

Semantic Classes Resistant to a Yiddish Sound Shift

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Regularity Hypothesis. The many successes of nineteenth century historical linguistics achieved through use of the comparative method culminated in the classical formulation of the neogrammarian hypothesis that genuine sound laws are exceptionless and storable in purely phonetic terms (cf. Leskien 1876; Osthoff & Brugman 1878: xiii). The regularity hypothesis was to become a key tenet of the American structuralists. Bloomfield (1933: 354) held that "non-phonetic factors, such as the frequency or meaning of particular linguistic forms, do not interfere with the change of phonemes." He argued moreover that the regularity hypothesis is "justified by the correlations which it uncovers" (p. 360) whereas claims of exceptions and sporadic change are open to attack as cases of wrong analysis actually involving borrowing, analogic new combination or unobserved phonetic process (pp. 360-364).<sup>1</sup>

The post-Bloomfieldian generation continued to adhere faithfully to a strong version of the regularity hypothesis. Gleason (1961: 395) held that "phonetic change affects any given allophone consistently." The claim of purely phonetic conditioning of sound change was implicit in Hockett's (1958: 440-444) physiologically motivated characterization of the sound change mechanism.

Hall (1964: 304) charged that the regularity hypothesis stirred opposition because people are "emotionally attached to the idea that speech must of necessity 'mirror' and follow human thought, not determine it." He remarked further that "all scholars with any competence in historical linguistics [are regularists] whether they admit to being regularists in theory or not" and coined the term "crypto-regularists" for "such linguistic geographers and others as oppose the regularist postulate in their theoretical elucidations but observe it in practice" (p. 305).

#### 1.2. Generative Phonology on the Regularity Hypothesis.

While generative phonology has clearly freed itself of the neogrammarian yoke, there hasn't emerged a single stance vis a vis the regularity hypothesis in historical work within the generative framework. Postal (1968: 231-309), coupling the (diachronic) neogrammarian position with the (synchronic) structuralist autonomous phoneme, falsified both at once by documenting the splitting in Mohawk of some instances of [kw] by epenthesis, where "the underlying phonological structure which differentiated phonetically like elements was a determining factor" (p. 247). King (1969: 134-139) had no qualms in accepting varied types of exceptions to sound changes, working with the less powerful hypothesis that "phonological change is regular, but its environment cannot always be stated in strictly phonetic terms" (p. 121). Wang (1969: 10) however, has warned that

exceptions explained in nonphonetic terms, when "contrasted with the sweeping scope of phonetic laws, which have direct or indirect physiological motivation when internally induced (...) appear unsatisfyingly ancillary and particularistic. In some cases, such suggestions are completely ad hoc and unconvincing (...)." Hooper (1976: 102), under the banner of natural generative phonology has drawn closer to the neogrammarian stand by asserting that "sound changes are always initiated for phonetic reasons and, therefore, in phonetic environments" and exceptions are accounted for in her theory as secondary developments arising between the implementation and completion of sound change (cf. below § 4.2).

1.3. Falsification of the Regularity Hypothesis. The neogrammarian thesis has been empirically disconfirmed on the level of language specific sound changes. Saussure (1916 [1959]: 93-94) elaborated with characteristic brilliance on the force of analogy as a counterforce to phonetic change. Sturtevant (1917[1968]: 83-84) asserted that "psychological causes may hinder a change from spreading to all words which contain a given sound." Wilkinson (1975: 527) proposed a

"minimization of homonymy" principle in explaining homonym-avoiding phonological devices in Igede and Carib. Among the nonphonetic factors affecting sound change cited in the literature are conditioning by the morphology (Sihler 1977), the inflectional paradigm (Malkiel 1968), and syntax (Anttila 1972: 79-80). Many such factors were integrated by Martinet (1952; 1953) in a theory in which factors of functional import may be held to account for developments not explainable in purely phonetic terms.

1.4. Functional vs. Nonfunctional Exceptions to Sound Laws.

It is conceivable that some of the neogrammarians, had they lived today, would accept the notion of phonological conditioning (on a nonphonetic level of representation) as consonant with the regularity hypothesis. But for analogical leveling (which can be seen as a "corrective" to sound change) and factors of functional value, the regularity hypothesis has stood up quite well wherever sound changes are intrasystemic (in the sense of Samuels 1972: 7) and not due to borrowing or other impact of an external system.

The strongest claim against the neogrammarian hypothesis is that sound laws may leave exceptions not explainable in terms of analogical leveling, functional factors (in the broadest sense) or extrasystemic impact. Of the classes of exceptions to sound laws proposed by

Öhmann (1948), tabu, euphemism and emphasis may fit into this category. Anttila (1972: 86) noted that "scholars, on the whole, agree as to where they expect such forms, for example, in names for all kinds of noises, scraping, quick movements, slow movements, tabu or unpleasant notions and so on."

In the present paper we shall document a series of semantic classes (constituting nonfunctional exceptions) which have systematically resisted an otherwise pervasive Yiddish sound change.

## 2. CLOSED SYLLABLE SHORTENING IN YIDDISH

2.1. Closed Syllable Shortening. In the Semitic Component of Yiddish, Proto Yiddish \*ē, \*ī, \*ō and \*ε, \*a, \*ǔ give six distinct Yiddish diaphonemes in open syllables: \*e > Northeastern Yiddish (NEY) ey || Central Yiddish (CY) ay; \*ī > NEY ɨ || CY u;<sup>2</sup> \*ō > NEY ey || CY ɔy; \*ε > NEY ε || CY {ε, ē};<sup>3</sup> \*a > NEY a || CY ǎ; \*ǔ > NEY, CY ɔ.<sup>4</sup> In closed syllables, the oppositions \*ē vs. \*ε, \*ī vs. \*a, and \*ō vs. \*ǔ have been neutralized (in the sense of Trubetzkoy 1939[1962]: 69-75) in favor of the more open, lower, shorter vowel in each pair. Thus only the reflexes of Proto Yiddish \*ε, \*a, and \*ǔ (NEY, CY ε; NEY a || CY ǎ; NEY, CY ɔ) are left in closed syllables in the modern language. We shall collectively refer to these three shifts as Closed Syllable Shortening.<sup>5</sup> Analysis of the historical and synchronic dynamics of Closed Syllable Shortening (CSS) is outside the scope of the present paper which is devoted to the exceptions to CSS. It seems preferable in the present context to amply illustrate the empirical effects of CSS by comparing affected forms in the Semitic Component of Yiddish with two cognate linguistic structures untouched by CSS.



## 2.2. Closed Syllable Shortening Relative to Tiberian.

The Semitic Component in Yiddish consists of lexemes cognate to known Hebrew and Aramaic lexical items.<sup>6</sup> Phonologically, the vowel system of the Semitic Component on the whole bears a one-to-one relationship with the vocalic graphemes of the classical Tiberian system of vocalization (applicable to Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic and, as a phonological system, to Hebrew and Aramaic forms not attested in the Old Testament as well).<sup>7</sup>

Proto Yiddish \*ē, \*ā, and \*ō correspond to the Tiberian vowel graphemes šere, qameš, and holem, which we will transcribe (following Schramm 1964: 29) e, a, and o. Proto Yiddish \*ɛ, \*ɔ, and \*ɔ̄ correspond to Tiberian segol, pathaḥ, and unstressed closed syllabic qameš respectively (= ɛ, ɔ, ɔ̄ in Schramm's transcription).<sup>8</sup>

CSS was discussed above (§ 2.1) in terms of Proto Yiddish vocalism. The process can be rephrased in terms of Tiberian graphemes: the Semitic Component in Yiddish maintains distinct oppositional reflexes for the relevant pairs of vowels — šere vs. segol and qameš vs. pathaḥ in open syllables.<sup>9</sup> In closed syllables, the reflexes of šere, qameš and holem (which correspond to long Yiddish protovowels) are processed by CSS and give reflexes of segol, pathaḥ, and unstressed closed syllabic qameš.

### 2.3. Closed Syllable Shortening Relative to Ashkenazic.

We use the term "Ashkenazic" to refer to the pronunciation of the traditional, hallowed and liturgical (but nonspoken) Hebrew and Aramaic. Ashkenazic was in use throughout the Yiddish speech territory of Central and Eastern Europe during the last thousand years. While the phonetic shifts of each Yiddish dialect applied equally to the Ashkenazic of the dialect's speakers, the phonology of Ashkenazic has remained relatively static as compared with the many changes undergone by the spoken Semitic Component in Yiddish. We are thus afforded the opportunity of comparing Semitic Component forms with their cognates in the Ashkenazic of each Yiddish dialect area.<sup>10</sup> Just as the effects of CSS are manifest in terms of Proto Yiddish vocalism (§ 2.1) and relative to Tiberian vowel graphemes (§ 2.2), the process can be rephrased in terms of Ashkenazic.

The Ashkenazic cognates of Semitic Component forms were never processed by CSS. Thus Tiberian e, ə and o give Northeastern Ashkenazic ey, ə and ey, respectively in both open and closed syllables but Northeastern Yiddish ey, ə and ey in open syllables only. Closed syllable forms are processed by CSS giving ɛ, ə and ə respectively. Analogously, Tiberian e, ə and o give Central Ashkenazic ay, u and əy, respectively in both open and closed syllables but Central Yiddish ay, u and əy in open syllables only. Closed syllable forms are processed by CSS giving ɛ, ǎ and ə.

2.4. The Empirical Effects of Closed Syllable Shortening.

In Table I, the three relevant Tiberian vowels are contrasted with the corresponding Proto Yiddish vowels which are processed by CSS in both dialects of Yiddish but in neither corresponding dialect of Ashkenazic.<sup>11</sup> In Table II, an illustrative Tiberian corpus provides eighteen examples for each relevant vowel: nos. 1-18 illustrate Tiberian e, nos. 19-36 Tiberian o, nos. 37-54 Tiberian o.

The numbering of the tables that follow (III - VII) is calibrated to Table II. Table III illustrates the unitary reflexes of Tiberian e (nos. 1-18) in the Ashkenazic of both Northeastern and Central Yiddish speakers (unprocessed by CSS), contrasted with the cognate forms in the Semitic Component of Northeastern Yiddish and Central Yiddish (processed by CSS). The same comparison is carried out for reflexes of Tiberian o in Table IV (nos. 19-36) and Tiberian o in Table V (nos. 37-54).

Nowhere are the effects of CSS in modern Yiddish more striking than in the series of systematic vocalic alternations in the Semitic Component of every Yiddish dialect. These alternations were engendered by CSS in instances where morphological paradigms give closed vs. open syllable allomorphs. In Table VI, six words representing each of the

three relevant Tiberian vowels have been gleaned from our base corpus (Table II) and the alternating pairs (open vs. closed syllable) of Northeastern Yiddish contrasted with the nonalternating forms of the Ashkenazic of Northeastern Yiddish speakers. The syllable boundary is marked by §. Central Yiddish and Central Ashkenazic forms are subjected to the same treatment in Table VII. In anticipation, the relevant open syllabic Tiberian forms were provided in Table II. CSS has resulted in vocalic alternations in the Semitic Component, where cognates in Tiberian and Ashkenazic exhibit none.<sup>12</sup>

TABLE I: Closed Syllable Shortening in the Semitic Component of Yiddish

Tiberian		Proto Yiddish	Northeastern Ashkenazic (in all positions)	Northeastern Yiddish (in open syllables)	Northeastern Yiddish (in closed syllables)	Central Ashkenazic (in all positions)	Central Yiddish (in open syllables)	Central Yiddish (in closed syllables)
e	*e	*e	ey	ey	e	ay	ay	e
o	*o	*o	o	o	a	u	u	o
u	*u	*u	ey	ey	e	ay	ay	u

<b>TIBERIAN e, ʕ, and o</b>		
0	ʔ	o
1. beθ-dān 2. ʕer (ʕerīm) 3. ʕet 4. hen 5. heṭ 6. leθ bererš 7. leš (lešīm) 8. memrš 9. meθ (mešīm) 10. meʕeθ leʕeθ 11. milleʕel 12. nes 13. qeš 14. šeθ (šešīm) 15. šem (šemōθ) 16. seʕeq-seʕeqš 17. tel 18. veš	19. beθ-ʕləmīn 20. daḥṣq 21. dōm (dōmīm) 22. kəθav-yṣḏ 23. kəlīl (kəlīlīm) 24. kibbūṣ ʕv (ʕvōθ) 25. meḥṣq 26. mən 27. pəyḏm (pəyḏmīm) 28. parṣṭ 29. pesṣq 30. qenṣe (qenṣeθ) 31. ribbonš deʕləmš 32. seḥōm 33. šamṣḏ 34. heṭṣr 35. ševṣṭ 36. sevṣḥ (sevṣḥīm)	37. bezəl 38. dor (dorōθ) 39. ḥoq 40. koš (košōθ) 41. loṭ 42. moṛeḥīm 43. qol (qolōθ) 44. rov 45. seḥōm 46. seḏ (seḏōθ) 47. sof 48. soferīm 49. teḥōm 50. tox 51. yeṣḏḏ 52. yom tov 53. ʔoθ (ʔoθlyyōθ) 54. ʕol

TABLE II: ILLUSTRATIVE TIBERIAN CORPUS

TABLE III: Tiberian e in Ashkenazic and Yiddish

NORTHEASTERN ASHKENAZIC	NORTHEASTERN YIDDISH	CENTRAL ASHKENAZIC	CENTRAL YIDDISH	GLOSS
1. beys dīn	bēz(d)n	bays dīn	bēz(d)n	'(rabbinical) court'
2. k̄ayr	k̄ayr	k̄ayr	k̄ayr	'proselyte'
3. k̄ayt	k̄ayt	k̄ayt	k̄ayt	'divorce'
4. heyn	hēn	hāyn	hēn	'both [... and]'
5. x̄eyt	x̄eyt	x̄ayt	x̄eyt	'sin'
6. l̄ays b̄areyrə	l̄ays b̄areyrə	l̄ays berayru	l̄ays brayrə	'there is no alternative'
7. l̄ayc	l̄ayc	l̄ayc	l̄ayc	'joker'
8. meymrə	mēmre	māymru	mēmre	'paragraph (in the Talmud)'
9. meys	mēs	mays	mēs	'corpse'
10. meyeys l̄eays	mēsł̄fs	mays l̄eays	mēsł̄fs	'period of twenty- four hours'
11. mil̄eyl	mil̄ēl	mil̄ayl	mil̄ēl	'penultimately stressed'
12. neys	nēs	nays	nēs	'miracle'
13. k̄ayc	k̄ayc	k̄ayc	k̄ayc	'end (of time)'
14. š̄ayd	š̄ayd	š̄ayd	š̄ayd	'ghost'
15. š̄eym	š̄ēm	š̄aym	š̄ēm	'(good) reputation'
16. s̄efayk s̄efaykə	s̄fēk s̄feykə	s̄efayk s̄efayku	s̄fēk s̄faykə	'most dubious matter'
17. t̄ayl	t̄ayl	t̄ayl	t̄ayl	'shambles'
18. yeyš	yēš	yayš	yēš	'entity'

TABLE IV: Tiberian  $\sigma$  in Ashkenazic and Yiddish

NORTHEASTERN ASHKENAZIC	NORTHEASTERN YIDDISH	CENTRAL ASHKENAZIC	CENTRAL YIDDISH	GLOSS
19. beys ɔləmɪn	bɛsəlmin	bays ɔləmɪn	bəsəlmin	'cemetery'
20. dəxək	txək	dəxək	txək	'difficulty'
21. dɔm	dəm	dum	dəm	'blood (one of the Biblical plagues)'
22. kesav yəd	ksav yəd	kesav yūd	ksav yəd	'manuscript'
23. kəlɔl	kləl	kelul	kləl	'rule'
24. kibud ɔv	kibed əv	kibid uv	kibed əv	'honoring of one's father'
25. məxək	məxək	məxək	məxək	'erasure'
26. mən	mən	mən	mən	'manna'
27. pəɔm	bɔm	pəɔm	bɔm	'defect'
28. pərɔt	prət	pərɔt	prət	'detail, aspect'
29. pəsək	psək	pəsək	psək	'punishment'
30. kənɔs	knəs	kenəs	knəs	'fine (punishment)'
31. ribeyno dəɔləmɔ	rebeyne dələme	ribeynu dələmu	rebeyne dələme	'God'
32. stəm	stəm	stəm	stəm	'randomly'
33. šəmɔd	šəməd	šəməd	šməd	'apostasy'
34. šətɔr	štar	šətɔr	štar	'legal document'
35. šəvɔt	švət	šəvɔt	švət	'fifth (Jewish) month'
36. šəvɔx	švax	šəvɔx	švax	'praise'



TABLE V: Tiberian o in Ashkenazic and Yiddish

NORTHEASTERN ASHKENAZIC	NORTHEASTERN YIDDISH	CENTRAL ASHKENAZIC	CENTRAL YIDDISH	GLOSS
37. bezev <sup>l</sup>	bzɔl	bezɔv <sup>l</sup>	bzɔl	'inexpensive'
38. dɛvr	dɔr	dɔvr	dɔr	'generation'
39. xevk	xɔk	xɔvk	xɔk	'law'
40. kev <sup>s</sup>	kɔs	kɔvs	kɔs	'cup'
41. lev <sup>t</sup>	lɔt	lɔvt	lɔt	'lot'
42. mevrɛdim	mɔrdim	mɔvrɛdim	mɔrdɛm	'rebels'
43. kev <sup>l</sup>	kɔl	kɔv <sup>l</sup>	kɔl	'voice'
44. rev <sup>v</sup>	rɔv	rɔvv	rɔv	'majority'
45. sɛdev <sup>m</sup>	zɔm	sɛdɔvm	zɔm	'Sodom'
46. sev <sup>d</sup>	sɔd	sɔvd	sɔd	'secret'
47. sev <sup>f</sup>	sɔf	sɔvf	sɔf	'end'
48. sevferim	sɔrim	sɔvferim	sɔrɛm	'scribes'
49. tev <sup>m</sup>	t(h)ɔm	tɛhɔvm	t(h)ɔm	'abyss'
50. tev <sup>x</sup>	tɔx	tɔvx	tɔx	'essence'
51. yasevd	yɛsd	yɛsvd	yɛsd	'foundation'
52. yev <sup>m</sup> teyv	yɛntɛf	yɛvm teyv	yɛntɛf	'holiday'
53. ev <sup>s</sup>	ɔs	ɔvs	ɔs	'letter (of alphabet)'
54. ev <sup>l</sup>	ɔl	ɔvl	ɔl	'burden'

TABLE VI: Systematic Vocalic Alternation in Northeastern Yiddish  
vs. No Alternation in Northeastern Ashkenazic

NORTHEASTERN YIDDISH	NORTHEASTERN ASHKENAZIC
2. פֿרײַמ 'proselytes' ~ פֿער	פֿרײַמ --- פֿער
7. לײַכױם 'jokers' ~ לעך	לײַכױם --- לעך
9. מעײַסױם 'corpses' ~ מעס	מעײַסױם --- מעס
14. שײַדלױם 'ghosts' ~ שײד	שײַדלױם --- שײד
15. שײַמױס 'remains of sacred books' ~ שײם	שײַמױס --- שײם
16. ספֿעק [~] ספֿעקלע 'most dubious matter'	ספֿעק ספֿעקלע
21. דױפֿלױם 'funds' ~ דױם	דױפֿלױם --- דױם
23. קלױלױם 'rules' ~ קלױל	קלױלױם --- קלױל
24. אַײַבעס 'the patriarchs' ~ אַײַ	אַײַבעס --- אַײַ
27. בעגלױם 'defects' ~ בעגל	בעגלױם --- בעגל
30. קנױפֿױם 'fines' ~ קנױפֿ	קנױפֿױם --- קנױפֿ
36. שױפֿלױם 'praises' ~ שױפֿל	שױפֿלױם --- שױפֿל
38. דײַפֿרױס 'generations' ~ דײַר	דײַפֿרױס --- דײַר
40. קײַפֿױס 'cups' ~ קײַפֿ	קײַפֿױס --- קײַפֿ
43. קײַפֿלױס 'screams' ~ קײַפֿל	קײַפֿלױס --- קײַפֿל
46. סײַפֿױס 'secrets' ~ סײַפֿ	סײַפֿױס --- סײַפֿ
51. יאָסײַפֿױס 'foundations' ~ יאָסײַפֿ	יאָסײַפֿױס --- יאָסײַפֿ
53. אַײַפֿױס 'letters' ~ אַײַפֿ	אַײַפֿױס --- אַײַפֿ

TABLE VII: Systematic Vocalic Alternation in Central Yiddish vs. No Alternation in Central Ashkenazic

CENTRAL YIDDISH	CENTRAL ASHKENAZIC
2. געײרעם ~ גער	געײרעם --- געײר
7. לאַײעם ~ לע	לאַײעם --- לע
9. מאַײעם ~ מעס	מאַײעם --- מאַײעס
14. קאַײעם ~ קעד	קאַײעם --- קעײע
15. קאַײעס ~ קעם	קאַײעס --- קעײעס
16. ספּײק [~] ספּײקע	ספּײק ספּײקע
21. דײעם ~ דעם	דײעם --- דעם
23. קלײעם ~ קלע	קלײעם --- קלע
24. װײעס ~ װע	װײעס --- װע
27. בעײעם ~ בעעם	בעײעם --- בעעם
30. קנײעם ~ קנעס	קנײעם --- קנעס
36. שװײעם ~ שװע	שװײעם --- שװע
38. דײערעס ~ דער	דײערעס --- דער
40. קײעסעס ~ קעס	קײעסעס --- קעס
43. קײעלעס ~ קעל	קײעלעס --- קעל
46. סײעסעס ~ סעס	סײעסעס --- סעס
51. יעסײעסעס ~ יעסע	יעסײעסעס --- יעסע
53. זײעסעס ~ זעס	זײעסעס --- זעס

## 3. EXCEPTIONS TO CLOSED SYLLABLE SHORTENING

3.1. Letters of the Alphabet. Of the twenty-seven letters of the Yiddish alphabet (which derive from the twenty-two Tiberian consonantal graphemes) eleven meet the structural description of CSS.<sup>13</sup> Only the names of three of these eleven, however, have been processed by CSS as expected. These are: NEY, CY xɛs (= [x]), tɛs (= [t]), mɛm (= [m]). Cf. Tiberian heθ, teθ, mem. The names of the other eight exhibit reflexes of Proto Yiddish long vowels in defiance of CSS. They are:

(1) NEY beyz || CY bayz (= [b]) for expected NEY, CY •bɛs (cf. Tiberian beθ). A homophonous form (in Tiberian) in the compound NEY, CY bɛz(d)n 'rabbinical court of law' < bɛs din (cf. Tiberian beθ din) was indeed processed by CSS as expected. We are thereby luckily provided with a minimally contrastive pair illustrating the resistance to CSS by a member of the relevant semantic class, as in several cases below.

(2) NEY veyz || CY vayz (= [v]) for expected NEY, CY •vɛs (cf. Tiberian veθ).

(3) NEY vɔv || CY vuv (= [v]) for expected NEY •vav || CY •vǎv (cf. Tiberian wɔw).

(4) NEY kɔf || CY kuf (= [k]) for expected NEY •kaf || CY •kǎf (cf. Tiberian kɔf).

(5) NEY xɔf || CY xuf (= [x]) for expected NEY •xaf || CY •xǎf (cf. Tiberian xɔf).

(6) NEY reyš || CY rays (= [r]) for expected NEY, CY •reš (cf. Tiberian reš). A homophonous Aramaic form appears however as expected in a number of Yiddish compounds, e.g. NEY, CY reš-məsiftə 'head of a rabbinical academy' (cf. Tiberian reš məθivtə) whose use is apparently restricted to learned speakers.

(7) NEY tɔf || CY tuf (= [t]) for expected NEY •taf || CY •tāf (cf. Tiberian taw).

(8) NEY sof || CY suf (= [s]) for expected NEY •saf || CY •sāf (cf. Tiberian θɔw).

3.2. Books of the Bible. Of the names in Yiddish for the twenty-four Biblical books, two meet the structural description of CSS and both have defied the rule.

(1) NEY šmeys || CY šmɔys 'Exodus' for expected NEY, CY •šmos (cf. Tiberian šəmōθ).

(2) NEY šəyftim || CY šəyftəm 'Judges' for expected •šəftim || CY •šəftəm (cf. Tiberian šofetīm).<sup>14</sup> The same lexeme appears however as NEY šəftim || CY šəftəm in the sense of 'judges (in general)' and especially 'judges (in the Book of Judges)'. A NEY informant, asked to translate the sentence "The judges are written about in the Book of Judges" responded in šəyftim [Book of Judges] šrāypcax vsgn di šəftim [judges].

3.3. Months of the Year. Two (of the twelve) names of months in the Jewish calendar meet the description of CSS. While one of these has been processed as expected (cf. above Tables II, IV: no. 35), the other has escaped. The eleventh month (which falls in late summer) is NEY ɔv || CY uv for expected NEY ɔav || CY \*ǎv (cf. Tiberian ʔɔv). A form whose Tiberian shape is identical, but does not fall into an affected semantic class appears however as expected in the expression NEY kībəd āv || CY kībəd ǎv 'respect for one's father' (cf. Tiberian kibbūð ʔɔv).

Now there is an area of Southeastern Yiddish (a dialect intermediate in many respects between NEY and CY whose vocalism shares the vowel colors of CY except that Proto Yiddish \*ē appears as ey as in NEY) where alongside the exceptional uv 'eleventh month' the dialect gives tīšəbɔv 'Fast of the ninth of Av' (cf. Tiberian tišʕō beʔɔv).<sup>15</sup> Proto Yiddish \*ō in tīšəbɔv escaped raising to \*ō̄ (Proto Eastern Yiddish) and u because raising apparently applied only under stress. The Southeastern Yiddish form can therefore only derive from a form that had escaped CSS. Had CAA applied, the form would be Southeastern Yiddish \*tīšəbav. The attested form tīšəbɔv can only derive from Proto Eastern Yiddish \*tīšəbɔv (as indeed today in NEY), not from a Proto Eastern Yiddish \*tīšəbǎv.

3.4. Link Words. Unlike the case of the first three categories discussed (§§ 3.1 — 3.3), this group does not constitute an unquestionably limited corpus. While it can easily be ascertained that all the names of the letters of the alphabet, the books of the Bible and the months of the year have been checked for meeting the requirements of CSS, there is no such secure check for this or the next group (§ 3.5).

(1) NEY b(ə)éys || CY b(ə)áys 'while, during' for expected NEY, CY •b(ə)és (cf. Tiberian bəḳéθ). But note NEY, CY məslés 'period of twenty-four hours, a day and a night' as expected (cf. Tiberian məḳéθ laḳéθ).

(2) NEY bəxéyn || CY bəxáyn 'therefore' (cf. Tiberian bəxén). These forms vary, however (socially? geographically?) with expected NEY, CY bəxén or pxén.<sup>16</sup>

(3) NEY heyéys || CY heyóys 'in as much (as)' for expected NEY, CY •heyós (cf. Tiberian hěyóθ). Reyzen (1920: 84) pointed to the failure of penultimate stress assignment to apply to this form as evidence of its restricted use among average Yiddish speakers. It is most likely a borrowing from Ashkenazic Hebrew or Aramaic and was not inherited into Proto Yiddish. Not having "come down the line," the form was not processed by the generally pervasive penultimate stress rule nor by CSS.<sup>17</sup>

3.5. Exceptions of no Apparent Semantic Class.

(1) NEY rov || CY ruv '(traditional) rabbi' for expected  
NEY •rav || CY •rāv (cf. Tiberian \*rov which is the only  
possible Tiberian protoform which could have given the reflexes  
in Yiddish despite modern Hebrew dictionaries which give rav).

(2) NEY xeyn || CY xayn 'grace, charm' for expected  
NEY, CY •xən (cf. Tiberian hen). Some speakers of  
Northeastern Yiddish have the adjective xėnəvdik 'graceful'  
while others have xėynəvdik and M. Weinreich (1928: 53) has  
documented <xənr got> 'graceful God' in 1526, in one  
of the very rare instances where a Semitism in Yiddish is  
found to have been spelled according to the (largely phonemic)  
Yiddish system of spelling, rather than the (largely purely  
consonantal) traditional Hebrew or Aramaic orthography.  
However, both present day xėnəvdik and documented  
<xənr got> represent probable work of analogical levelling  
on the model of the inflectional system in the Germanic  
Component in Yiddish, rather than relics of a form originally  
processed by CSS.

(3) NEY xeyv || CY xōyv 'debt' for expected NEY, CY •xov  
(cf. Tiberian hov). Tshemerinski (1913: 61), who called this  
form the only anomaly known for this vowel, theorized analogy of  
Yiddish forms from the same stem where y appears, e.g. xāyev



'guilty', xíev 'obligation' (cf. Tiberian ḥayyōv, ḥiyyūv). Bin-nun (1973: 276) claimed that analogy with the plural (NEY xéyvəs || CY xōyvəs) was responsible for the long vowel reflex, ignoring however all the other instances where singular forms of the canonical shape CVC (processed by CSS) alternate systematically with plurals of the shape CVCVC (where the vowel is in an open syllable and hence not processed by CSS), e.g. sg. NEY, CY kəl 'voice', kəs 'cup', səd 'secret' vs. pls. NEY kéyləs, kéysəs, séydəs || CY kōyləs, kōysəs, sōydəs (cf. Tiberian qol, kos, sođ; qolōθ, kosōθ, sođōθ).

3.6. Western Yiddish. The term "Western Yiddish" refers collectively to the now defunct Yiddish dialects of Alsace, Germany, Holland and other Central European areas (cf. M. Weinreich 1958) as distinguished from present day spoken Yiddish, collectively called Eastern Yiddish (EY) comprising Northeastern, Southeastern and Central Yiddish. When Uriel Weinreich launched the Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry (cf. U. Weinreich 1960) the key goal was Eastern Yiddish but the location of Western Yiddish informants who recall numerous lexical items (and even some who speak the language) has enabled the Atlas to cover in some degree the entire historical speech territory of Yiddish (cf. Map 1).

In our search for exceptions to CSS (§§ 3.1 -- 3.5), we have focused only on Eastern Yiddish, preferring to work

with less material but secure material gleaned from the spoken language. Naturally the forthcoming publication of the Atlas (directed by Prof. M. Herzog) will add a wealth of knowledge to many problems of Yiddish dialectology from the perspective of Western Yiddish. There is however a relatively healthy body of literature and dialect work available on various areas of Western Yiddish and rather than skirt the problem, we will test wherever possible the exceptions to CSS uncovered in the East (§§ 3.1 — 3.5) with attestations in the West. The most reliable corpus of Western material is found in the works of the master of Dutch Yiddish, Hartog Beem (1970; 1975), who is one of the last who actually heard the spoken language as a youth. <sup>18</sup>

The confrontation with Western Yiddish (WY) material reveals three degrees of conformity with exceptions to CSS in the East. Some of the forms enumerated turn out to be Pan Yiddish (maintaining reflexes of long vowels in closed syllables in WY as in all of EY). A second category displays CSS processing in the West as expected (where the EY forms are anomalously resistant). Finally, and quite intriguingly there is a group where forms have been partially processed by CSS in Western Yiddish (but not at all in the East).

3.7. Confrontation with the West.

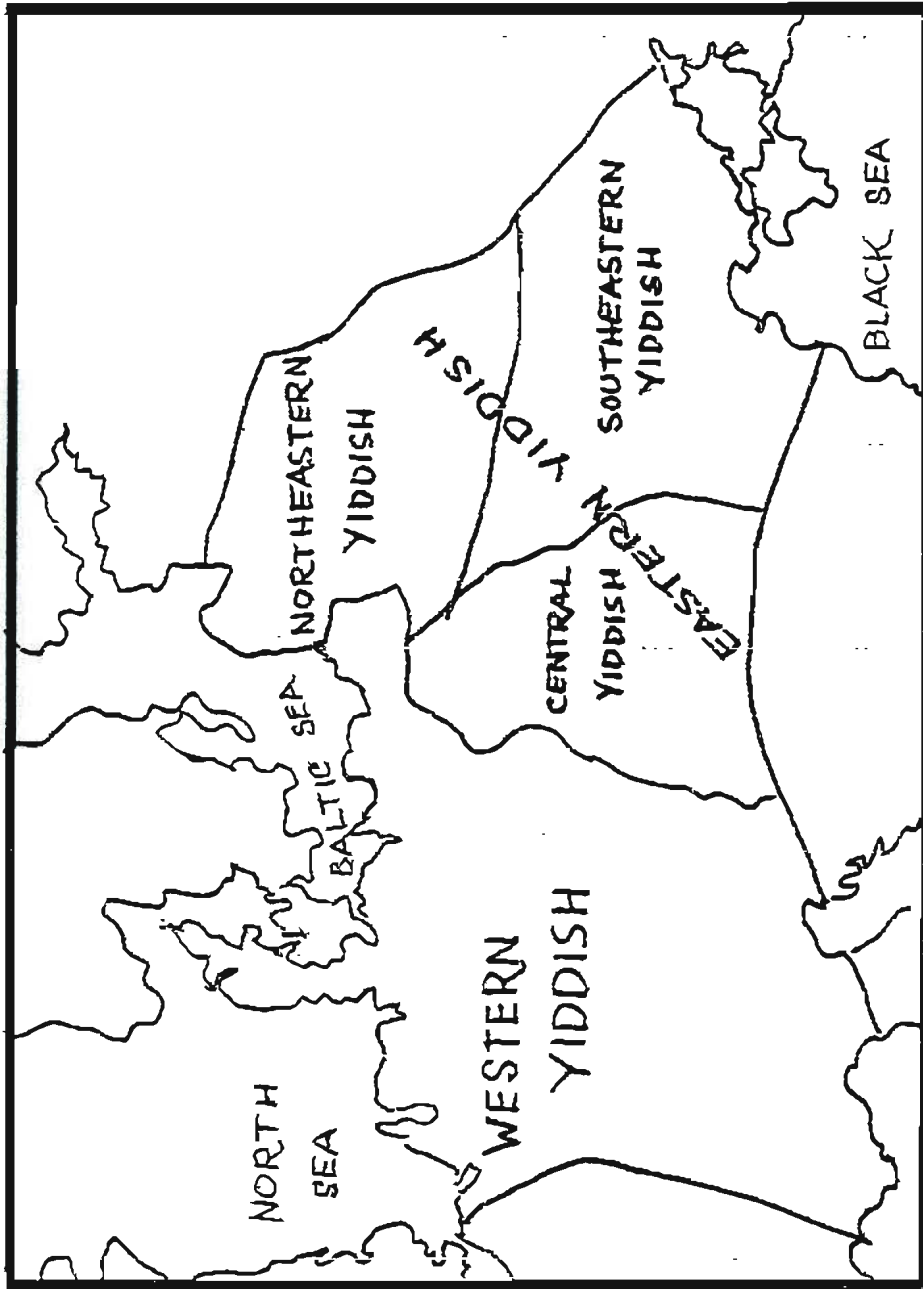
The reflexes in Dutch Yiddish (in the Semitic Component) of Proto Yiddish \*ē, \*ō, and \*ō are ey, ō, and ou respectively. Where CSS applies, Proto Yiddish \*ē, \*ō, and \*ō give the expected reflexes of Proto Yiddish \*ε, \*a, and \*ǔ, to wit ε, ǎ, and ǔ. We may thus confront Dutch Yiddish forms with EY forms. Of the seventeen exceptions to CSS enumerated above (§§ 3.1 — 3.5), we have found cognates for twelve — all of the items in §§ 3.1, 3.3, 3.5 above, but none for those in §§ 3.2 and 3.4. In the case of § 3.4 (link words), the lack of Western Yiddish cognates (if not due to the inadequacy of our corpus) may be attributed to their being learned borrowings from Ashkenazic Hebrew and Aramaic rather than reflexes of Proto Yiddish forms. If such a view proves tenable, the forms in § 3.4 will no longer be considered exceptions to sound law as the composite evidence of (a) failure of CSS to apply, (b) ultimate stress in § 3.4(3), and (c), nonattestation in Western Yiddish make it highly likely that these forms are late borrowings and should be weeded out of the bona fide corpus of exceptions to CSS in Yiddish. No such claim can be made for the forms in § 3.2, however, since there were obviously names for the books of the Bible in Western Yiddish, and hopefully it will prove possible to obtain reliable data on these forms.

3.8. Pan Yiddish Anomalies. Of the eight names of letters of the Yiddish alphabet in which CSS has failed to apply in EY (§ 3.1), six appear in WY with likewise unshortened vowels. These are (using the vowel system of Dutch Yiddish) bəys, vəys, vōv, rəyš, tōf, sōf (cf. Beem 1975: 10, 101, 134, 142) for expected •bəs, •vəs, •vāv, •rəš, •tāf, •sāf.

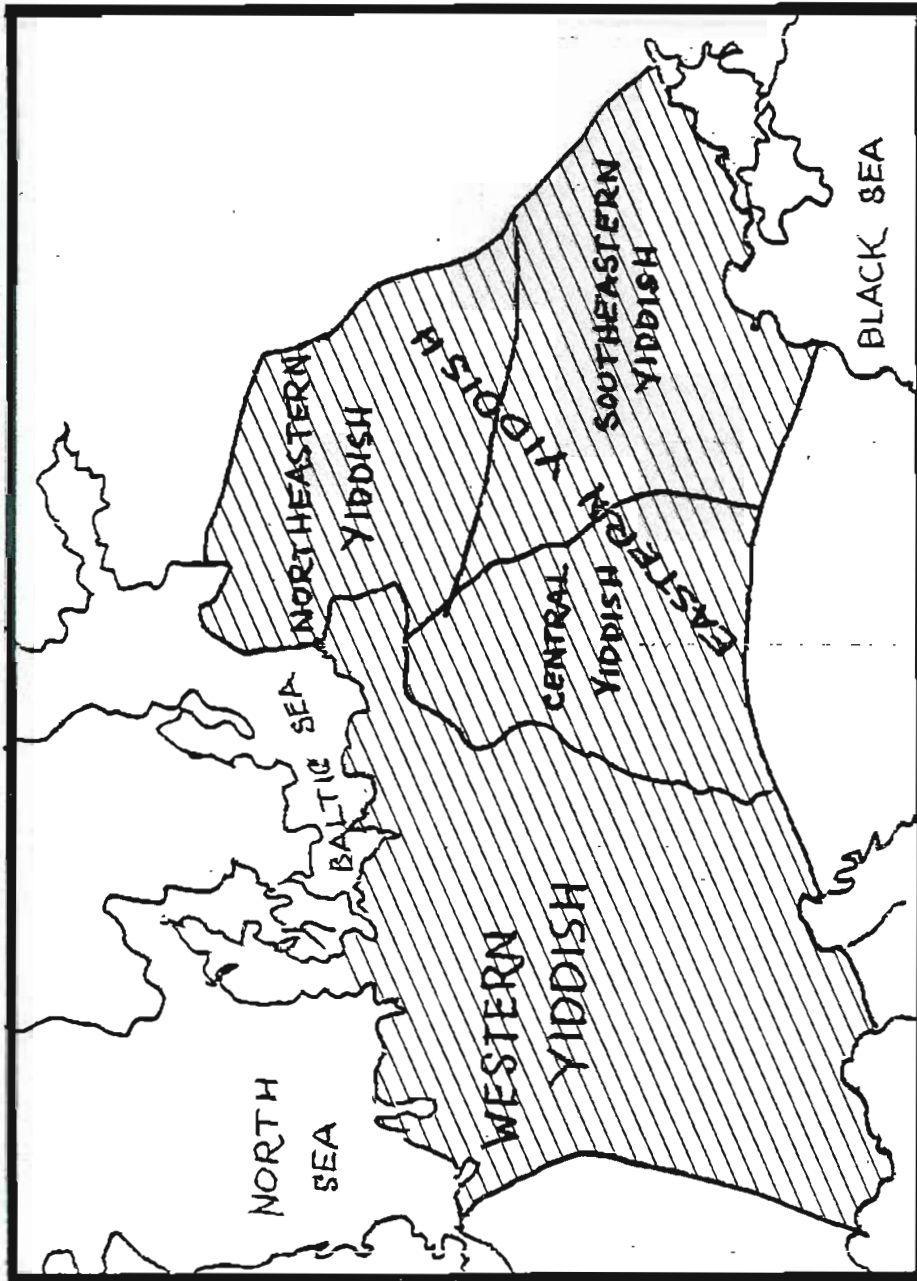
Similarly, Dutch Yiddish has xəyn (§ 3.5(2)) in lieu of expected •xən, and unshortened forms have been documented in Alsace (Zivy 1966: 46) and Germany (Weinberg 1973: 57). Cf. Map 2.

3.9. Eastern Yiddish Anomalies. In all of WY, CSS has applied to Proto Yiddish \*ǝ in § 3.5(3), giving the expected alternation with the plural. Luckily both singular and plural occur in the dialogue of Swiss Horsedealer's Yiddish recorded by Guggenheim-Grünberg (1954: 58) where the singular is xɔf and the plural xɔufəs. Likewise, Dutch Yiddish gives xɔf ~ xɔuves (cf. Beem 1975: 22, 24), and xɔf has been documented in the Yiddish of Germany (cf. Guggenheim-Grünberg 1973: 84).

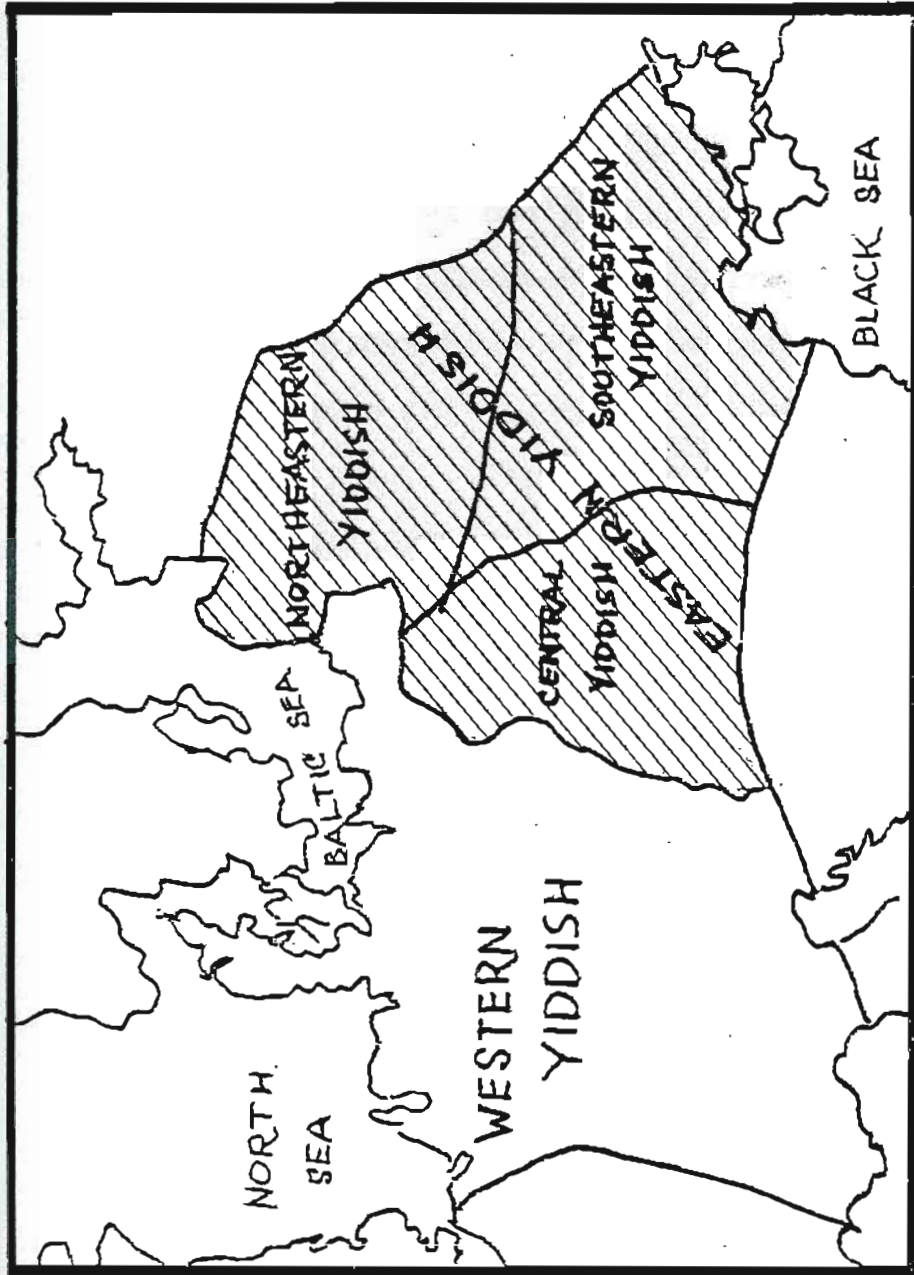
Of the letters of the alphabet, only § 3.1(4,5) appear as expected in Dutch Yiddish — kāf, xāf in sharp contrast to the anomalous Eastern Yiddish forms. Weinberg (1973: 69) has kāf for Germany and hopefully work with informants can still help obtain confirmation for other areas. Cf. Map 3.



MAP 1. Traditional Classification of Yiddish Dialects  
(after Herzog 1965: 7)



MAP 2. Pan Yiddish Anomalies. Six names of letters of the Yiddish alphabet (NEY beyz, veyz, vov, reyš, tof, sof || CY bayz, vayz, vuv, rayš, tuf, suf || Dutch Yiddish beys, veys, vov, reys, tof, sof) and the word for 'grace, charm' (NEY xeyn || CY xayn || Dutch Yiddish xeyn) appear anomalously unshortened throughout the historical speech territory of Yiddish (shaded area). Cf. §§3.1(1-3, 6-9), 3.5(2), 3.8.



MAP 3. Eastern Yiddish Anomalies. Two names of letters of the Yiddish alphabet (NEY kof, xof || CY kuf, xuf) and the word for 'debt' (NEY keyv || CY xoyv) appear anomalously unshortened in all of Eastern Yiddish, (shaded area) but shortened as expected in the West (kăf, xăf, xoyv). Cf. §§ 3.1(4,5), 3.5(3), 3.9.

3.10. Partial Application of CSS in the West.

There are two forms (§§ 3.3, 3.5(1)) where Proto Yiddish \*ō was unrounded as expected but not shortened to \*ǎ as expected, giving ā in WY.

According to Beranek (1965: 130-131), the entire western sector of WY has āv for the month, and localized attestation is documented for Holland (cf. Beem 1975: 1). Beranek's isogloss bisects the entire Western Yiddish area on a North-South axis giving āv to the west of the isogloss and ōv to the east. The latter form manifests the normal reflex of Proto Yiddish \*ō in Western Yiddish in open syllables and its failure to unround and shorten to \*ǎv in this area groups the eastern sector of WY with all of EY in that the form has totally resisted CSS. Reservations have been raised, however, with respect to the reliability of Beranek's isoglosses in light of his failure to localize his informants or other sources (cf. Lowenstein 1969: 17).

Much of WY has rāv for 'rabbi'. This form has been documented in Alsace (cf. Zuckerman 1969: 47) and was localized in a number of villages by Guggenheim-Grünberg (1973:99). In Holland, however, the dominant variant is rōv (cf. Beem 1970: 203-204) where it is homonymous with a word for 'hunger' (cf. Tiberian רָצָוּ). According to Beranek (1965: 132-133), the eastern half of the territory of WY does not have rāv but this is contradicted by Guggenheim-Grünberg's reliable localized documentations.



Now the location of the isoglosses will doubtless emerge from the Weinreich-Herzog atlas. But it is today clear beyond any doubt that āy and rāy are widespread WY variants, and they deserve a special historical study. We will note here two possible historical explanations. Assuming that CSS failed to apply (an assumption supported by the uniform failure of CSS to apply in all EY dialects) WY ōv and rōv (both of which are documented variants) would have been unstable phonologically, containing a long vowel in a closed syllable (in violation of CSS) and may have undergone unrounding to the very stable and widespread ā in Western Yiddish which is predominantly a Germanic Component vowel. Cf. e.g. the well known WY kāfn flāš 'to buy meat'. Alternatively, these forms resulted from incomplete processing by CSS.

3.11. The High Vowels. In presenting the role of and exceptions to CSS in the Semitic Component of Yiddish, only the nonhigh vowels were considered. Each of the six vowels considered corresponds to a distinct Tiberian vowel color and the alternations engendered constitute salient features of the Semitic Component in every Yiddish dialect. This is not the case as regards the high vowels (Proto Yiddish \*ī, \*ĩ, \*ū, \*ũ) where the distinctive feature is length. Dialects that have lost the length distinction, such as NEY have only i and u, and M. Weinreich (1973: II, 290) claimed that there were no Semitic Component pairs where a long vowel alternated with a short vowel in the high series.

The following are the reflexes of the high vowels in NEY, CY and Dutch Yiddish:

<u>Proto Yiddish</u>		<u>NEY</u>	<u>CY</u>	<u>Dutch Yiddish</u>
*ī	>	i	ī	ī
*ĩ	>	i	ĩ	ĩ
*ū	>	u	ū	u
*ũ	>	u	ũ	õ

We have established two pairs which suggest to us vestiges of CSS having applied to the high vowels as well. These are CY dīn 'law' vs. plural dīnəm where the singular has been processed by CSS. In Dutch Yiddish, we find xōš 'sense' vs. plural xūšəm. Working on this (admittedly weak) evidence, it might augur well for the main theme of our discussion — semantic classes resistant to CSS — to seek circumstantial corroborating evidence for CSS amongst the high vowels, and to see if the exceptions bear any relationship to those enumerated above (§§ 3.1 — 3.5). Such corroborating evidence lies in the nonoccurrence of long vowels in closed syllables in dialects where the reflexes of Proto Yiddish \*ī and \*ĩ on the one hand and \*ū and \*ũ on the other have been kept apart (CY and Dutch Yiddish). The only word Birnbaum (1922: 29) was able to find containing ī (< \*ī) in a closed syllable in the Semitic Component of CY is šīn, again a letter of the alphabet (= [š]).<sup>19</sup> Analogously,

the only instances in CY of Semitic Component  $\bar{i}$  (< \* $\bar{u}$ ) in closed syllables documented by Birnbaum (1934: 30) are n $\bar{i}$ n, y $\bar{i}$ d, k $\bar{i}$ f, again letters of the alphabet (= [n], [y], [k]). In NEY, where the color of the proto vowel has been preserved, but the length distinction lost, the names of these letters are nun, yud, kuf (cf. Tiberian nun, \*yu $\check{d}$ , \*guf; the classical yo $\check{d}$  and gof could not have been the protoforms of the attested forms in Yiddish). We cautiously conclude that the high vowels were indeed processed by CSS, but the names of letters of the alphabet meeting the structural description of CSS retained unshortened vowels in defiance of the rule.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

4.1. Regularity in the Exceptions. The exceptions to CSS are consonant with the claim that there appears to be in instances of exceptions to sound laws "regularity in the irregularity" (Anttila 1972: 86). King (1969: 121) concluded that "even the exceptions to phonological changes tend to be statable in terms of natural phonological, lexical, or grammatical categories." Notwithstanding the presence in Western Yiddish of expected forms where cognate forms in the East have resisted CSS in several instances (§ 3.9), the complete agreement of all Eastern Yiddish dialects on all the exceptions to CSS (§§ 3.1 - 3.5) and of all dialects of Yiddish on many (§ 3.8), is indeed remarkable, considering the vast expanse of the historical speech territory of Yiddish (cf. maps 1-3).

Even more noteworthy is the systematicity with which the exceptions have limited themselves to the affected categories. While nearly all the letters of the alphabet meeting the structural description of CSS resisted the law, the word for 'letter (of the alphabet)' was indeed processed as expected, giving NEY, CY ps (cf. Tiberian ʔoθ). While the names of Biblical books escaped CSS (§ 3.2), Biblical names did not. Thus NEY, CY zdom 'Sodom', NEY xam || CY xām '(Noah's son) Ham' (cf. Tiberian seðóm, hóm). Yiddish speakers

use the phrase šiker vi lot 'as drunk as Lot' (cf. Tiberian lot) to describe one who has partaken excessively of the bottle (cf. Genesis 19: 32-38).

#### 4.2. The Exceptions to CSS in light of Theory of Sound Change.

Recent work on ongoing sound change has shown that sound change may be "phonetically abrupt but lexically gradual" (Wang 1969: 9). The case of exceptions to CSS in Yiddish may well reflect a process of sound change as described by Chen (1972: 493):

"Instead of changing a speaker's entire vocabulary overnight, as it were, sound change begins as an innovative pronunciation of a single word or a group of words, and then progressively spreads to other portions of the lexicon. In a model of phonological change conceived along the time and lexical dimensions, exceptions need no longer be fortuitously attributed to external interferences such as dialect mixture, but can be regarded as residual forms of a sound change which has not yet completed its course (...)"

Hooper (1976: 104) proposed that "at first a new rule is always variable; the rule may or may not apply in any given situation."

It seems likely that CSS diffused gradually across the lexicon of the Semitic Component in Yiddish. The affected semantic classes were the last to have been struck. CSS petered out before applying fully to these classes, although even names for letters of the Yiddish alphabet (the best documented class of exceptions) were grazed. Hence the names of two letters appear shortened in the West (kăf, xăf — § 3.9), and the names of three have been processed throughout the speech territory of Yiddish (xes, tes, mem — §3.1).

#### 4.3. Possible Explanations for the Exceptions.

It could be argued that names for letters of the traditional alphabet, books of the Bible and the names of the Jewish months escaped sound change because of their intimate ties to traditionally hallowed aspects of religious life; hence they maintained their Ashkenazic forms (cf. above § 2.3). This claim seems to us untenable because many of the scores of forms processed by CSS fit equally well into this category and the explanation is therefore ad hoc. We have even encountered above (Tables II, IV: no. 31) a Yiddish name for God processed by CSS. There is a second Yiddish name for God which meets the description of CSS. It

too has been processed by CSS — NEY hašém yizbóreḥ  
|| CY hašém yizbúreḥ (cf. Tiberian haššém yiḥboráḥ).

We may only venture a guess (for which no claims are made) that at least the failure of CSS to apply to names of letters, months and Biblical books may be due to differences in language acquisition. Perhaps the child (living during the application of CSS) usually acquired these lexical items by conscious learning (rote, memorization) rather than from the everyday speech of parents and peers. If so, it is not unreasonable to hypothesize that such parts of the lexicon would be the very last to fall prey to CSS (cf. above § 4.2).

N O T E S

1. Fries (1961: 203), however, has pointed out that Bloomfield adhered to the regularity hypothesis not as "a dogma that must be believed in without question" but rather a "sound assumption that has proved productive in practice."

2. In the interests of providing as broad as possible a transcription of cited forms, this vowel will be transcribed throughout as u although there are in fact several allophones thereof — ũ preceding labial and velar (= [+grave]) consonants and ū or uə elsewhere. (in broadest terms). In the Semitic Component, the complementation appears to be perfect (cf. Birnbaum 1918: 27; 1923: 125; but note Gutman 1926: 380) although contrastive pairs have been established (ū vs. ũ) for non-Semitic Component lexical items (cf. Herzog 1965: 183).

3. The historical complementation is as follows: in CY stressed open syllables Proto Yiddish \*ε was lengthened-raised-closed to ē (under the impact of Germanic lengthening of Middle High German <ē>). Elsewhere it remained ε.



4. The Semitic Component refers to Semitisms that are synchronically Yiddish, i.e. fused with Germanic and Slavic in Yiddish and constituting an integral part of all forms of Yiddish (cf. Borokhov 1913: 9). While each dialect of Yiddish generally has a unitary phonetic system for all components, the components diverge widely in their phonological structure. Closed Syllable Shortening has no applicability to the Germanic or Slavic Component in Yiddish.

5. In terms of the protosystem, this process affecting the nonhigh vowels could just as well be termed lowering or opening. We choose shortening, however, because the radical phonetic shifts have obscured the other two facets. Luckily, long vowels were diphthongized (under the impact of the well known Germanic diphthongization of the Medieval long vowels) leaving the effects of Closed Syllable Shortening fully visible even in dialects where length is no longer a distinctive feature (e.g. Northeastern Yiddish). But cf. § 3.11.

6. We choose the term Semitic Component over Hebrew and Aramaic Component because Jewish Aramaic itself contained a weighty Hebrew component, raising questions as to the direct source of Semitisms in Yiddish of a morphologically Hebrew shape.

In the present paper, where the problems under scrutiny are phonological rather than lexical or etymological, it seems preferable to employ the neutral "Semitic Component" with the understood limitation that no Semitic other than Hebrew or Aramaic is involved.

It should be noted, however, that the Tiberian system of vocalization was, in the opinion of many scholars, codified under the impact of the spoken Aramaic of the time, as Hebrew had been defunct as a living language for many centuries prior to the activity of the Tiberians in the late first millenium A.D. Cf. Moscati (1969: 68), Rosenthal (1974: 9) and Schramm (1964: 18).

7. The differences between Biblical and non- or post-Biblical application of Tiberian vocalization (cf. Schramm 1964: 9) do not materially bear on the points at issue herein.

8. We use Schramm's system because it has the advantage of providing a one-to-one correspondence between Tiberian vowel graphemes and transcriptional symbols, while the more elaborate systems marking vocalic length are potentially contentious. Note, however, that *šere*, *qameš* and *holem* in all positions are cognate to long Yiddish protovowels (giving long or diphthongized reflexes in the modern language)

and that unstressed closed syllabic qameṣ gives a short vowel reflex distinct from the reflexes of both qameṣ in other positions and from pathaḥ. These facts bear great resemblance to the classical medieval Hebrew grammarians' interpretation of the Tiberian system. Although the medieval (Qimḥian) system is discredited by modern scholarship (cf. e.g. Chomsky 1952: xx), it does not constitute circular reasoning to use the Yiddish reflexes as evidence for some (not necessarily strictly Tiberian) Tiberian-like protosystem bearing affinity to the medieval grammarians' thesis, because there isn't the slightest shred of evidence of any linguistic contact between the medieval grammarians (in Islamic Spain constituting the base of the Sephardic Jewish tradition) and the territory (Central Europe) where Yiddish developed (Ashkenaz).

9. Cf. e.g. Northeastern Yiddish tēve 'habit' vs. téyve '(Noah's) ark' || Central Yiddish tēve vs. táyve (cf. Tiberian tēvaq, tevō); NEY xōne '(masculine) forename' vs. xāne '(feminine) forename' || CY xúne vs. xāne (cf. Tiberian ḥōnō, ḥannō). Obviously, no such opposition can be maintained between holem and unstressed closed syllabic qameṣ in open syllables. Note that Semitisms in Yiddish (vis a vis Tiberian) have been processed by penultimate stress

assignment, reduction of poststress vowels, consonantal degemination and assorted other rules.

10. This situation may be somewhat analogous to that of Classical vs. vernacular Mandaic among the Mandaeans (cf. Macuch 1965: LIX) except that of course Ashkenazic forms are cognate only to forms in the Semitic Component of Yiddish, not the entire language.

11. Regarding our transcriptions and notation note that:

(a) in Tables II-VII stress has not been marked in Yiddish forms unless it is other than penultimate.

(b) While the Tiberian vowels have been transcribed after Schramm (cf. above note 8), we have marked mobile shewa (with ə) and dagesh forte (with gemination of the relevant consonant) and use ḥ and Ḥ for Schramm's h and Ḥ.

(c) Nearly all Ashkenazic forms cited may be stressed ultimately or penultimately (depending on social factors — the ultimately stressed forms are the more formal and higher prestige forms).

(d) ˘ and ˉ are used in our Yiddish transcriptions to denote that the vowel in question in the dialect contrasts distinctively through length with another vowel of the same color; hence we have kept NEY ä and CY ǎ apart because of the opposition in CY of ǎ vs. ā. NEY and CY ɛ and

ֿ however, are transcribed unitarily. Vowel height and degree of opening sufficiently distinguish CY ֿ (from ֿ) and ֿ (from ֿ).

(e) We use the black circle (•) to mark spurious forms. The asterisk (\*) is reserved for historical reconstructions.

12. Closed Syllable Shortening was proposed (on grounds of internal and comparative reconstruction not touched upon in the present paper) by the present writer in an unpublished paper delivered to a seminar in the history of Yiddish (directed by M. Herzog), Dec. 20, 1977. Note that the past century of Yiddish philology (cf. e.g. Lebnzohn 1874: 19-25, Tshemerinski 1913; Veynger 1913; M. Weinreich 1973: II, 328-334; IV, 337-338) has considered the vocalic alternations in the Semitic Component of Yiddish (cf. Tables VI-VII) to be due to lengthening in open syllables. This dispute need not be relevant in the present discussion of exceptions to sound change as the exceptions remain the selfsame exceptions in either theory. There is, however, one difference, which may in fact be material: assuming standard theory (open syllable lengthening), the exceptions constitute a group of forms to which a phonological change has anomalously applied where its environment (/\_\_\$) is not met; assuming our own theory (CSS), the exceptions constitute a class of forms where a phonological change

has anomalously not applied where its environment (/\_\_C\$) is indeed met.

13. The number of letters in the Yiddish alphabet varies, depending on the number of variants of graphemes counted as separate letters. We arrived at twenty-seven by adding the four spirantized variants of Tiberian beθ, kɔf, pe, tɔw (veθ, xɔf, fe, θɔw) and the hissing variant of šin (śin) to the twenty-two base consonantal graphemes as these five variants represent distinct phonemes, and their names constitute distinct Yiddish words. Note, however that it turns out in the present context that the spirantized variants behave identically (phonologically) to the names of the nonspirantized graphemes. We have not included the word-final allographs of five letters of the alphabet, however, because they do not represent distinct phone(me)s. Moreover, they are distinguished by the addition of Germanic Component lexemes, rendering them irrelevant to the present discussion.

14. In this case, as a number of others (cf. e.g. Table II, nos. 19, 31, 42, 48) a syllable is closed in Yiddish although open in Tiberian according to the classical grammarians.

15. This variant was documented by U. Weinreich (1965: 44), Bin-nun (1973: 272) and was geographically delimited by Herzog (1965: 170, 173, map 5.15).

16. Underlying |baxén| may be processed by optional deletion of ə; optional deletion feeds obligatory regressive assimilation of voice giving [pxén] alongside [baxén].

17. There is one more word which might be included here, hamóyn 'masses', used in scholarly Yiddish (cf. Tiberian hamón). There is considerable evidence that this word represents a middle or late nineteenth century borrowing from (early) modern Hebrew. Aside from its ultimate stress, NEY informants (who have ey for CY oy < Proto Yiddish \*ō) who knew the word gave only hamóyn, suggesting they had the word from the standard or literary language. Cf. Reyzen (1920: 84).

18. We are deeply indebted to Hartog Beem (currently of Hilversum, Netherlands) for a number of personal communications in response to our inquiries concerning the pronunciation of lexical items in connection with the present paper.

19. Presumably, this applies also to the hissing variant of the letter, sin (cf. Tiberian šin). Cf. note 13.

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