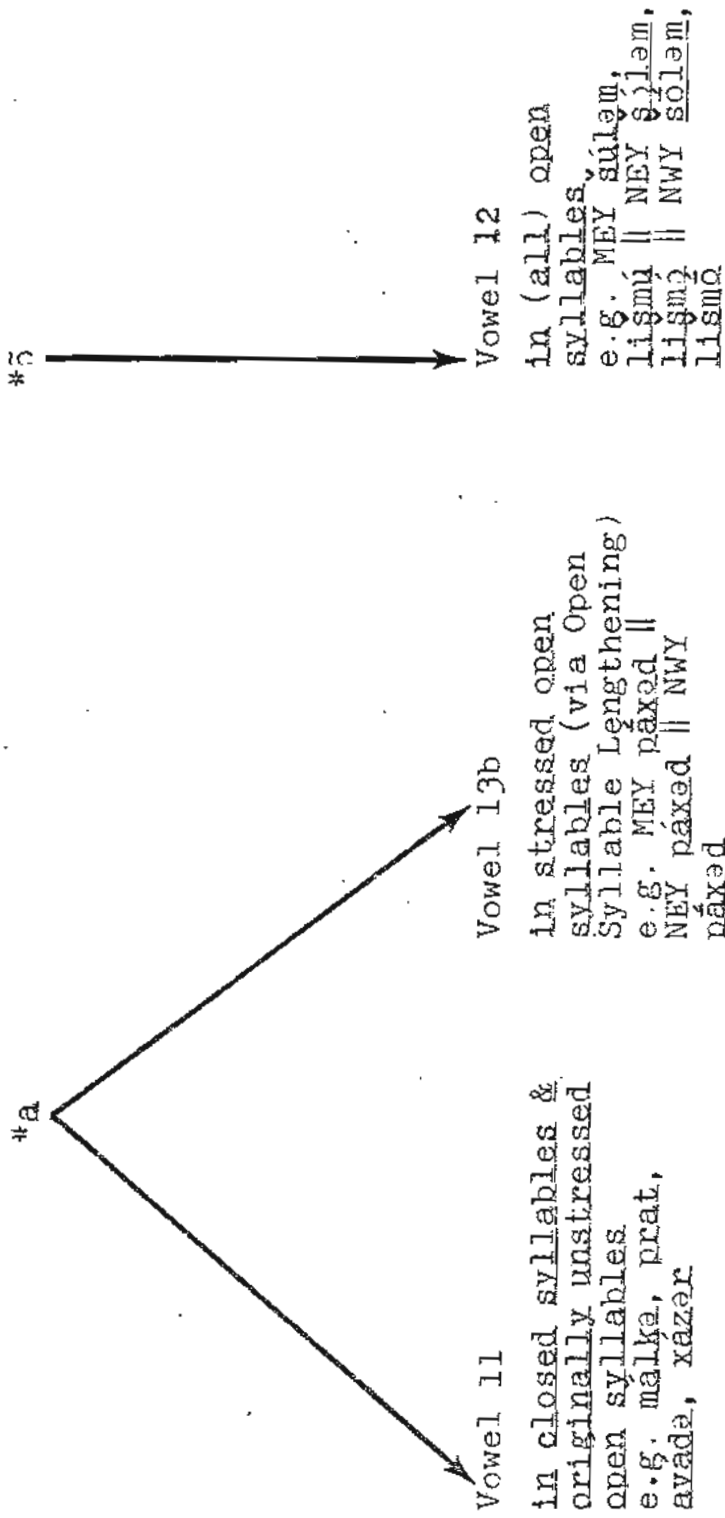
Table 88: Effects of the Proposed Scenario

1. *a > Vowel 13b [i.e. is processed by Open Syllable Lengthening] in originally stressed open syllables	2. *a > Vowel 11 [i.e. remains short] in all other positions	3. *ā > vowel 12 [i.e. remains long] in (all) open syllables
MEY páxed NEY páxed NWY páxed	MEY, NEY, NWY málkǝ, prat, xázer, avádǝ	MEY šúlǝm, lišmú NEY šólǝm, lišmí NWY šólǝm, lišmó

Reconstruction of the mid back and low vowels is
symmetrical with the results obtained from the mid front
vowels.   The Semitic Component vowel system cannot derive
from a five vowel system of the Sephardic or Palestinian
variety (cf. Table 51).   It derives from a system which
distinguishes two lower mid and low vowels, 11/13 and 12
(in addition, of course, to the nondisputed 41 and 42).
Whether the Proto Yiddish cognates of Tiberian qames
and pathah were distinguished by quality alone ($ɔ$ vs. a) as
in the seven vowel interpretation of Tiberian vocalism (Table
47), by quantity alone ($ā$ vs. a) as in the Kimchian version
of Tiberian (Table 48) or by both ($ɔ̄$ vs. a) as in the
qualitative-quantitative interpretation (Table 49) is of
secondary interest.   The opposition between the two is the
only phonologically important fact.   If a choice is to be
made, however, we again opt for the qualitative-quantitative
version which is more in accord with the evidence of Yiddish
dialectology (vowel 12 invariably appears as a long rounded
vowel or a reflex thereof in a non-length distinguishing area),
German dialectology (cf. Nagl 1901) and Hebrew manuscript
evidence (cf. Birnbaum 1931).

9.3.5.   Vowels 31 and 32

The phonemic opposition between vowels 31 and 32 in
open syllabic position in the Semitic Component of Yiddish

dialects is a secondary development resulting directly from stress shift and degemination. By experimentally reinstating ultimate stress assignment and consonantal gemination, the distribution between the two is rendered complementary. Thus, for example, the 31. vs. 32 opposition in Mideastern Yiddish xídəš 'new/original idea; remarkable event' vs. xsídəs 'Chassidism', while synchronically valid, is historically complementary because the i vowel in the first cited item was originally in unstressed closed syllabic position, that of the second item in open syllabic position (cf. Classical Tiberian ḥidåšdűš̌ vs. ḥǎsiåšǒűə). The residual evidence of open vs. closed syllabic alternation of 32 and 31 in Yiddish dialects (cf. §§ 9.2.4, 9.2.41) indicates that these two form an integral part of the process that has resulted in the alternations even if the distinction was at first allophonic. Length distinguishing versions of Tiberian likewise regard the two as complementary in Classical Hebrew (cf. Tables 48-49; 76.9,23).

9.3.6. Vowels 51 and 52

The situation is analogous to that of vowels 31 and 32. Synchronic open syllabic oppositions are historically complementary. Thus, for example, the opposition between Mideastern Yiddish i_{51} and $ī_{52}$ and Northwestern Yiddish $\bar{o}_{51}$

and ū₅₂ may well be synchronically valid in items such as
Mideastern Yiddish šítəf 'partner' vs. prítə 'penny' ∥
Northwestern Yiddish šótəf vs. prútə.   The classical forms
are šutštíf and pərūští, where the u vowel in the first is
in a closed syllable.   The residual evidence of open
vs. closed syllabic alternations of 52 and 51 in Yiddish
dialects (cf. §§ 9.2.4, 9.2.42) indicates that all the high
vowels were part of the process which resulted in the
alternations.   The comparative evidence points to a
complementary allophonic status of the Proto Yiddish *ī vs.
*i and *ū vs. *u oppositions.   Length distinguishing
versions of Tiberian regard vowels 51 and 52 (like 31 and
32) as complementary in Classical Hebrew (cf. Tables 48-49;
76.16,27).

9.3.7. Results of Limited Comparative Reconstruction

"Safe" comparative reconstruction (making use only
of nondisputed Northwest Semitic data) has not provided
decisive results concerning the historical validity of
Open Syllable Lengthening (standard theory) with respect
to the alternations involving the pairs 41 and 42, 31 and 32,
51 and 52, or with respect to the very existence of the
long member of each pair.   Wherever the language does
provide evidence in the form of a firm phonemic opposition in

identical environments —— the pairs 21 and 22, 11 and
12 —— limited comparative reconstruction firmly disproves
standard theory.   Vowel 22 cannot be a lengthened vowel
21 because vowel 25 is the lengthened 21.   Likewise, vowel
12 cannot be a lengthened vowel 11 because vowel 13 is the
lengthened 11.   As the 21 ~ 22 and the 11 ~ 12 alternations
cannot result from Open Syllable Lengthening, they must
result —— as the only logical alternative —— from
Closed Syllable Shortening.   Moreover, it is obvious
that the 41 ~ 42, 31 ~ 32 and 51 ~ 52 alternations (where
there is no comparative evidence) are part of the same
process as the 21 ~ 22 and 11 ~ 12 alternations (where
comparative evidence disconfirms Open Syllable Lengthening).
We therefore conclude that none of the alternations result
from Open Syllable Lengthening.   Analogously the proof that
vowels   22 and 12 were originally long (rather than being
originally short vowels processed secondarily by Lengthening)
disconfirms the general notion that the Proto Semitic Component
had five short vowels only.   There is therefore no reason
to accept the notion with respect to vowels 42, 32 and 52
which can safely be regarded as being originally long (albeit
originally allophonic).   Before proceeding to the actual
reconstruction of the segmental and dynamic phonology of the
protosystem, and the implications for the history of Yiddish,
we shall make use of transcomponent reconstruction to check
our results.

9.4.   Transcomponent Reconstruction

Transcomponent Reconstruction can help to determine whether or not the Semitic Component long vowels (in alternating and nonalternating forms alike) result from Open Syllable Lengthening engendered by the well known development in German.   The method proposed is straightforward. It entails investigating the circumstances of the Germanic rule and the transposition of these circumstances to appropriate Semitic Component forms.

9.4.1. Stress as a Conditioning and Causative Factor

Germanists are in unanimous agreement that Open Syllable Lengthening applied under wordstress only (cf. Paul 1884: 102; Moser 1916; Behaghel 1928: 274-280; Penzl 1975: 113-115).   In fact, scholars who have gone beyond the descriptive requirement of framing the conditioning environment to consider the actual causation of Lengthening, are agreed that stress was the primary causative factor. Weinhold (1883: 15) argues that Open Syllable Lengthening arose in consequence of the strengthening of primary wordstress, itself a result of compensation for the weakening of secondary affixal stress.   Paul (1975: 52) likewise regards Germanic stress as the factor responsible for lengthening, basing his

position upon phonetic details of vowel production. For
Kranzmayer (1956: 11), Open Syllable Lengthening is part
of a chain shift, and arose in compensation for the
weakening of Old High German fully oppositional posttonic
vowels to ə. as part of the well known Germanic tendency
toward isochronic rhythm. What is common to all the
interpretations is the primacy of word stress in the causation
of Open Syllable Lengthening.

Taking the Germanic rule (which is of course
equally valid for the Germanic Component in Yiddish, cf. above
§4.3),

$$V \rightarrow [+ \text{ long}] / \underline{\hspace{2cm}}\$$$
$$\underset{[+ \text{ stress}]}{}$$

we are in a position to transcomponentally test the validity
of Semitic Component Open Syllable Lengthening. Genuine
instances of Semitic Component Open Syllable Lengthening
are processed only under original wordstress. Originally
unstressed syllables escape Lengthening as stress shift to
penultimate position occurred after Lengthening (cf. above
§7.3; Katz 1980b). The evidence of transcomponent
reconstruction is sketched in Table 89. The first column
illustrates the lengthening of Middle High German a, ä and
o (cf. Yiddish diaphonemes 13a, 25 and 42). Each of the
examples cited illustrates an item lengthened under wordstress
followed by a slot for the corresponding vowel in unstressed

position. This slot will usually be empty because unstressed
vowels will generally have been reduced to ə. One could,
with reservations, posit ə as the unstressed allophonic
counterpart of one of the stressed ę vowels, but this would
in any case not be cognate with any Yiddish diaphoneme. The
diaphonemic system concerns the stressed vowel systems of
Yiddish dialects (including, of course, vowels to which
stress has shifted in the Semitic Component).

The second column in Table 89 examines the two
cases of genuine Open Syllable Lengthening in the Semitic
Component, 11 > 13 and 21 > 25. Again, we use Tiberian
forms to stand in for a general system not bound by any
of the several reading traditions, for the sake of convenience.
For the argument at hand, all that is relevant is stress and
syllable structure of the cited forms. Classical Tiberian
náhaδ and réγaʕ are processed by Open Syllable Lengthening
because the respective a and ę vowels meet the structural
description of the shift which calls for wordstress. The
cognate Yiddish diaphonemes are therefore vowels 13b and 25.
Classical hãzír and ʔęmęθ escape Lengthening because of lack
of stress. The cognate Yiddish diaphonemes are therefore
vowels 11 and 21.

Let us now turn to spurious Open Syllable Lengthening
— vowels 12, 22 and 42 which standard theory ascribes in
the Semitic Component to the Lengthening of vowels 11, 21 and 41.

Table 89: Transcomponent Reconstruction: Germanic Component Evidence for Genuine vs. Spurious Open Syllable Lengthening in the Semitic Component

Germanic Component Open Syllable Lengthening: $V \rightarrow [+long] / \underline{\quad} \frac{\$}{[+stress]}$	Semitic Component Genuine Open Syllable Lengthening (processes stressed vowels only)	Semitic Component Spurious Open Syllable Lengthening (processes any vowels)
1. MHG trágen: MEY trúgṇ || NEY trógṇ || NWY trṓgṇ (V 13a)	1. CT páhaḏ: MEY páxed || NEY páxed || NWY páxed (V 13b)	1. CT lišmṓ: MEY lišmú || NEY lišmó || NWY lišmṓ (V 12)
1a. ---------------------	1a. CT ḥāzír: MEY, NEY, NWY xázer (V 11)	1a. CT šōlōm: MEY šóləm || NEY šólem || NWY šóləm (V 12)
2. MHG tröten: MEY treitṇ || NEY trétṇ || NWY trétṇ (V 25)	2. CT réɣaʕ: MEY réɣə || NEY réɣə || NWY régə (V 25)	2. CT séfer: MEY sáifer || NEY séifer || NWY séifer (V 22)
2a. MHG behüeten: MEY bahítṇ || NEY bahítṇ || NWY behítṇ (V ∅)	2a. CT ʔɛ́mɛ́ʕ: MEY, NEY, NWY émaš (V 21)	2a. CT berērṓ: MEY brájrə || NEY bréjrə || NWY bréjrə (V 22)
3. MHG vógel: MEY fóigl || NEY féigl || NWY fóugl (V 42)		3. CT hṓšex: MEY xóišəx || NEY xóišəx || NWY xóušəx (V 42)
3a. ---------------------		3a. CT mōrṓ: MEY mójrə || NEY méjrə || NWY mójrə (V 42)

Limited comparative reconstruction (§9.3) was able to determine that 12 and 22 are not lengthenings of 11 and 21, but was unable to provide evidence with respect to vowel 42. Transcomponent Reconstruction can, however, deal with all three. As is evident from Table 89, column 3, vowels 12, 22 and 42 (unlike 13b and 25) appear irrespective of classical stress. Tiberian qames, whether in lišəmɔ́, or šɔlóm, appears as the same vowel 12. Sere, whether in séfɛr or bɛrērɔ́, appears as vowel 22. Holem, whether in ḥóšɛx or mɔrɔ́ appears as vowel 42. There is one possible explanation for the appearance of vowels 12, 22 and 42 in the Semitic Component. They were originally long, and were not processed by Open Syllable Lengthening.

9.4.2. Lengthening-Blocking Consonants

Another salient feature of Germanic Component Open Syllable Lengthening is its failure to apply preceding certain consonants, most notably /š/ and /x/. Table 90, column 1, cites four cases and two illustrative items for each, of the effects of /š/ and /x/. Column 2 cites corresponding Semitic Component forms where /š/ and /x/ have no effect, evidently because the preceding vowels were never processed by Lengthening. Germanic Component lengthening of */ă/ is blocked by /š/ and /x/, hence Middle High German

Table 90:   Transcomponent Reconstruction:
Semitic Component Counterparts of Germanic
Component Lengthening-Blocking Consonants

Germanic Component	Semitic Component
1. Lengthening of /ã/ is blocked by /š/: MHG naschen, waschen: MEY, NEY, NWY nášn 'nibble', vášn 'wash' (V 11)	1. Cf. CT lɔ̄šɔ̄n, pɔ̄šū̆t: MEY lúšn 'language', púsət 'plain' ‖ NEY lɔ́šn, pɔ́šət ‖ NWY lɔ̄šn, pɔ̄šət (V 12)
2. Lengthening of /ã/ is blocked by /x/: MHG lachen, machen: MEY, NEY, NWY láxn 'laugh', máxn 'make' (V 11)	2. Cf. CT hɔ̄xɔ́m, zɔ̄xɔ́r: MEY xúxəm '(iro.) wise man', zúxər 'male' ‖ NEY xɔ́xəm, zɔ́xər ‖ NWY xóxəm, zóxər (V 12)
3. Lengthening of /õ/ is blocked by /š/: MHG gedroschen, grosse: MEY NEY, NWY gədrɔ́šn 'threshed', grɔ́šn 'penny' (V 41)	3. Cf. CT jɔ́šər, tɔ̄šɔ́v: MEY jɔ́jšər 'justice', tɔ̄jšəv '(long time)resident' ‖ NEY jéjšər, téjšəv ‖ NWY jɔ́ušər, tɔ́ušəv (V 42)
4. Lengthening of /õ/ is blocked by /x/: MHG gebrochen, kochen: MEY, NEY, NWY gəbrɔ́xn 'broken', kɔ́xn 'cook' (V 41)	4. Cf. CT dɔ́ḥaq, kɔ̄ḥɔ́θ: MEY 'dɔ́jxək 'dearth', kójxəs 'strength' ‖ NEY déjxək, kéjxəs ‖ NWY dɔ́uxək, kɔ́uxəs (V 42)

naschen, waschen, lachen, machen correspond not with MEY •núšṇ,
•vúšṇ, •lúxṇ, •múxṇ ‖ NEY •nóšṇ, •vóšṇ, •lóxṇ, •móxṇ ‖ NWY
•nőšṇ, •vőšṇ •lőxṇ, •mőxṇ (vowel 13a) but with nonlengthened
nášṇ, vášṇ, láxṇ, máxṇ (vowel 11).   Had Semitic Component
vowel 12 been the result of Germanic inspired Open Syllable
Lengthening, it too would have escaped lengthening before
/s/ and /x/.   In fact, however, Semitic Component 12 appears
freely before these consonants, e.g. MEY lúšn, púšət, xúxəm
zúxər ‖ NEY lóšn, póšət, xóxəm, zóxər ‖ NWY lőšn, pőšət,
xőxəm, zőxər, rather than •lášn, •pášət, •xáxəm, •záxər.
Analogously, Germanic Component lengthening of */ō/ is
blocked by these consonants, hence Middle High German
gedroschen, grosse, gebrochen, kochen do not correspond with
MEY •gədrójšṇ, •grójšṇ, •gəbrójxṇ, •kójxṇ ‖ NEY •gədréjšṇ,
•gréjšṇ, •gəbréjxṇ, •kéjxṇ ‖ NWY •gədróušṇ, •gróušṇ,
•gəbróuxṇ, •kóuxṇ (vowel 42) but with nonlengthened
gədróšṇ, gróšṇ, gəbróxṇ, kóxṇ (vowel 41).   Semitic Component
42 appears freely before these consonants, e.g. MEY jójšər,
tójšəv, dójxək, kójxəs ‖ NEY jéjšər, téjšəv, déjxək, kéjxəs ‖
NWY jóušər, tóušəv, dóuxək, kóuxəs rather than •jóšər, •tóšəv,
•dóxək, •kóxəs.   Consonants capable of blocking Open Syllable
Lengthening could not do so in the case of Semitic Component
vowels 12 and 42 where there was no lengthening to block.

9.4.3. Fusion of Germanic and Semitic Component Vowels

We have consistently referred to vowels 12, 22, 32, 42, 52 in the Semitic Component. In so doing, we have been making reference to the Pan Yiddish systematization of vocalic diaphonemes (cf. Table 1). This is a synchronic systematization relating geographically disparate realizations in common lexical items to each other. No historical conclusions need be drawn from the use of these numbers in the system as we have been employing it. The original system as posited by Max Weinreich differs from our modification thereof, as explained above (§4.1), in that we have omitted four   diaphonemes posited by Weinreich — vowels 23, 33, 43 and 53 — on the grounds that they have no unique empirical counterparts in known varieties of Yiddish. They are fully identical with 22, 32, 42 and 52 respectively, and their separation from the O2 series (originally long vowels) is accomplished solely on the basis of comparison with Middle High German cognate forms. Where Middle High German displays a short vowel subject to lengthening, Weinreich places the vowel in the O3 series. To this extent, the Weinreich system is partially a protosystem. Following standard theory, Weinreich naturally places all of the Semitic Component long vowels in the O3 series, and uses their placement in the protosystem in conjunction with standard theory (cf. M. Weinreich 1973: II, 334, 352-354). For the history of the

problem it is noteworthy that in the original version of his Pan Yiddish vowel system, Weinreich (1960a: 66-68) left open the question of whether to assign appropriate Semitic Component forms to vowel 12 or 13, 42 or 43, 52 or 53. He assigned vowels 22 and 32 unequivocally to Semitic Component forms. In the later version, Weinreich brought his system into line with his theory of a primeval Sephardic five short vowel type system with later long vowels regarded as results of Open Syllable Lengthening. In some cases, there is hardly any Germanic evidence in favour of a 03 vowel and long vowel Semitic Component forms are used —— circularly, in our view —— to corroborate the existence of the diaphoneme. Such a case is vowel 53, where the only Germanic Component items provided by Weinreich (1973: II, 355) to illustrate the diaphoneme are (in Standard Yiddish) du 'you' and nu 'well!; come on!'. Synchronically there is no justification for this classification because length distinguishing dialects such as Mideastern and Northwestern Yiddish do not distinguish 51/52 in word final stressed position, and Mideastern Yiddish •dĭ and •nĭ, like Northwestern Yiddish •dŏ and •nŏ are synchronically spurious as the 51/52 merger in word final position is phonetically in favour of 52. Historically, the notion of a Germanic Component vowel 53 becomes more nebulous still in light of the Middle High German parallel

forms with u͍ǫ, as Weinreich (1973: IV, 377) himself notes.
Vowel 53 is a phantom vowel.

Now comparative reconstruction (§ 9.3) has demonstrated
that Semitic Component 12 and 22 could not represent lengthened
11 and 21. Transcomponent reconstruction (§9.4), corroborating
these results, extended the proof to vowel 42, which is shown
to have been originally long. While disproving standard
theory and demonstrating the original existence of long vowels,
it is still not discounted that vowels 12, 22 and 42, although
distinct from their short counterparts, could have developed
in phonetic unison with Germanic lengthened vowels. If one
uses the seven vowel version of Tiberian (Table 47) as the
point of departure, then it would follow that Proto $*ɔ_{12}$,
$*e_{22}$ and $*ɔ_{42}$ were originally short and underwent phonetic
lengthening in line with Open Syllable Lengthening, although
they were distinct from the protovowels 11, 21 and 41. Within
the framework of the seven vowel system, this would be tenable
only with respect to $*e_{22}$ and $*ɔ_{42}$ which would be distinct from
$*ɛ_{21}$ and $*ɔ_{41}$. It would not be tenable with respect to $*ɔ_{12}$
which would then be identical with $*ɔ_{41}$.

Every historical linguist knows that complete merger
does not lend itself to reconstruction. To the extent that
series 02 vowels have merged with series 03 vowels in all
varieties of Yiddish, there is no empirical way of determining
whether the Proto Semitic Component long vowels developed

in phonetic unison with originally long or with secondarily
lengthened Middle High German vowels. The seven vowel version is
disqualified at least with respect to the overlap between
12 and 41. In terms of Tiberian graphemes, that is to say
that the Semitic Component cannot derive from a system where
the cognate of Tiberian qames was a single phone. The
primeval distinction between vowels 12 (open syllabic
qames) 11 (originally stressed closed syllabic qames)
and 41 (originally unstressed closed syllabic qames) serves to
demonstrate that the system Yiddish derives from did
in fact distinguish unstressed closed syllabic qames
(qames qatan) from qames in other positions, and the
evidence of Yiddish disconfirms those opinions claiming
that it was an invention of normativist grammarians.
We have no proof that vowels 22 and 42 were distinguished
from their series O1 counterparts, vowels 21 and 41 by
more than quality alone (i.e. $*a_{22}$ vs. $*\varepsilon_{21}$ and $*o_{42}$ vs.
$*o_{41}$) but there is no good structural reason to assume that
vowel 12 was distinguished by length (and quality) as an
anomaly. Further, the primeval status of the high vowels,
can best be determined tentatively by analogy with the
other vowels in the system. There is no reason to assume
that vowels 32 and 52 were products of lengthening when
we know from the case of other vowels that the protosystem
did have long vowels.

We have throughout the work at hand retained one

of Max Weinreich's series O3 vowels —— vowel 13, because
unlike vowels 23, 33, 43 and 53, it does indeed have a unique
empirically discernible reflex in some varieties of Yiddish.
This provides an ideal opportunity for determining whether
the vowel we have throughout been calling Semitic Component
vowel 12 (cf. e.g. Table 76.19) did in fact develop with
unambiguous Germanic Component vowel 12 (cf. Table 1.6)
or with Germanic Comoonent vowel 13, which we have in the
present chapter specified further to vowel 13a (cf. Table
1.11). We have proven that Semitic Component "12" (i.e.
MEY u ‖ MEY ‫ ‖ NWY ā) does not constitute a lengthened
Semitic Component vowel 11.   If the Semitic Component entered
Yiddish during or following the lengthening of stressed
open syllabic Middle High German a (and the congruent
development in the Germanic Component of Yiddish), it would
be possible to assume that Semitic Component *ā (for open
syllabic qames as in the Kimchian system, cf. Table 48) underwent
development with Germanic Component vowel 13a, while *a (for
pathah ʿand closed syllabic stressed qames]), merged with
Germanic Component vowel 11, and was lengthened to 13b in
stressed open syllabic position. This scenario would
presume that the phonetic quality of open syllabic qames in
the speech of the first Yiddish speakers was closest to the
contemporary stage of the development of 13a. More

importantly, the determination that Semitic Component forms
fused with Germanic Component vowel 12 (cognate with the
unambiguously originally long normalized Middle High
German â) would further corroborate the results of comparative
and transcomponent reconstruction and add still more proof
to the disconfirmation of standard theory. The opposite
result, determination that Semitic Component "vowel 12" forms
are actually vowel 13[a] forms —— as claimed by Max
Weinreich (1973: II, 352) would seem to indicate that the
early Yiddish cognate of Tiberian open syllabic qames
—— although distinct from pathah —— was phonetically an
a vowel which underwent lengthening and rounding.

Obviously, the resolution of this match-up problem
—— the only case where the actual fusion between Germanic
and Semitic Component vowels can be tested (because of the
empirical reality of Germanic Component 13[a]) —— cannot
proceed in any of the modern dialects of Yiddish, where 13a
and 12 are wholly merged. Gerzon (1902: 20-21) and Sapir
(1915: 239) took note of the inseparability of the modern
Yiddish cognates of Middle High German â and lengthened a.
Prilutski (1920: 54, 57-58), comparing Yiddish with German
phonology, claimed that the complete overlap between the
two is a special characteristic of Yiddish.   In fact, the
issue of vowels 12 and 13a within the Germanic Component has

been a subject of heated debate among Yiddish scholars.
Nineteenth century German-Jewish scholars, who were on
the whole not particularly interested in emphasizing
un-German features of the Germanic Component in Yiddish,
generally transcribed <a> for graphemic representations
of older Yiddish texts cognate with both Middle High
German â and lengthened a in line with the ā realizations
of Modern Standard German (e.g. Modern German Abend 'evening',
blasen 'blow', Nadel 'needle', Name 'name', sagen 'say',
Tag 'day' — all with /ā/; cf. Middle High German
âbent, blâsen, nâdel vs. name, sagen, tac). Even the
great Alfred Landau followed this practice (cf. Landau and
Wachstein 1911). There is ample evidence that this
notion, that both vowels were merged as /ā/ in premodern
Yiddish, is false. Firstly there is the internal
graphemic evidence. While <א> is ambiguous, nonmarking
of a vowel in old Yiddish orthography can only represent a,
and marking by <ו> can only represent a rounded vowel
(cf. Boeschenstein 1514: [7-8]; Fagius 1543a: [35];
1543b: [44]; Helicz 1543: [3]; Schade 1592: [138];
Meelführer 1607: 263; Buxtorf 1609: 653). When graphemic
environment and morphological context eliminate the possibility
of u realizations, <ו> clearly represents one of the o vowels
(length was not generally marked in older Yiddish orthography).

The frequent use of <ı> in positions where standard German has /ā/ unequivocally disproves the possibility of an unrounded Yiddish realization.   Moreover, a number of Chsristian Yiddish scholars, including Schade (1592: [141]), Pfeiffer (1680: 522), Ammersbach (1689: 34), Schudt 1714-1718: II, 285), Haselbauer (1742: 237), Chrysander (1750a: 4), Reizenstein (1764: [218]), Selig (1767: 36) and Friedrich (1784: 197) have explicitly mentioned the "Jewish pronunciation" <o> of the vowel known to them from German as <a>.   In light of the evidence of premodern Yiddish ǫ realizations, Max Weinreich (1923b: 41-42, 79-80, 84-85, 119, 136-137, 155, 158; 1926: 162; 1928b: 708) concluded that the cognates of **both** Middle High German â and a in the Yiddish represented in older texts were merged as rounded ǫ (of whatever specific quality and length).   In fact, Weinreich (1923b: 41-42) went so far as to say "I personally am certain that old Yiddish had ǫ wherever modern Lithuanian Yiddish has o", making reference to present day Northeastern Yiddish ²₁₂/₁₃ₐ[/₄₁].

As it turns out, both the Germanist oriented scholars who transcribed <a> for the cognates of both Middle High German vowels, and Weinreich, who transcribed <o> for the cognates of both Middle High German vowels in older Yiddish texts, were half wrong.   The Germanists used modern Standard German as a model.   Weinreich, on far stronger theoretical ground, used

modern (Northeastern) Yiddish as a model. The problem demands analysis of the texts themselves using principles of graphemics. The puzzle was solved by Solomon A. Birnbaum (1932b: 13-14) in his analysis of the orthography of the Köln document of 1396, which he discovered and which was for several decades the oldest known Yiddish manuscript. Birnbaum demonstrates that in the fourteenth century Western Yiddish contained in the manuscript, the Yiddish cognate of Middle High German $\hat{a}$ was definitely rounded, while the cognate of Middle High German a in lengthening position was unquestionably unrounded. For his view that both had rounded in older forms of Western Yiddish, Weinreich has been criticized by Joffe (1954: 105-114), Marchand (1960: 35-37) and Süsskind (1969-1970: 43).

The Joffe, Marchand and Süsskind position also requires modification. Nearly all the scholars who have dealt with the issue have treated Western Yiddish as a homogeneous variety when in fact there are vast differences between local varieties in the West. A number of these form the criteria we have employed in provisionally positing three major dialect areas within Western Yiddish —— Southwestern and Midwestern Yiddish (collectively comprising Southern Western Yiddish) and Northwestern Yiddish (cf. above §4.2; Tables 2, 3-5; Katz 1979b; 1983) Friedrich, the "first Yiddish dialectologist" (M. Weinreich 1940b: 103), used the <a> vs. <o>

isogloss _within_ Western Yiddish as one of the proposed
criteria in his classification of the varieties of Yiddish
known to him. Friedrich (1784: 50-52) notes that some
speakers say <Was> (= _vas/vās_) while others have <Woes>
(= _vōs_). It is obvious from Friedrich's remark that
some areas of Western Yiddish have kept vowel 13a unrounded
(and therefore separate from vowel 12) while others have
rounded the vowel (and merged it with 12). Weinreich's
views match the rounding areas, while the nonrounding areas
are in conformity with the views of Joffe, Marchand and
Süsskind.

Because of the normalized orthography used for
centuries in the Western Yiddish speech territory, there is
unfortunately little hope of determining the geographic
spread of both areas from older Yiddish literature. Valuable
clues are provided by some of the works of drama produced
by proponents of the Enlightenment movement in the late
eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although sociologically
speaking, these authors were anti-Yiddish and sought to
spread the use of German amongst the Jewish population of the
German speaking lands, they frequently made use of local
varieties of Yiddish for special effects, most notably
to depict the traditionalist characters whom they regarded
with malice. In Wolfssohn's (1798) _Laykhtzin und fremelay_,

the grapheme <א>, an unequivocal /o/ phoneme in Northwestern
Yiddish, is used in such items as bǝcóln 'pay', gǝzógt 'said',
klógt 'complains', mógǝr 'thin', nóman 'name', tóg 'day' where
Middle High German has a.   Because of the obvious ō realizations
Joffe (1954: 113) regards this (Amsterdam 1798) edition as
"a travesty of Western Yiddish".   Joffe is quite wrong.   It
is a representative of the northern areas of Western Yiddish,
as correctly maintained by Borokhov (1915: 225) and Reyzen
(1923: 33).   In the dramas more representative of the
southerly regions of Western Yiddish, vowel 13a is invariably
marked by <א>, <אא>, or <הא>, all unequivocal symbols
for unrounded /a/ phonemes (e.g. A. L. Rosenthal's Di
hokhtsayt tsu Grobsdorf, written in 1822, published in part
by Lowenstein 1975; Herz's (1828) Ester).

The confrontation of Semitic Component with Germanic
Component forms within a single dialect area cannot be carried
out from Western Enlightenment dramas, because for all the
dialectal phonemic orthography in the Germanic Component of
Yiddish, the Semitic Component continued to be rendered
in the historical Hebrew or Aramaic spelling system. In
copious eighteenth century Latin letter lexicological
compilations of Western Yiddish (e.g. Christian 1727,
Bibliophilus 1742, Reizenstein 1764, Friedrich 1784,
Tirsch 1782, Selig 1792) the dialect based orthography is
limited to the Semitic Component, and there is scarcely a
clue as to the phonology of the Germanic Component of these

dialects, especially with respect to phonemic distribution.
Now it can in fact often be extrapolated from a given
group of Semitic Component Latin letter transcriptions that
a certain diaphoneme had a certain realization in both
components in the local Yiddish dialect represented in the
text. Thus, for example, a transcription <N'veles>
'carcasses', where vowel 22 appears as monophthongal <e>
(presumably /ē/), if consistent for all vowel 22 items within
the text, is strong evidence that Germanic Component vowel 22
was also monophthongal in the variety of Yiddish known to
the author and that had the compilation rendered local forms
of the Germanic Component, one would venture across such
transcriptions as <geen> 'go'. While Semitic Component
Latin letter transcriptions are invaluable for the determination
of the (dia)phonemic system of the variety described, they
are not capable of divulging phonemic distribution within
the Germanic Component. A given book may divulge the
presence of both ā and ō in the dialect, but without specific
Germanic Component transcriptions, there will be no way of
knowing the fate of vowel 13a and its matchup with the
Semitic Component.

The best way to solve the problem is to examine
documentations of residual modern Western Yiddish, to
determine whether the Semitic Component types MEY almúne

'widow', klúlə 'curse', parnúsə 'livelihood, trade' ‖

NEY almónə, klólə, parnósə ‖ NWY almónə, klólə, parnósə

are matched up with the Yiddish reflexes of Middle

High German âbent, blâsen, nâdel (in which case they are

vowel 12) or with the reflexes of name, sagen, tac (in which

case they are vowel 13a). In Southern Western Yiddish

(Southwestern and Midwestern), Germanic Component vowel

13a, while undergoing lengthening to ā was never rounded.

While merging with Pan Western Yiddish $\bar{a}_{24/44}$, it never

merged with vowel 12 which appears as ō, ɔu or ū, hence

Southern Western Yiddish námə, zágə, tāg, consistently

distinct from óvnt, blózə, nódl / óuvnt, blóuzə, nóudl /

úvnt / blúzə / núdl.   Turning to the Semitic Component,

we find Southern Western Yiddish almónə, klólə, parnósə /

almóunə, klóulə, parnóusə / almūnə, klūlə, parnúsə, with

unambiguous vowel 12, never •almánə, •klálə, •parnásə

(cf. Pörges 1921: 193-194; Guggenheim-Grünberg 1954; 1958:

91-93; 1961; 1969; 1973: 62-63; Beranek 1961: 288, 295;

1965a: 124-125, 136-145; Zuckerman 1969: 46-48; Lowenstein

1973-1975; Katz 1979b). Added to the evidence of

comparative and transcomponent reconstruction, the empirical

data provided by modern Western Yiddish dialectology

serves to overwhelmingly disconfirm the standard theory

in the field claiming that the Yiddish reflexes of Tiberian

open syllabic qames result from lengthening of an originally

short a.   Like open syllabic sere and holem, the Yiddish

reflexes of open syllaic qames were long to begin with.

9.5.   Interdialectal Reconstruction and the Viability of
        Proto Yiddish

9.5.1.   Interdialectal Reconstruction

        Methodologically and conceptually, interdialectal
reconstruction is the comparative method applied with certain
limitations of corpus as may be of special interest on an ad
hoc basis. Unlike Limited Comparative Reconstruction (cf.
§9.3) in the special sense in which we have employed the
method — limiting the comparative data base to nondisputed
features — interdialectal reconstruction is only limited
in so far as we shall be comparing varieties of Yiddish rather
than varieties of Yiddish with cognate languages.   In the
case at hand, this is not tantamount to using sociolinguistic
criteria to distinguish languages from dialects.   There are
firm structural criteria for distinguishing "Yiddish" from
any of the relevant systems we have been taking into account
from outside the language. These include the fusion of the
Semitic and Germanic components and the diaphonemic system
of Pan Yiddish vocalism not shared by any non-Yiddish linguistic
system. But the structural criteria for defining the method
are not as significant as its purpose.   By comparing
a structurally (or historically or geographically) defined
group of genetically related varieties, we are in a position
to confront the problem of the viability of the protolanguage.

(cf. §3.3).   Fusion languages are ideal for this type of
exercise due to the opportunity provided of comparing the
way the several components have fused in geographically
disparate areas.   The Semitic Component provides even
greater possibilities because of the absence of Semitic
speaking communities anywhere near the European homeland
of Yiddish.   The alternative to the protolanguage is
the text theory which presupposes many geographical and
temporal   points of entry of individual items from texts
into the language.

9.5.2.   Parallel Fusion

The most striking evidence is actually a phenomenon
we have been employing all along for a variety of purposes   ——
the diaphonemic system of Pan Yiddish vocalism.   Were it
not for the identity of the fusion between Semitic and Germanic
Component vowels in all varieties of Yiddish, the concept of
the diaphoneme would be untenable and in a practical sense,
would be useless except for intra-Germanic Component
investigations.   But instead of having to discuss, for
example, "the Yiddish cognate of Middle High German $\hat{o}$ which
appears in the Midwest as $\underline{A}$ fused with the cognate of Tiberian
open syllabic $\underline{X}$, and in the Southeast as $\underline{B}$ fused with the
cognate of Tiberian open syllabic $\underline{Y}$" the Yiddish linguist, in

consequence of the strikingly parallel way in which the
vowels of both components have fused, can encapsulate the
very fusion between two vowels by a symbol (e.g. the
diaphonemic number) expressing this relationship for
all of Yiddish through time and space. Six characteristic
examples of parallel fusion are cited in Table 91.
Had Yiddish once been a wholly Germanic language with
Semitisms creeping into the vernacular from a wide assortment
of texts in the course of centuries and over the wide
expanse of the European Yiddish native territory, a Semitic
Component vowel, obtained from a grapheme in a text, would
surely have fused with one local realization here, with another
local realization there. Parallelism of fusion points
to a protolanguage, and from the perspective of the history
and age of Yiddish, to primary fusion, ergo a relatively
early rise of the language (cf. §3.2).

9.5.3.   Disparity of Concrete Realization

Parallel Fusion in a number of phenemically similar
varieties is attributable to parallel (nongenetic) developments,
and indeed, to language contact between the several varieties.
Here again, the case of Yiddish provides a happy circumstance
— vastly divergent phonemic systems (cf. Tables 3-8). To cite

Table 91:   Parallel Fusion

Fusing Vowels	Mideastern Yiddish	Northeastern Yiddish	Northwestern Yiddish
MHG â, CT open syllabic games: âder 'vein', ?almûná 'widow' (V 12)	údər, almúnə	ídər, almúnə	ódər, almúnə
MHG open syllabic ë, CT stressed open syllabic segol: trëten 'step', pêlë 'miracle' (V 25)	tréjtṇ, péjlə	tréjtṇ, péla	trétṇ, pélə
MHG ê, CT open syllabic sere: gên 'go', CT maxaššefâ 'witch' (V 22)	gajn, maxašáife	gejn, maxašéjfe	gejn, maxšéjfətə
MHG ie, CT open syllabic hireq: tief 'deep', medînâ 'country' (V 32)	tif, medíne	tif, medíne	tif, medíne
MHG ô, CT open syllabic holem: brôt 'bread', sônê 'enemy' (V 42)	brojt, síjne	brejt, séjne	brout, sóune
MHG uo, CT open syllabic shureq: bruoder 'brother', refûâ 'medicine' (V 52)	bríder, reffə	brúder, refúe	brúder, refúə

an example, the concept "Vowel 52" stands for /ǖ/ in Strasbourg,
/ū/ in Amsterdam, /ī/ in Warsaw and /u/ in Vilna but it is
the common realization for a common corpus of lexical
items from both components in all these areas. "Vowel 42"
may be /ɔu/ in Strasbourg and Amsterdam, /ō/ in Frankfurt,
/ɔj/ in Warsaw and /ej/ in Vilna, but like every other Yiddish
diaphoneme, it is the common realization in all these
areas for both components in the same lexical items.   The
diversity of concrete realization, coupled with the phenomenon
of parallel fusion, is further evidence in favour of descent
from an earlier entity rather than horizontal diffusion
through space.

9.5.4.   Parallel Anomalies

        We define anomalies firstly in the traditional
historical linguist's sense of "exceptions" to sound laws
and secondly as synchronically deviant realizations within
a certain system.   While there are, to be sure, many individual
dialectal Semitic Component features (cf. U. Weinreich 1960-1961),
these are minute by comparison with the degree of parallelism.
A vital area for the theorist of protolanguages to explore is the
arena of anomalies.   However strong the parallelism of fusion
between the components of a fusion language and the diversity
of concrete realization, the historical evidence is valid only
from a relative temporal point of view.   That is to say, the

combination of parallelism of fusion and diversity of realization helps to disconfirm the likelihood of relatively recent interdialectal diffusion as the cause of both. This type of evidence can bring us back in time only to a more uniform stage in the history of the language when both geographical expanse and disparity of concrete realization were less extensive than in the modern state of affairs. Parallelism of anomalies vis-à-vis the stock languages is far more convincing evidence for descent from a protolanguage. It can hardly be due to coincidence that exceptions to the usual and expected relationships ("sound laws") between phonemes of the stock languages and those of the several dialects of the fusion language are the same exceptions, in the same lexical items, in all varieties of the fusion language. Parallelism of anomalies (coupled, of course, with parallel fusion and disparity of concrete realization) is perhaps the strongest tool of the historical linguist in the investigation of protolanguage viability.

Table 92 illustrates fifteen lexical items. Column 1 provides their expected forms, given the usual correspondences between Hebrew and Aramaic graphemes and Yiddish diaphonemes. All fifteen items, taken from Mideastern Yiddish, are spurious as marked by *. Column 2 illustrates the actual Mideastern Yiddish realizations. While all fifteen items are historically

Table 92:	Parallel Anomalies: Mideastern Yiddish Corpus
Expected Reflexes	**Actual Reflexes**
1. •bɛz	1. bàjz
2. •vɛz	2. vàjz
3. •yav	3. yuv
4. •jid	4. jīd
5. •nin	5. nīn
6. •kif	6. kīf
7. •rɛš	7. rajš
8. •šin	8. šīn
9. •sin	9. sīn
10. •taf	10. tuf
11. •saf	11. suf
12. •xɛn	12. xajn
13. •méjlǝx	13. májlǝx
14. •mǝzízǝ	14. mǝzízǝ
15. •ádǝr	15. údǝr

anomalous, items 1-12 are in addition synchronically
anomalous as they are almost the only items in the dialect
exhibiting vowels 12, 33, 32 and 52 in closed syllabic position
in the Semitic Component. Items 1-11 are names of letters
of the Yiddish alphabet, Mideastern Yiddish bajz (= [b] < b̲),
vajz (= [v] < v̲), vuv (= [v] < w̲), jīd (= [j] < j̲), nīn (= [n]
< n̲), kīf (= [k] < q̲), rajš (= [r] < r̲), šīn (= [š] < š̲), sīn
(= [s] < ś̲), tūf (= [t] < t̲), and sūf (= [s] < e̲). Item 12,
xajn 'grace; charm' likewise displays a stubborn long vowel
reflex (vowel 22) in closed syllabic position. Item 13,
májləx 'king' appears with the usual realization of sere rather
than expected segol (which would give vowel 25 in stressed open
syllabic position). Item 14, mazízə 'traditional door post
amulet' appears with vowel 51 instead of the expected 52 (the
normal reflex of open syllabic shureq). Finally, item 15,
údər 'the month Adar (sixth month of the Jewish calendar)
appears with vowel 12 for expected 11. Now the reasons
for the exceptions are a subject for enquiry in and of itself
(cf. Katz 1978a; 1980a). At present, we are concerned with
their pandialectal distribution. Turning to Northeastern
Yiddish (Table 93) and Northwestern Yiddish (Table 94) we find
the same anomalous diaphonemes appearing in the local phonetic
guise in the same lexical items. Because of the Northeastern
Yiddish collapse of 31 with 32 and 51 with 52, there are fewer

Table 93:	Parallel Anomalies: Northeastern Yiddish Corpus	

Expected Reflexes	Actual Reflexes
1. •bɛz	1. bejz
2. •vɛz	2. vejz
3. •vav	3. vɔv
4. jud	4. jud
5. nun	5. nun
6. kuf	6. kuf
7. •rɛš	7. rejš
8. šin	8. šin
9. sin	9. sin
10. •taf	10. tɔf
11. •saf	11. sɔf
12. •xɛn	12. xejn
13. •mélǝx	13. méjlǝx
14. mǝzúzǝ	14. mǝzúzǝ
15. •ádǝr	15. ódǝr

Table 94:   Parallel Anomalies:
Northwestern Yiddish Corpus

Expected Reflexes	Actual Reflexes
1. •bɛz	1. bɛjz
2. •yɛz	2. yɛjz
3. •yav	3. vōv
4. •jod	4. jūd
5. •non	5. nūn
6. •kof	6. kūf
7. •rɛš̌	7. rɛjš̌
8. •šin	8. š̄in
9. •sin	9. sīn
10. •taf	10. tōf
11. •saf	11. sōf
12. •xɛn	12. xɛjn
13. •mélǝx	13. méjlǝx
14. •mǝzúzǝ	14. mǝzózǝ
15. •ádǝr	15. ódǝr

synchronic anomalies in the Northeast.   It is noteworthy
that three other letters of the Yiddish alphabet which would
have long vowels in closed syllables if the whole of the
alphabet were exempted as a semantic class from shortening
of long vowels in closed syllables, xɛs (= [x] < ḥ), tɛs
(= [t] < ṭ) and mɛm (= |m] < m), appear as expected with
vowel 21 throughout Yiddish.

9.5.5.   Implications for Proto Yiddish

From the continuum of possible positions, three
major views of the viability of protolanguages may be
abstracted (cf. §§ 3.3). View (a), characteristic of the
classic nineteenth century comparative stammbaum model,
considers protolanguages to be actual entities lending
themselves to complete reconstruction.   View (b), espoused
by the nineteenth cenutyry diffusionists and many later
scholars opposed to overabstraction, gives little credence
to the viability of protolanguages.   One of the many
possible intermediate standpoints is view (c), which regards
protolanguages as partially real in the sense that parts of
the attested varieties obviously are derived from a prehistoric
protoentity. While we can never be sure of the exact forms of
this protoentity, its existence is confirmed by such tools as
parallel fusion, divergent concrete realization and parallel

anomalies, in addition to the traditional criterion of
consistent correspondences. Far from confirming Marchand's
(1960: 41; 1965: 249-250) theories of many "Yiddishes",
the Semitic Component provides vital evidence of a Proto
Semitic Component, ergo primary fusion with the Germanic
Component, ergo Proto Yiddish and a relatively early origin
of the language.

9.6.   Proto Vocalism of the Semitic Component in Yiddish

9.6.1.   Segmental Phonology of the Proto Semitic Component

          Our point of departure was the synchronic vowel
system of the Semitic Component of modern Yiddish dialects
(§§ 5.6.3 — 5.6.4; 6.4.3 — 6.4.4). The most salient
features of the system are (a) systematic alternation between
open syllabic 12, 22 and 42 and closed syllabic 11, 21 and 41,
and to a lesser degree of open syllabic 32 with 31 and 52 with
51, and (b) nonoccurrence of long vowel reflexes in closed
syllables. Comparing these vowel systems with the modern
Germanic Component (§ 5.6), and with coterritorial forms
of Ashkenazic (§ 6.4) and subjecting them to the tests of
internal (§ 9.2), limited comparative (§ 9.3), transcomponent
(§ 9.4) and interdialectal reconstruction (§ 9.5), we have
discounted the accepted theories of a five vowel system
undergoing expansion in consequence of Germanically inspired

Open Syllable Lengthening, and we have demonstrated the primeval presence of long vowels in the system. The proposed proto vocalism of the Semitic Component is illustrated in Table 95. We posit a ten vowel system which at first glance resembles the qualitative-quantitative version of Tiberian vocalism (Table 49). There is, however, a crucial difference, as is evident from the Tiberian vowel grapheme names subscripted to each protovowel. Unlike the seven vowel interpretation of Tiberian vocalism (Table 47), the Kimchian system (Table 48), and the qualitative-quantitative version (Table 49), the proto vocalism of the Semitic Component distinguishes sere from segol and qames from pathah in open syllables only. Similarly holem has a realization distinct from that of unstressed closed syllabic qames (qames qatan) in open syllables only. The opposition between long and short hireq and long and short shureq (the high vowels), while in any event complementary, likewise obtains in open syllabic position only. The synchronic distribution of the proto vocalism of the Semitic Component is illustrated in Table 96. Note that in closed syllables, the system bears a striking resemblance to Sephardic and the five vowel Palestinian systems (Table 51).

9.6.2. Dynamic Phonology of the Proto Semitic Component

The broader implications of this two-pronged result

Table 95: Proto Vocalism of the Semitic Component in Yiddish

$*\bar{\imath}_{32}$
(‖ open syllabic hireq)

$*i_{31}$
(‖ closed syllabic hireq)

$*\bar{e}_{22}$
(‖ open syllabic sere)

$*\varepsilon_{21/25}$
(‖ segol; closed syllabic sere)

$*\bar{u}_{52}$
(‖ open syllabic shureq/qibbus)

$*u_{51}$
(‖ closed syllabic shureq/qibbus)

$*\bar{o}_{42}$
(‖ open syllabic holem)

$*\bar{\mathfrak{o}}_{12}$
(‖ open syllabic qames)

$*c_{41}$
(‖ unstressed closed syllabic qames; closed syllabic holem)

$*a_{11/13b}$
(‖ pathah; stressed closed syllabic qames)

Table 96:   Synchronic Distribution of the Proto Vocalism of the Semitic Component

in open syllables	*ī	*ē	*ɛ	*ɔ̄	*a	*ō	*ū
in closed syllables	*i		*ɛ		*a	*ɔ	*u
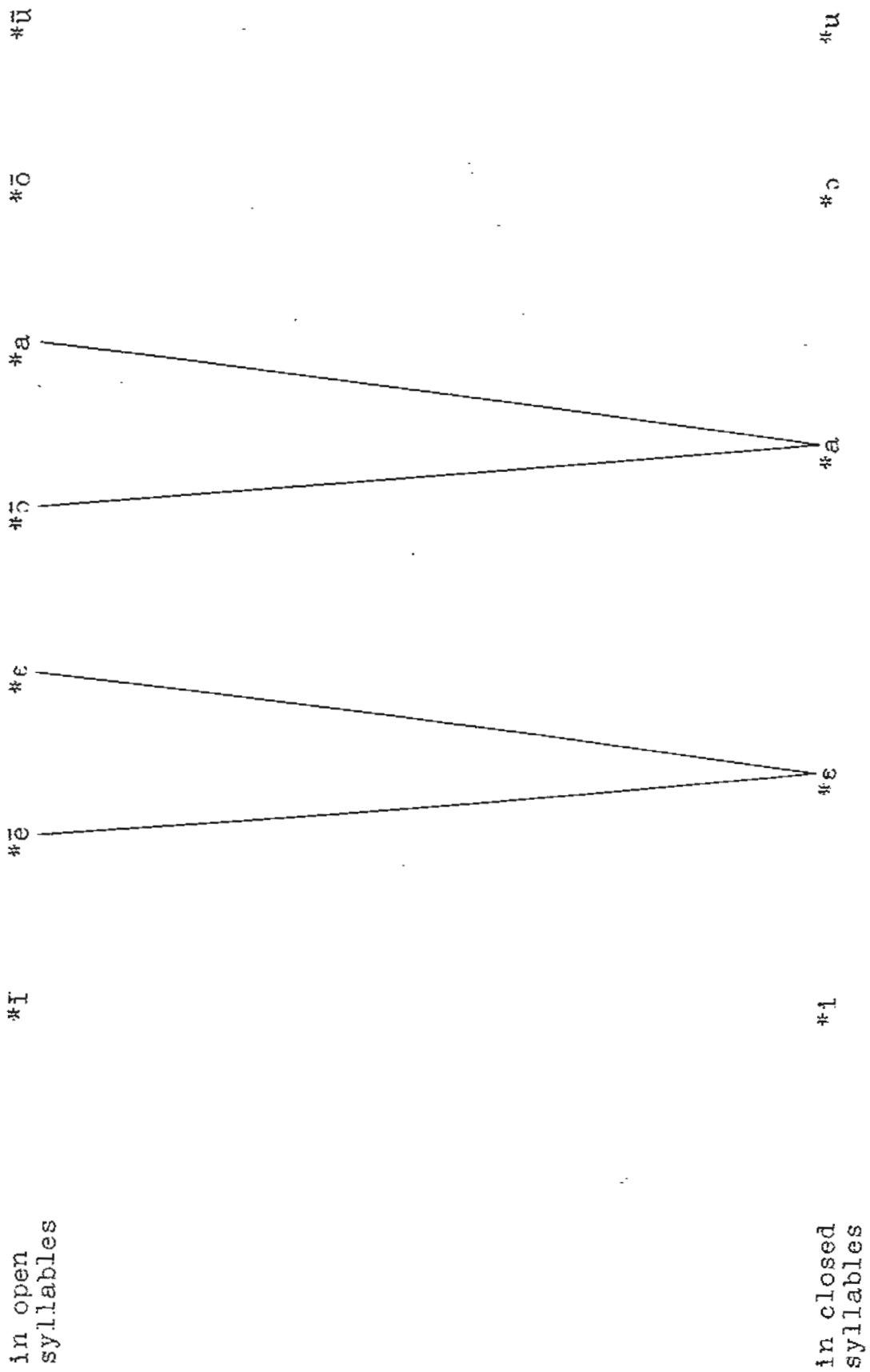
(open syllabic "Tiberian" vs. closed syllabic "Sephardic"/
"Palestinian") will be considered below (§ 9.7). There is
one immediate problem to be faced. Having demonstrated
that the systematic alternations between open syllabic series
02 long vowels and closed syllabic series 01 short vowels
did not arise by means of Open Syllable Lengthening, we are
back at square one with respect to accounting for these
alternations. Now there is but one logical alternative to
Open Syllable Lengthening — Closed Syllable Shortening
(with which we have experimented synchronically for
purposes of internal reconstruction, § 9.2). Unlike Open
Syllable Lengthening, Closed Syllable Shortening accounts
for all the data successfully. Nevertheless, it would be
highly improbable, to put it mildly, that Closed Syllable
Shortening entered the Semitic Component at some point in
time during the history of Yiddish without processing the
Germanic Component as well and without entering Yiddish
from some contiguous or coterritorial language with which
Yiddish speakers were in contact. In fact, it would be
rather ludicrous to argue that a major rule profoundly
affecting the vowel system could come from nowhere and
process the minority component of a fusion language, leaving
the majority component untouched. The only way out of this
quandary and the only solution which presents itself to us,
is the notion that the Semitic Component inherited the rule
itself along with its phonology, morphology and lexicon. Let

us then proceed a step further to reconstruct the dynamic
phonology of the Proto Semitic Component. As illustrated
in Table 97, underlying Semitic Component long vowels
in closed syllables are synchronically processed by
Closed Syllable Shortening, generating surface short vowels.
Their underlying length could of course be established only
where synchronic alternation with surface long vowels in
open syllables is exhibited in homomorphemic paradigms.
Carried one stage further, the implication of our proposal
is that the alternations themselves (e.g. Proto Yiddish
*kelālím ~ *kelál, *šēδím ~ *šεδ, *gōláθ ~ *qol, *dīním ~
*din, *mūmím ~ *mum) were inherited into the Semitic
Component. In consequence of these alternations, the
synchronic Proto Semitic Component had dual synchronic
sources for the derivation of surface short vowels, as
illustrated in Table 98. Surface short vowels (center
column) derive from underlying long vowels in closed
syllables processed by Closed Syllable Shortening where
alternation exists (left column) as well as from underlying
short vowels in nonalternating forms (right column).
Synchronically speaking, the Proto Semitic Component
is characterized by neutralization in closed syllables of
the opposition between its long (or tense) and short (or lax)
vowels.

Table 97: Dynamic Phonology of the Proto Vocalism of the Semitic Component:
V → [-long] / ___ C$

Underlying Vowels in Closed Syllables	CLOSED SYLLABLE SHORTENING	Surface Short Vowels in Closed Syllables
*|ī|	→	*[i]
*|ē|	→	*[ɛ]
*|ā|	→	*[a]
*|ō|	→	*[ɔ]
*|ū|	→	*[u]

Table 98: Synchronic Sources of the Proto Semitic Component Short Vowels

Underlying Long Vowels processed by Closed Syllable Shortening		Surface Short Vowels		Underlying Short Vowels
*|ī|	⇒	*[ɪ]	⇐	*|ɪ|
*|ē|	⇒	*[ɛ]	⇐	*|ɛ|
*|ā|	⇒	*[a]	⇐	*|a|
*|ō|	⇒	*[ə]	⇐	*|ɔ|
*|ū|	⇒	*[u]	⇐	*|u|
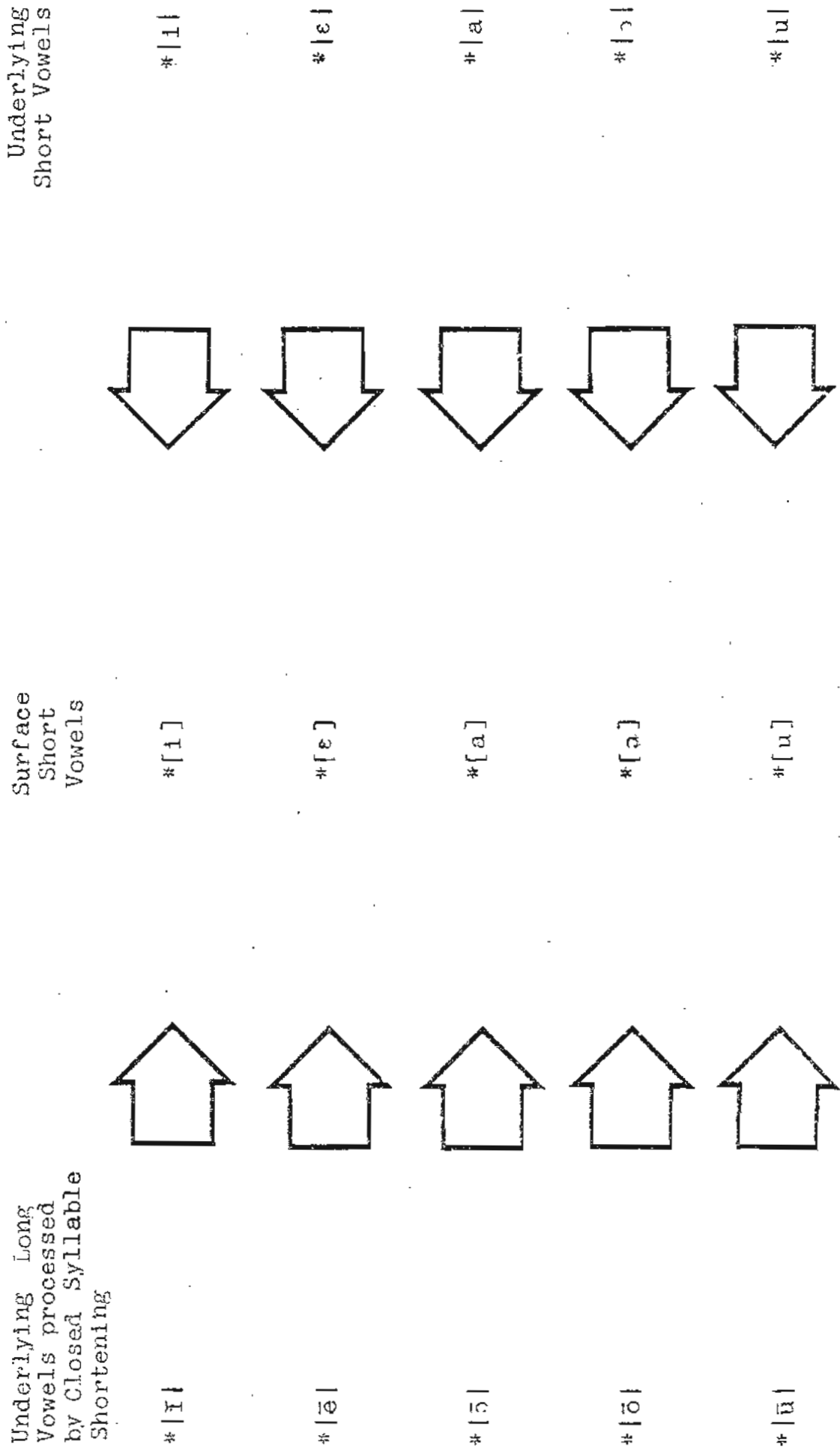
9.6.3. Primary vs. Secondary Semitic Component Diaphonemes

The ten Semitic Component protovowels (11, 21, 31, 41, 51, 12, 22, 32, 42 and 52) account for the stressed vowel system of the Semitic Component as we believe it to have been inherited into Proto Yiddish. There are, however, thirteen Semitic Component vowels matched up with up to fourteen of the sixteen Pan Yiddish vowel diaphonemes (Table 1). We propose to call those diaphonemes synonymous with protovowels primary vowels. Diaphonemes thought to have arisen by documented or reconstructed sound shifts during the history of Yiddish may then be referred to as secondary vowels. While disproving the notion that vowels 12 (cognate with open syllabic qames) and 22 (cognate with open syllabic sere) result from Open Syllable Lengthening, we have come across two secondary vowels which did in fact result from Open Syllable Lengthening — vowels 13b (cognate with stressed open syllabic pathah) and 25 (cognate with stressed open syllabic segol).

An interesting secondary vowel in the Semitic Component is vowel 34 (in now defunct areas of Western Yiddish, also 24). Unlike vowels 13 and 25 which are secondary in both components, vowels 24 and 34 are primary vowels (original diphthongs) in the Germanic Component (cf. Table 1.13-14). Like vowel 13b, this diaphoneme is matched up with different Germanic Component vowels in different areas — vowel 34 in

all of Eastern Yiddish and most of Northwestern Yiddish,
mostly vowel 24 in Southern Western Yiddish. While all
primary vowels are matched with identical Germanic Component
vowels in all parts of Yiddish, it is little surprise that
secondary vowels would undergo diverse fusion with different
Germanic Component vowels in different varieties of the
language.

In modern Eastern Yiddish, such items as MEY
dā́gə 'worry', mā́xl '(type of) food; delight, mā́məd 'standing'
mā́(n)sə 'story', šā́lə 'question (of permission)' ‖ NEY
dájgə, májxl, májməd, májsə, šájlə (‖ Southeastern Yiddish
dágə, máxl, máməd, má(n)sə, šálə) appear consistently fused
with Germanic Component vowel 34. In many southerly regions
of Western Yiddish, they appear with $\bar{a}_{13ab/24/44}$, and we
have no definitive proof that the fusion is with 24 rather
than with 13ab. The regional Southern Western Yiddish forms
dā́gə, mā́xl, mā́məd, mā́(n)sə, šā́lə merit a special study (cf.
Katz 1979b). Fusion with vowel 34 is excluded as a
serious possibility in these areas because Germanic Component
vowel 34 appears consistently as aj or ɛj in the West.

Bloomgarden and Spivak (1911: xiii) and Birnbaum
(1922: 26) claim that the environment specific to the
Semitic Component vowel 34 (or 24) forms is the sequence
[a] [ʔ or ʕ] [ă] (pathah followed by א or ע followed by
hatef pathah). This is, to be sure, correct for some forms

(e.g. Tiberian maʔăxól, maʕămóð), but as Borokhov (1913e: no. 333) notes, the correspondence frequently fails to hold (cf. Tiberian daʔ5yó, šᵊʔēló).   In our view the environment common to all Semitic Component vowel 34 (/24) forms is the presence of ʔ or ʕ in intervocalic position, irrespective of the quality or quantity of the surrounding vowels.   In each case, the sequence of consecutive syllabic segments (hiatus) caused by the loss of ʔ and ʕ fused with a certain stage of Germanic Component 34 (or 24).   The rise of this diaphoneme helps demonstrate the presence of these consonants at an early stage of Yiddish.

9.7.   Historical Inferences

9.7.1.   Summary of Phonological Development

To fathom the major contours of phonological development of the Semitic Component, it is necessary to conceptually separate what there was (the system brought into Europe by the settlers who would become the first Yiddish speakers) from what happened to it in the Germanic environment.   The key developments are illustrated in Table 99.   The vertical arrow represents the Semitic Component through time while the horizontal line separates the system brought into Europe from the

Table 99: Summary of the Phonological History of the Semitic Component in Yiddish

Pre Yiddish	Yiddish
ten vowel system processed synchronically by Closed Syllable Shortening; input of reading tradition forms resistant to Closed Syllable Shortening	Germanic Component Impact upon Semitic Component phonology including 1) Open Syllable Lengthening 2) Medial Vowel Reduction/Deletion 3) Stress Shift (Penultimate Stress Assignment) 4) Degemination 5) Posttonic Reduction 6) Collapse of t/ṭ, k/q, d/ḍ, g/ɣ, s/ṣ/ẓ, x/ḥ, x/w 7) Loss of ẓ and ʕ resulting in the rise of Semitic Component vowel 34(/24)

developments it was destined to undergo under Germanic
impact. A primeval ten vowel system, processed
synchronically by Closed Syllable Shortening .—— and
therefore exhibiting only five surface short vowels in
closed syllables —— entered Proto Yiddish. Under the
impact of the reading tradition, it is likely that many of
the names of the letters of the alphabet, and perhaps a
handful of other lexical items, tenaciously retained
long vowels in closed syllables in defiance of Closed
Syllable Shortening. In the European period, represented
by the area below the horizontal line, the Semitic Component,
fused with the Germanic Component, was subjected to a
number of phonological developments obviously due to Germanic
impact. Items 6 and 7 —— merger of Northwest Semitic
consonants unknown to the Germanic Component with other
consonants whose realizations did have close approximations
in the Germanic Component, and the total loss of two of
these, giving rise to diaphoneme 34 (/24) in the Semitic
Component —— can be ordered at various points in the history
of Yiddish.

Let us now restrict ourselves to ordered sound shifts
in the history of Semitic Component vocalism. To begin at
the earliest possible (Pre Yiddish) point, we may include
Closed Syllable Shortening (which at any rate survived into
Proto Yiddish as a synchronic rule for alternating forms).
These are then the six sound shifts that account for the vast
majority of Semitic Component forms in terms of Tiberian etymons.
All of these transpired during the Old Yiddish period (cf.
above §4.3) before the application of the Great Yiddish Vowel
Shift.

(1)   Closed Syllable Shortening:

V > [-long] / ___C$

*ʔōṣārōθ 'treasures' > *ʔōṣārōθ, *gannāv 'thief'
> *gannóv, *šabbōθ 'Sabbath; Saturday' > *šabbíθ,
*šālōm 'peace' > *šolóm, *šuttōfūθ 'partnership' >
*šuttōfūθ; *kəlōl 'rule' > *kəlál, *šēδ 'ghost' >
*šεδ, *dīn 'law' > *din, *qōl 'voice' > *qol,
*mūm 'blemish' > *mum.

In the last five instances, systematic alternation
with open syllabic allomorphs (plural forms) would
have maintained Closed Syllable Shortening as a
synchronic rule in Proto Yiddish.

V → [- long] / ___C$

*|kəlōl| → *[kəlál] (12 → 11), *|šēδ| → *[šεδ] (22 →
21), *|dīn| → *[din] (32 → 31), *|qōl| → *[qol]
(42 → 41), *|mūm| → *[mum] (52 → 51). Cf. Proto
Yiddish *[kəlōlím] 'rules', *[šēδím] 'ghosts',
*[dīním] 'laws', *[qōlōθ] 'voices', *[mūmím] 'blemishes'.

(2)   Open Syllable Lengthening:

V > [+long] / _____$
             [+stress]

*páhaδ 'fear' > *pāhaδ, *béγεδ 'garment' > *bēγεδ.

(3)   (Sporadic) Medial Vowel Reduction/Deletion:

V > [-tense / ∅] / VC₀___C₀V

*ʔōṣārōθ > *ʔōṣ(ə)rōθ, *haθunnō 'wedding' > *haθənnō,

*šuttɔ̄fúθ > *šutt(ə)fúθ.

(4)   Stress Shift   (Penultimate Stress Assignment):

    $\begin{array}{l} V \\ [+\text{tense}] \end{array} > [+\text{stress}] \; / \; \underline{\hspace{1em}} C_0 (VC_0) \#\#$

*ʔɔ̄ṣ(ə)rɔ́θ > *ʔɔ́ṣ(ə)θrɔθ, *ʔəméθ > *ʔéməθ, *gannóv
> *gánnɔv, *haθənnɔ̄ > *háθənnɔ̄, *šabbɔ́θ > *šábbɔθ,
*šɔlɔ́m > *šɔ́lom, *šutt(ə)fúθ > *šútt(ə)fuθ.

(5)   Degemination:

$C_\alpha C_\alpha > C$

*gánnɔv > *gánɔv, *háθənnɔ̄ > *háθənɔ̄, *šábbɔθ >
*šábɔθ, *šútt(ə)fuθ > *šút(ə)fuθ.

(6)   Posttonic Reduction:

$V > [-\text{tense}] \; / \; \underset{[+\text{stress}]}{V} \; C_0 \underline{\hspace{2em}}$

*ʔɔ́ṣ(ə)rɔθ > *ʔɔ́ṣ(ə)θrəθ, *bɛ̄yəð > *bɛ̄yəð, *ʔéməθ >
*ʔéməθ, *gánɔv > *gánəv, *háθənɔ̄ > *háθənə, *pɔ̄hað >
*pɔ̄hað, *šábɔθ > *šábəθ, *šɔ́lɔm > *šɔ́ləm, *šút(ə)fuθ
> *šút(ə)fəθ.

Note that Coen Syllable Lengthening (2) was originally
allophonic. The oppositions 11 vs. 13 and 21 vs. 25 were

phonologized in consequence of Stress Shift (4), which gave
rise to such pairs as *házir vs. *páhaδ (vowels 11 vs. 13b)
and *?émeθ vs. *béveδ (vowels 21 vs. 25). The first member
of each pair escaped lengthening because its stress was
still ultimate when Lengthening applied. Phonologization
was enhanced by Degemination (5) which produced many new
items with vowel 11 in stressed open syllables (e.g. *gánov,
*šáboθ) and a number with vowel 21 (e.g. *hétēr). Degemination
processed many geminate consonants responsible for closing
the preceding syllables which were opened when the remaining
single consonants began the CV sequence of the following
syllable.

Assorted consonant mergers and losses (cf. Table 99)
and the effects of the

(7)   Great Yiddish Vowel Shift (cf. 4.3; Tables 12-13)
        would then give Old Yiddish

        *óucres, *béged, *émes, *gánov, *xásene, *xézer,
        *héter, *páxed, *šábes, *šólem, *šútfes.

The further development of these and other Semitic Component
forms would at this point in time become part of the
individual histories of the several dialects of Yiddish.
Our reconstruction is at sharp variance with Leibel's (1965)
who proposes that stress shifted first to initial syllables
and only secondarily to the penultimate position in many cases.
Cases of prepenultimate stress in modern Yiddish (e.g. xásene)
are due to Medial Vowel Reduction (3) which applied prior to
Penultimate Stress Assignment.

9.7.2.   The Semitic Component and Ashkenazic

Had the Semitic Component entered Yiddish from the
Hebrew and Aramaic reading tradition of Ashkenazi Jewry (the
text theory) then surely it too, like the Ashkenazic from
which it derived, would have long and short vowels in
both open and closed syllables.   In as much as Closed
Syllable Shortening is not a Germanic development, but one
which uniquely characterizes the Semitic Component in Yiddish,
the text theory is rendered untenable.   To salvage the text
theory, one would have to posit immaculate conception of
Closed Syllable Shortening during the history of Yiddish.
We contend that the Semitic Component entered into the fusion
of Yiddish when the first settlers arrived on German speaking
territory.   That Semitic Component (whatever its lexical
and grammatical differences vis-à-vis the later Semitic
Component) was characterized by a ten vowel system, reduced
synchronically to a five vowel system in closed syllables.
With respect to the theories concerning the origins of the
Semitic Component (§ 3.1), the historical phonology of the
Semitic Component is in concord with the continual
transmission theory.

9.7.3.   The Semitic Component and Northwest Semitic Vowel
          Systems

The proto vocalism of the Semitic Component (Tables
95-98) conforms with none of the candidate Hebrew and Aramaic
systems.(§ 8.3).   It is midway between Tiberian (in its

Kimchian and qualitative-quantitative versions (Tables 48-49) and Palestinian (Table 51). The vowel system from which the Semitic Component derives maintained Tiberian-like oppositions in open syllables which were neutralized in closed syllabic position, resulting in a Palestinian-like system in closed syllables. This type of development is highly natural from the perspective of linguistic universals (e.g. Kenstowicz and Kisseberth 1977: 176). The historical phonological evidence of Yiddish provides good reason to posit a Northwest Semitic vowel system intermediate between the ten vowel Tiberian variety and the five vowel Palestinian variety. Whether this reconstructed midway system constituted a chronological midpoint between an earlier ten vowel system and a later five vowel system remains to be investigated.

9.7.4. Vernacular Origins

The nonderivability of the Semitic Component from Ashkenazic or from any combination of Ashkenazic and Germanic impact and the unique vowel system characterizing the Semitic Component, lead to the conclusion that it was brought to Europe in the everyday speech of the first settlers. From the perspective of the theories concerning the age of Yiddish (§ 3.2), the phonological history of the Semitic Component is in concord with the primary fusion theory. That is not to

deny that enrichment from sacred texts played a noteworthy,
if secondary, role in the evolution of the Semitic Component
as we know it today.   Analogously, the notion of primary
fusion beween the Germanic and Semitic Components is not
a denial of enrichment of the Germanic Component by later
contacts with German dialects, especially in the first
centuries of the history of Yiddish, during which the
center of gravity of the language was in the West and
coterritorial with German dialects.   The proposed
framework of primary fusion and secondary enrichment is
illustrated in Table 100.

Now the notions of vernacular origin and primary
fusion are not meant to suggest that Yiddish was born the
day the first family settled in a German speaking town in
the ninth or tenth century.   They are meant to oppose
the notion that the Jewish community in the area that was
to become Ashkenaz adopted a local variety of German, and
used it for generations during which time Semitisms began to
creep into their speech from the sacred texts used by members
of the community.   Far removed in time from the generations
of the settlers, and with no surviving documents to consult,
the modern historical linguist is hardly in a position to
describe the pace and form of the fusion for the settlers
and their children.   If a model is to be put forward, it will

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Table 100:   Primary Fusion;   Secondary Enrichment      │
├─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤


   ▶  ▶  ▶  ▶                    ◀  ◀  ◀  ◀

   Proto   Semitic   Component      Proto   Germanic   Component




   Enrichment from Hebrew      ↺ ↻    Enrichment from
   and  Aramaic texts                 coterritorial German
                                      dialects
```
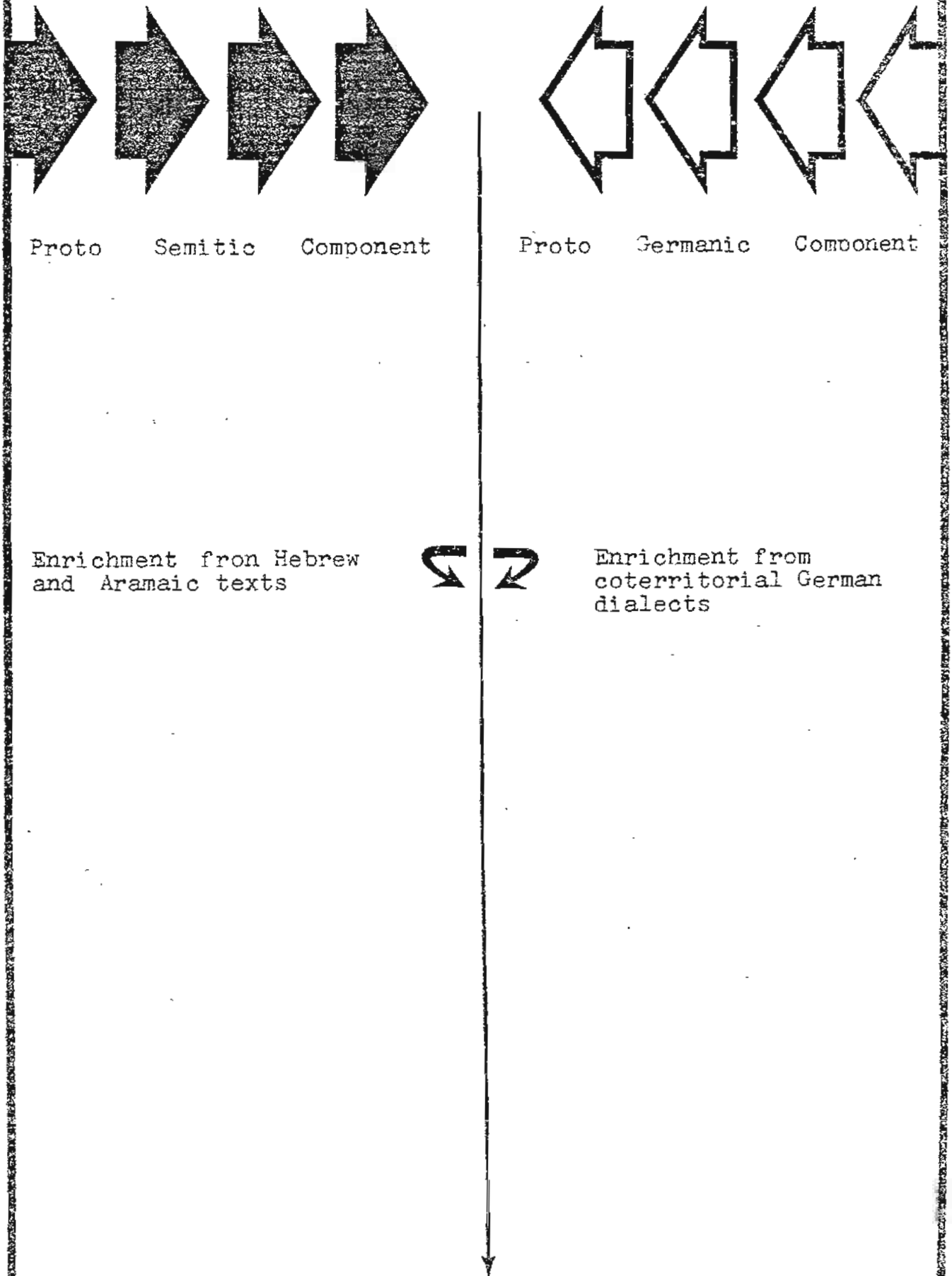
of necessity be a thought experiment for which no empirical
evidence is available. It is perhaps wiser to concede
ignorance while exploring possibilities within the framework
of constraints dictated by the hard linguistic evidence. The
vernacular Semitic Component could have been part of a Semitic
or non-Semitic language (i.e. the prelanguage) spoken by the
(retroactively speaking) first Ashkenazim. The prelanguage
could have been maintained by the first settlers, or even the
first generations of settlers, while from the very start,
they will have become familiar with and adapted local varieties
of German (cf. Hudson 1982). Now these varieties of
German dialects will have been characterized by linguistic
specificities not shared by German speakers, partly in
consequence of the structural impact of the prelanguage, partly
as a result of the social autonomy of the community and on the
strength of contacts with other Jewish communities on German
speaking soil. Even if a genuine state of bilingualism
obtained at the earliest times of continuous Jewish settlement
in Ashkenaz, it seems likely that the fusion formulae
characteristic of the emerging new language, Yiddish, came into
play upon the first confrontation with the new linguistic
surroundings.

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