

with considerable freedom (3.3 ff.). But there was no Jewish community speaking "pure German" up to the nineteenth century. The first generation of immigrants to Loter, and possibly more than one generation, entered upon a situation of multilingualism (7.18), and the first years of the new language Yiddish must have been uncertain and stammering, that is, rich in alternate sounds, forms, and words. All alternates were acceptable as long as there was communication. When a more stable form of language began to emerge in Loter, it was not the coterritorial variant of German. The intonation and the "differential phonetics" (1.9.1) were not the same; they were adapted from the prelanguages that were brought along. Surely the Hebrew and Loetz components were a conspicuous variance in the language of the Jews compared to that of the coterritorial German. And even had these components been represented to a lesser extent than they presumably were, they would still be basically something that the language of the Germans could not have been. Even within the German component itself the facts were grouped in the Jewish community in a manner entirely different from the grouping in German (7.31).

The basic difference between Yiddish and German has no direct bearing on the question of whether a German and a Jew, say in the year 1000 in Cologne, could communicate. Communication was possible even nine hundred years later, when Yiddish and German were most certainly independent linguistic systems (2.16.1). Scandinavians among themselves, a Dutchman and a northern German, a Russian and a Ukrainian, even a Russian and a Pole, or an Italian and a Spaniard can "communicate." In the case of some of the languages mentioned the difficulties in communicating are greater, in the case of others they are less, but it is irrelevant whether the subjects know if linguists view the cases under consideration as separate languages or as different dialects within one language.

**7.2** If its fusion character determines the entire subsequent linguistic fate of Yiddish (1.8), we have to fashion a picture of each determinant. Determinant and component are not identical. From the German determinant, for example, there was only one step to the German component of Yiddish, but not all linguistic units that could have been taken over into Yiddish potentially were actually taken over. But the German determinant is also not identical with the German stock language; it is an excerpt (not always exactly definable) of the stock language—that part of the stock language to which the Loter-Ashkenazic community had access. An acquaintance with the history and structure of the stock language from which the determinant derived does not yet yield a proper picture of the determinant. For example, Sephardic Hebrew is for Yiddish an extraneous formation; maskilic

Hebrew and modern Israeli Hebrew appear different from our point of view (4.25.2, 4.25.3) than their appearance in the history of the Hebrew language. In the case of German we are interested in both Middle High German (and to some extent even Old High German) and New High German, but from different points of view. On the other hand, the student of Yiddish is considerably interested in the so-called Ashkenazic rabbinic Hebrew, whereas the Hebraist may regard it as a comparatively insignificant matter; and in the case of the German determinant, the student of Yiddish must occasionally ponder over a sole medieval isogloss that even a professional Germanist has ignored. The same applies to the other two determinants, Loetz and Slavic. The interest of the student of Yiddish, as will be seen, is always specific, determined by the time, the territory, and the social stratification.

This leads to the conclusion that the student of Yiddish does not find ready-made all he has to know about the determinants. The stock languages are comparatively well investigated—in this respect students of the oldest Latin, the oldest Greek, or the oldest Hebrew may envy us considerably—but the special problems that Yiddish poses frequently call for special research. (This yields a by-product: not only does general linguistics profit from research on Yiddish, but so does the study of the individual stock languages.)

We shall take up the determinants in the order of their age among Jews in the entire course of historical development: Hebrew (7.3–7.16), Loetz (7.18–7.23.5), German (7.24–7.44.3), Slavic (7.48–7.61). Jews were connected with Hebrew ever since they became a people; Loetz in two versions was brought to Loter by the immigrants; German they first found in Loter; Slavic they owe to the eastward expansion of Ashkenaz.

**7.3** It is best to begin the examination of Hebrew with the clarification of the fundamental difference between two linguistic formations: Whole Hebrew and Merged Hebrew. The guest reciting the benediction after the meal together with the family will pronounce, in accordance with the rules of Whole Hebrew, "May the Merciful bless this /'baal-ha'bajis/ (master of the house)," but in conversation at the table he will address him as /bale'bos/ or /bal'bus/, as Merged Hebrew requires. The same difference can be observed constantly, not only with reference to whole sentences or phrases, but also with reference to single lexical units. In Merged Hebrew the word *taanit* (fast) is /tones/ or /tunes/, depending on the dialect. *Ester-/tones/ (/tunes/)* (Fast of Esther) is also pronounced in this way in the expression *fun ester tones biz purim*, but the more formal designation calls for /tajnis/ or /tanis/. *Rabonon-kadish* (the rabbis' *kaddish*) is said after study, but in the prayer book it is called *kadish derabonon*.

Let Whole Hebrew be the name of the language of continuous Loshn-koydesh texts (or of single phrases or words taken unchanged out of a continuous text) that a Yiddish speaker reads when he looks into a holy book or cites from memory. For an English speaker or a German speaker Whole Hebrew is the only approach to Hebrew, but the Yiddish speaker deals also with another kind of Hebrew element and in a more intimate way. This is the Loshn-koydesh component that is a part of the Yiddish speaker's unmediated language. The Loshn-koydesh component in the fusion of Yiddish—the Merged Hebrew—frequently goes different ways than Whole Hebrew. Most striking is the fact that in the unaccented syllables in Merged Hebrew the vowels are reduced (8.8.5). Hence in Whole Hebrew we have (*vezos ha*)'broxo (and this is the blessing), but in Merged Hebrew /'broxe/. Moses' mother's name is /joi'xevəd/, as found in the Bible, and thus the name will be pronounced when read aloud in a divorce procedure; but ordinarily the name is /joxvəd/, sometimes abbreviated to *yokhe* or /xevət/, where the unaccented first syllable fell out altogether. Whole Hebrew compounds turn in Merged Hebrew into words with one main stress: /be'rojš ha'šono/ *yikoseyvun*, but /'rošəšone/ or /roše 'šone/ or /roše 'šune/ in Merged Hebrew. The child is made to repeat the words /'moide a'ni/ with a pause between each word, but the child is asked: Have you said /moide'ani/?

Essentially it is correct to say that Merged Hebrew is no longer Hebrew but Yiddish, for it is the Hebrew component of Yiddish, and the descriptive linguist will actually be inclined to ignore the question of the derivation of the linguistic material that he considers. But the historical linguist will definitely gain from the designation Whole Hebrew. A linguistic unit of Hebrew derivation could have entered Yiddish through various channels: (1) from Whole Hebrew then and there, for example as a quotation (and then it will be least merged); (2) from Whole Hebrew in an older period of Yiddish—the largest number of units in the Loshn-koydesh component; and (3) possibly also through the mediation of a prelanguage. It is conceivable, for example, that one or another Loshn-koydesh-component unit could have entered Yiddish in the form in which the western Loez or southern Loez immigrants had used it in *their* Merged Hebrew. Too many such cases cannot be expected, for the Ashkenazic Jew could constantly draw anew from the open Loshn-koydesh well; and our knowledge of the Loshn-koydesh component in the Loez languages will always remain meager, for the number of Loez documents is small and the traditional spelling of the Loshn-koydesh component elements obstructs the manner of pronunciation. For the present we must therefore operate only with the category “Hebrew among the Loez Jews” without differentiating the two formations of the Whole Hebrew and Merged Hebrew in their

languages. But on comparing the development of *bajis* in such a “normal” unit as /ben 'bajis/ with such a queer (hitherto unexplained) vocalization as /bale'bos||bal'bus/, willy-nilly we turn our gaze in the direction of a prelanguage.

Nor is there full uniformity in the boundary of Whole Hebrew. No one will say in the grace after the meal *es* /bale'bos/ *haze* (the master of this house), but one can hear *baal-ha'bajis* or *bale'bajis*; in the benediction “. . . *bore* (creator) . . .” one can hear *boi'rei* or *'boirei* and even *'boire*. In other words, some members of the community show a tendency in Whole Hebrew to depart from the grammatical norms and to approach the norms of Merged Hebrew. Here one can discern group variations (scholars, for example, will probably be inclined to read “more correctly” than ordinary Jews) and individual variations, and the same individual may even change his pronunciation of a sentence or a phrase depending on the situation.

Phonemically, today's Ashkenazic Whole Hebrew is similar to Yiddish. The phoneme combinations are perhaps occasionally different, but taken singly it appears that Ashkenazic Whole Hebrew has no phoneme not found in Yiddish. But does this have to be so? In older stages of Ashkenaz the integration apparently was not so complete, and other Jewish communities, the western Loez Jews for instance, probably had phonemes in their Whole Hebrew that their vernacular did not possess. Therefore it is basically better not to foretell conclusions; it is preferable to conceive of the situation as follows: In each culture area the phonemic systems of Whole Hebrew and of the unmediated language are correlated; whether or not they are identical must be determined separately in each case.

7.3.1 Analogies to the two formations in Loshn-koydesh can be found in various cultures. Medieval acrolectic Latin in the Romanic countries also was parallel with the vernaculars, and as a result there remained in French, for example, two easily discernible layers. Essentially they are both of Latin derivation, but the Romanic layer went through all the stages of development of Latin: Gallo-Romanic, Old French, and so on; the other layer is the so-called *mots savants* (the name is also used for similar phenomena in other languages). For example, the Latin *mobile* (movable) became, through the normal sound shifts in French, *meuble* (furniture); but in addition the adjective *mobile* (movable) later came directly from Middle Latin. Modern French therefore has doublets, both of which derive from the same progenitor, but through different developmental processes. Similarly, English has two kinds of adoptions from French: older more comfortable ones, and modern ones that sound somewhat foreign. *Piece* and *resistance* are familiar in English from the Middle English period, but besides, there is the word *pièce* meaning

a document, taken over toward the end of the eighteenth century, and *pièce de résistance*. *Swede* is the name of a certain Scandinavian group, but a kind of soft Swedish leather is called *suède*, pronounced the French way. In the category of somewhat foreign words, both spelling and pronunciation testify to the relative recency of the borrowing.

Actually the doublet /bale' bos ~ 'baalha'bijis/ is similar to *pièce* ~ *pièce*. The scholars, it can be said, always had access to the Loshn-koydesh sources and could constantly renew the "learned words" in their original form. But the illustrations also show that the difference between Whole Hebrew and Merged Hebrew is not entirely of this type. Doublets that have entered at different times also exist in Yiddish. For instance, to the traditional meaning of *aliyah* (call to the reading of the Torah) a new meaning has been added in the past two generations, namely 'immigration to Israel', and some pronounce it not in the accepted way but rather in the manner of contemporary Hebrew; thus the doublet /a'lije ~ ali'ja/ has come into existence in Yiddish (we have the same thing in the non-Hebrew component, in *kort* ~ *karle* [card], *parshoyn* ~ *perzon* [person], and the like). But /'baalha'bijis/ does not exist in the Loshn-koydesh component of Yiddish, in Merged Hebrew; it is a unit in a kindred formation, but an independent one. On the other hand, in the case of the two formations of Hebrew we have a permanent internal bilingualism, not an external influence. Closer to the Ashkenazic situation is the picture among non-Jews in central and eastern Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the aristocracy employed French as a second language, in addition to the vernacular. But Loshn-koydesh in Ashkenaz was, to the majority of the community, infinitely closer than Middle Latin was to the medieval Frenchman, and especially closer than French to the average Russian or Pole in the period of "Francomania."

**7.4** As early as the Middle Ages the Hebrew grammarians perceived the specific meaning of the concept "pronunciation" pertaining to Whole Hebrew. Most frequently they used the term *keriah* (reading). Their description is exact; it derived from a practice that had not yet been confused by naive linguistic or anachronistic communal considerations. In the case of unmediated languages, speaking is primary; the problem is how the spoken words are noted in writing. In the case of Hebrew in the Middle Ages, writing was a simple matter, as long as one knew how to *read* the sacred texts, especially the biblical text.

The problem confronted even the Jews in Babylonia and in Palestine, although there the manner of reading was transmitted from as early as unmediated times; in the course of time, memory became precarious and fragmentary. But the problem of reading must have become especially acute in the new culture areas that began to arise in the Gaonic

period; there the very "tradition" had to be imported and the defenders of this or that reading system had to be believed on their own authority.

In consonance with the general differentiation between Sepharad and Ashkenaz, two principal reading systems could be distinguished as early as the Middle Ages. They came to be known as the Sephardic pronunciation and the Ashkenazic pronunciation. The Sephardim read the first sentence in the Bible /berešit bara elohim et hašamaim veet haares/, whereas the Ashkenazim read /bereišis boro elohim es hašomajim vees hoorec/. Similarly in Merged Hebrew we say not only /bereišis boro/, but also "He began from /bereišis/." Between these two pronunciations there are, as we can see, not only consonantal differences, but—importantly—a difference in the sound value of the vowels. The fact that the Sephardic pronunciation does not differentiate between a *patah* and a *kamez* and a *segol* and a *tseré* is most conspicuous.

Nowadays we hear that the Sephardic pronunciation is the "correct one" and the Ashkenazic corrupt. This is a misconception. In the case of historical categories it is irrelevant to speak of right or wrong; this conception derives from extralinguistically motivated prestige evaluations, from the fact that contemporary Israeli Hebrew has accepted in principle the Sephardic pronunciation (as to breaches therein, see 4.25.3 ff.). For centuries each community adhered to its system, and surely the Ashkenazim did not think that their pronunciation was inferior. As late as the eighteenth century the Hassidim adopted the Sephardic prayer book but not the Sephardic pronunciation, and even the German Reformists in the nineteenth century did not depart from the Ashkenazic system in reading the sacred texts. The only exceptions were the grammarians. The Sephardic grammarians themselves were not so convinced of the perfection of their pronunciation (7.10), and the first German humanists interested in Hebrew grammar provided, to the best of their ability, data on both pronunciations; but beginning with Reuchlin among non-Jews and Elijah Levita among Jews, the conception was established that the Sephardic pronunciation was superior. The famous grammarian of the Haskalah period, Yehuda-Leyb Ben-Zeev, who drew both from the Sephardic grammarians and from Elijah Levita as well as the Christian Hebraists, strengthened this view. It conformed well to the entire approach of the Haskalah period and the then contemporary Jewish scholarship about the relative position of Ashkenaz and Sepharad in Jewish history (2.28).

It was therefore a milestone in the study of Hebrew when Rapoport and Luzzatto, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, posited the following thesis: The Ashkenazic pronunciation is not a corruption of the Sephardic; it also has a legitimate basis in Jewish tradition. The two diverge because they derive from two different sources: the Sep-