THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL ATLAS OF ASHKENAZIC JEWRY: REALIZING THE DESIGN

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I. Special features of the LCAAJ as a dialect atlas

The Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry was founded by Uriel Weinreich in 1958. Following the long tradition of linguistic and ethnographic atlases, it set out to interview a large number of speakers of diverse geographic origins and to display the information gained thereby in a series of maps. From its inception, however, the LCAAJ has had a distinct and unusual place among dialect atlases: it represents an attempt to reconstruct the geography of a language and culture dislocated in its historical terrain before the investigation began. Furthermore, it was designed in accordance with its founder's views on the application of structuralist linguistics to dialect geography--his belief in the viability of a structural dialectology.

Since Yiddish is spoken today, in the main, by elderly people who are far removed from their place of origin, the design of the LCAAJ includes certain unusual procedural features, which are in their turn based on a set of assumptions born in no small part of necessity, upon whose validity the very possibility of the LCAAJ rests. The first of these assumptions is that in spite of the fact that informants have spent decades away from their home towns, and have been exposed to other Yiddish dialects and

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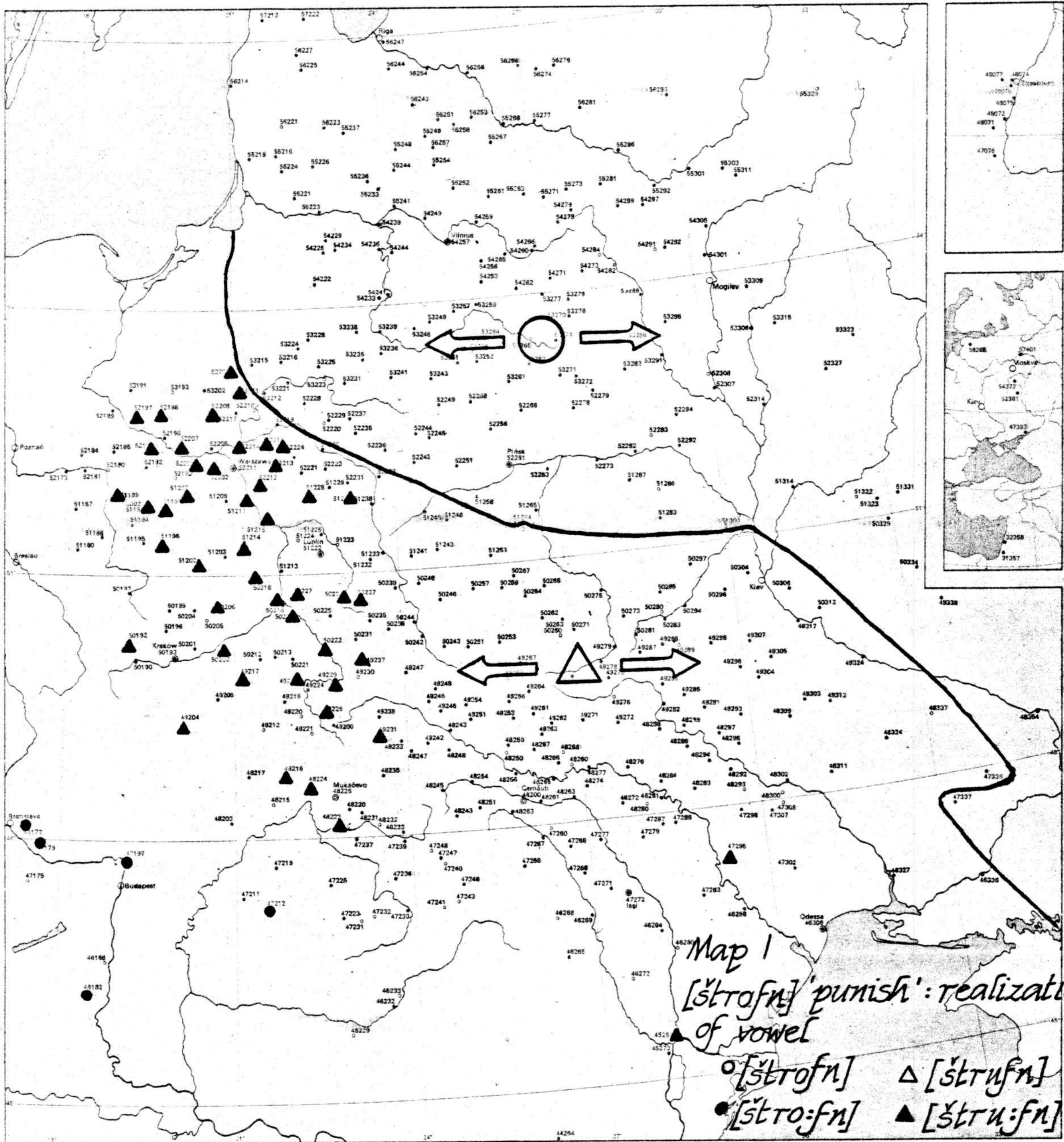
to one or more other languages, their memories for their native dialects are nevertheless reliable. The second assumption is that most informants are able to provide authentic information about the speech of the town in which they spent their linguistically formative years. It was imperative to cover as many points in the historical Yiddish language area as possible and to gather as much information as possible from each. The favored procedure of the traditional dialect geographer was a luxury denied the fieldworker for the LCAAJ. He could not walk into a village and seek out a monolingual informant who had rarely travelled and read little. Informants had to be found by other means, most commonly by advertising through various channels. Had too many of them been excluded on account of possible lack of reliability the amount of information that could be collected would have been greatly reduced.

Map 1 is an example of the kind of geographic constellation that proves the validity of our two key assumptions. The map depicts the vocalism of the Yiddish verb štrofn 'punish': it appears as štrofn in the Northeast; as as štro:fn in the Southwest; and in the intervening area, as štrufn and štru:fn. The sharp dividing lines between the distribution of the features involved argue strongly against any significant memory failure, confusion, or dialect contamination afflicting our informants.



Map 1
[štrofn] 'punish': realization of vowel
○ [štrofn] △ [štrufn]
● [štro:fn] ▲ [štru:fn]

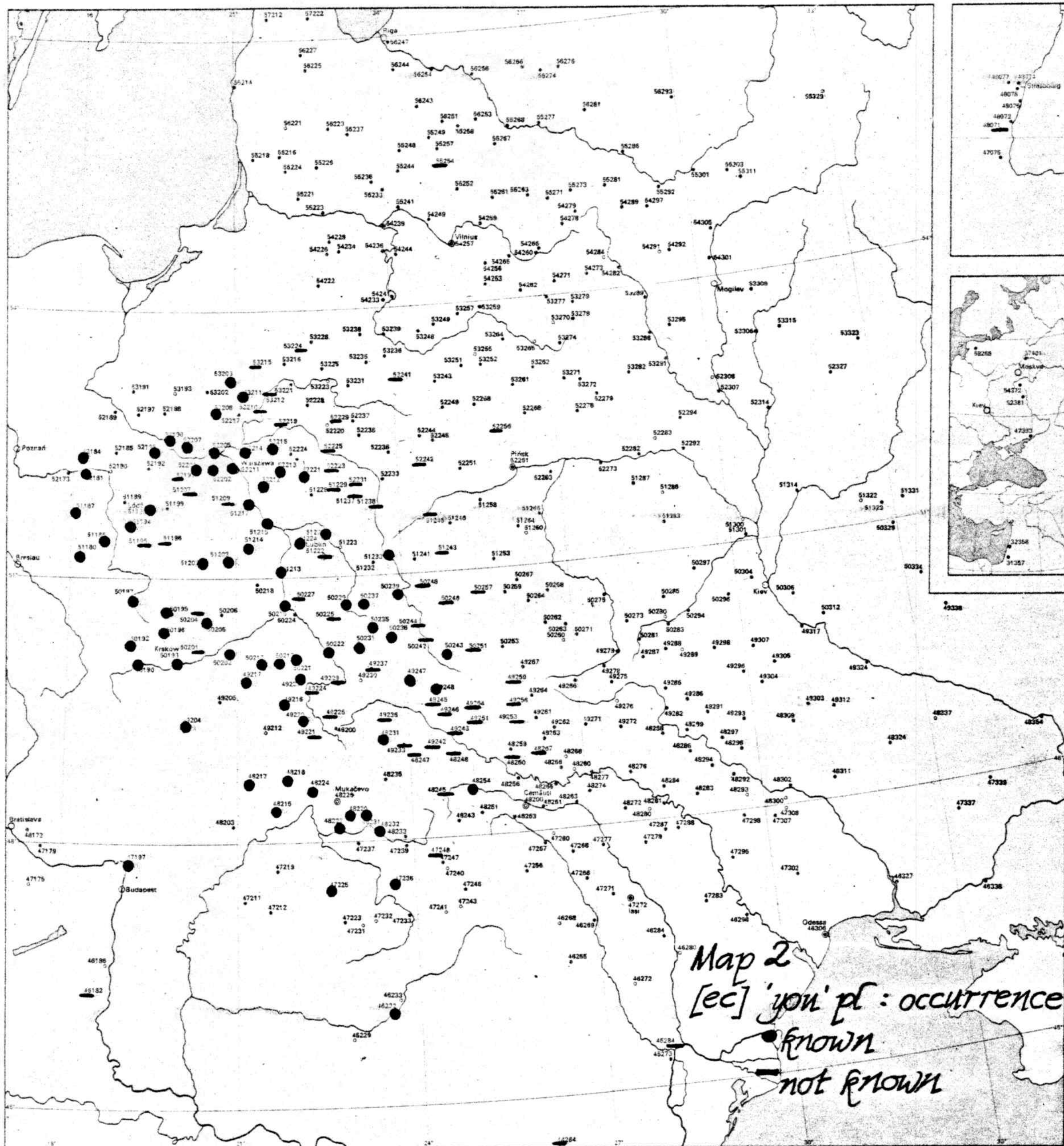
Had such factors been widespread, they would surely have led to the blurring of the pattern. Nor does it seem to have hurt our presentation to have depended on this group of 500 to 600 relatively unselected informants. On this, as on nearly every map, it is apparent that the overwhelming majority of our informants provided us with data valid for our purpose. In the midth of this body of useful information, occasional eccentricities, due to some memory lapse or to some sociolinguistic nicety that we have been forced to disregard, do not seriously affect the geographic picture.

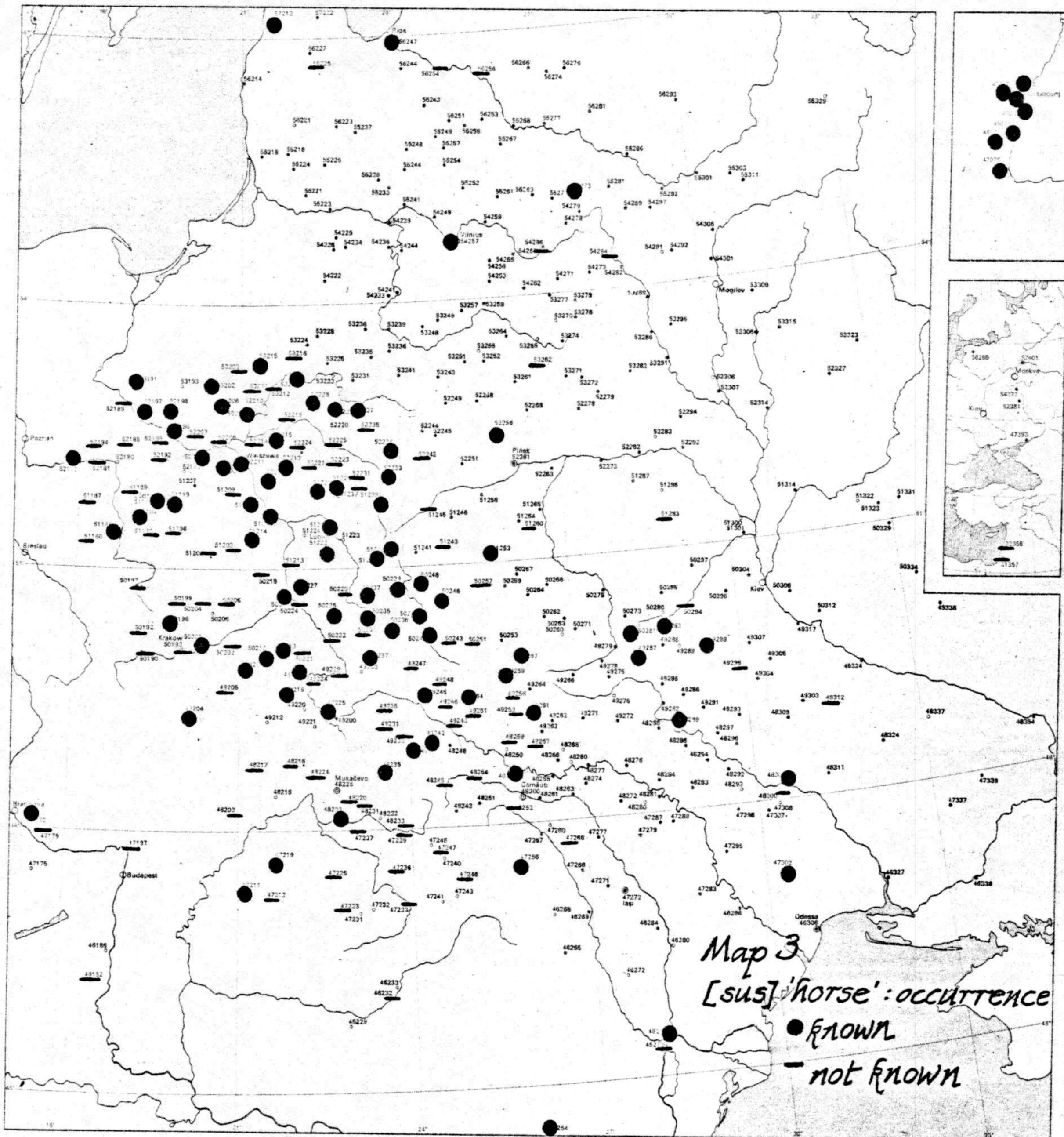
A third assumption derived from the need to cover as much ground as possible in interviewing informants: that it would be possible to effect certain short-cuts in the data-gathering process, based on Yiddish dialect data that was already available to us. For instance, the approximate locations of the major phonological boundaries were known before the LCAAJ project was designed, and the extreme phonological homogeneity of large areas was familiar to researchers. At the other extreme, the occurrence of certain highly restricted lexical items had also previously been determined: borrowings from languages which have been of lesser importance as source languages for the Yiddish lexicon--Latvian for example or Lithuanian--tend to remain local peculiarities only. In either case it was often held that it would not be necessary to attempt to elicit a given item at each and every location of the Yiddish language territory either because it was assumed to be universally known or entirely unknown in a particular area. As a result the master questionnaire was abridged for each main dialect region,

so that questions thought to be irrelevant or unnecessary were systematically omitted in the interviews.

Map 2 is an instance in which the abridgement provides us with all the necessary information: the occurrence of a localized lexical item, <u>ec</u> 'you (pl.)' is delimited by a surrounding area of non-occurrence. To have attempted to elicit responses from locations to the east would indeed have been superfluous. On the other hand map 3 <u>sus</u> 'horse' shows us how omission of a question at too many locations has deprived us of the chance to establish a lexical boundary. We have no evidence of the status of the item in the area adjacent to the region for which it is recorded. It is now understood that omitting a question at point A may devalue information elicited at point B.

Still a fourth assumption affected the design of the Atlas. This one concerned neither the informants nor the manner of eliciting information but rather the area to be covered. The historical Yiddish language area stretched from Alsace-Lorraine in the West to Smolnsk in the East. In this century, however, a rift developed which encompassed the German, Dutch, and Czech speaking Jewish communities of Western and West Central Europe. These communities once spoke Yiddish but assimilation to the secular culture of the non-Jewish environment had included the adoption of the non-Jewish vernacular. Besides, Yiddish in Western and West Central Europe had always been in close geographic contact with German,

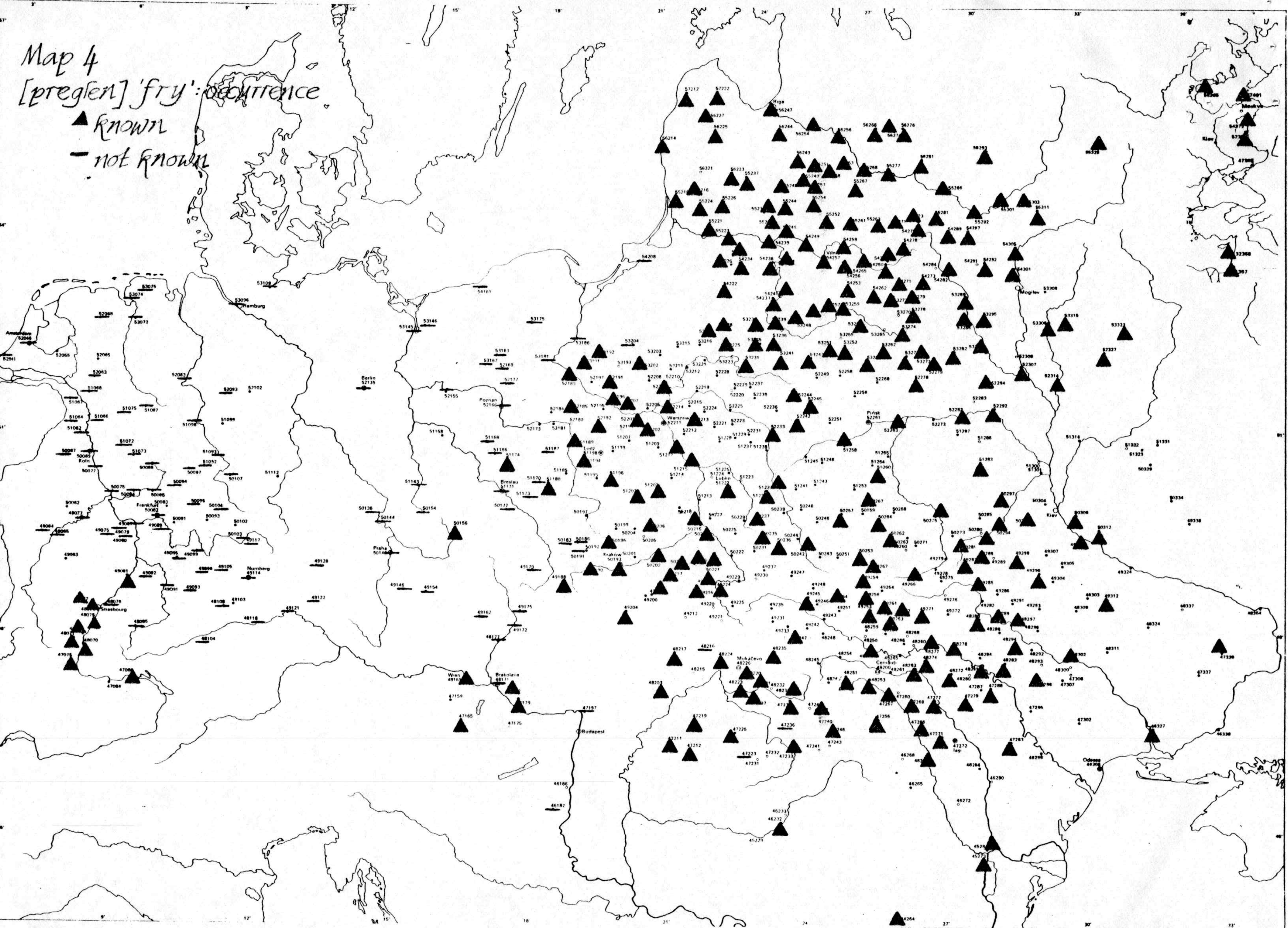

Riga
Vilnius
Mogilev
Pinsk
Poznań
Warszawa
Breslau
Krakow
Kiev
Mukačevo
Bratislava
Budapest
Iasi
Odessa
Moskva
Map 2
[ec] 'you' pl : occurrence
known
not known



Map 3
[sus] 'horse' : occurrence
known
not known
Vilnius
Mogilev
Warszawa
Pinsk
Poznan
Breslau
Kraków
Kiev
Mukačevo
Budapest
Odessa
Iasi

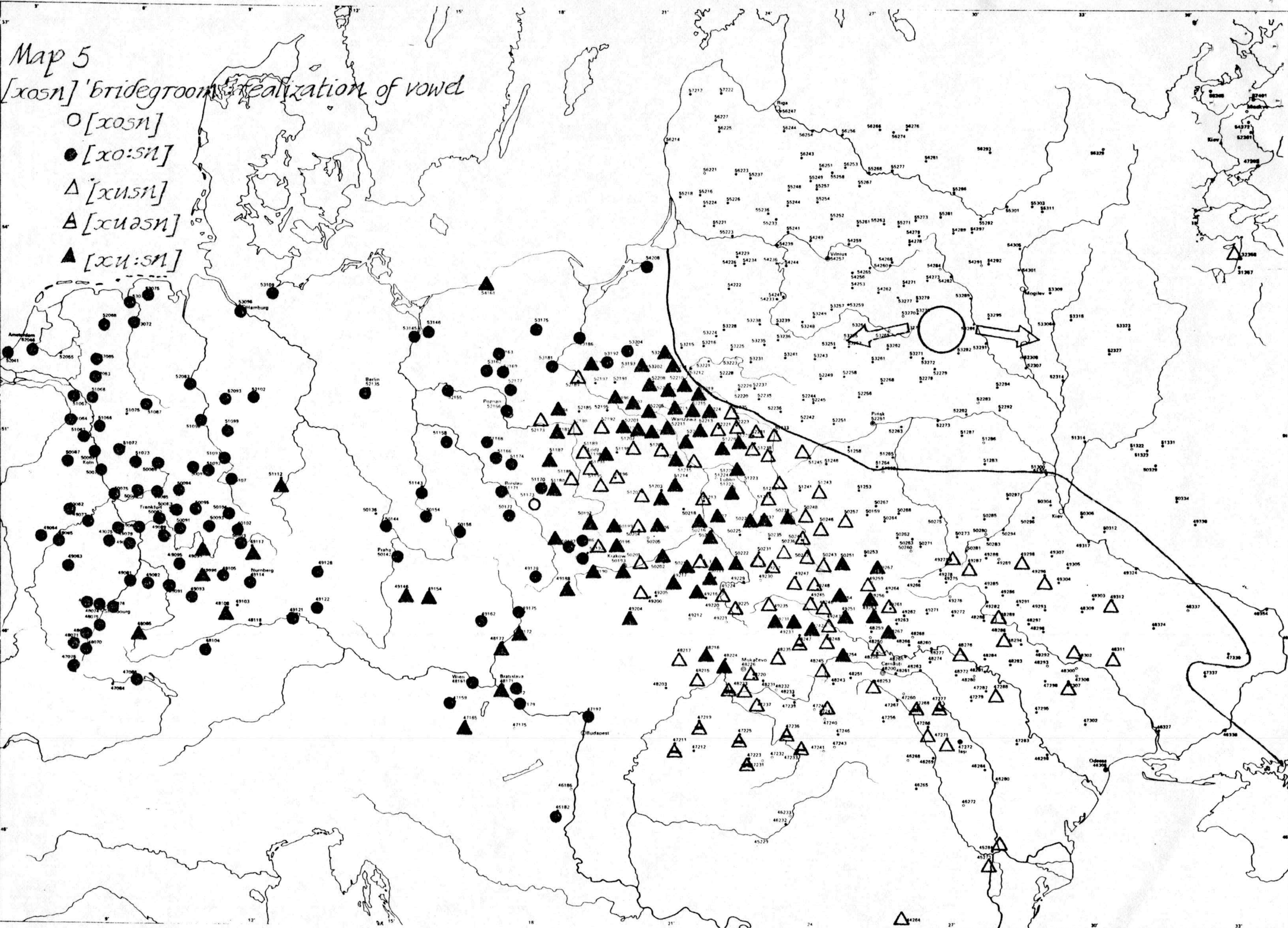
its major source language, and perhaps always vulnerable to dilution by it. Thus the original design of the LCAAJ was for an atlas of Yiddish in Eastern and East Central Europe, taking into account the vestiges of Western Yiddish in Alsace, Switzerland, and Holland. In addition a short questionnaire dealing for the most part only with Jewish cultural matters was to be administered mainly in German to informants from the West, in an attempt to elicit ethnographic information and such linguistic fragments as could still be identified as Yiddish. Information gained through the use of this questionnaire was to be presented as an appendage to the main body of Eastern Yiddish material. Surprisingly, it transpired that much more, and above all more clearly geographically patterned material was elicited from German informants than had ever been believed possible. Extensive fragments elicited from the German area were indeed distributed in patterns that bridge the gap between the extant dialects of the historical Western Yiddish type in Alsace and Western Hungary. They permit the construction of maps that at one and the same time assert the continuity and display the variation that prevailed over the historical Yiddish language territory. Volume I, which will include 125 maps, covers all the questions in both the master questionnaire and the special Western version which turned up useful information in both the East and the West.

Map 4 (preglen) 'fry' shows the break in the continuity of extant Yiddish that would indeed have been reflected

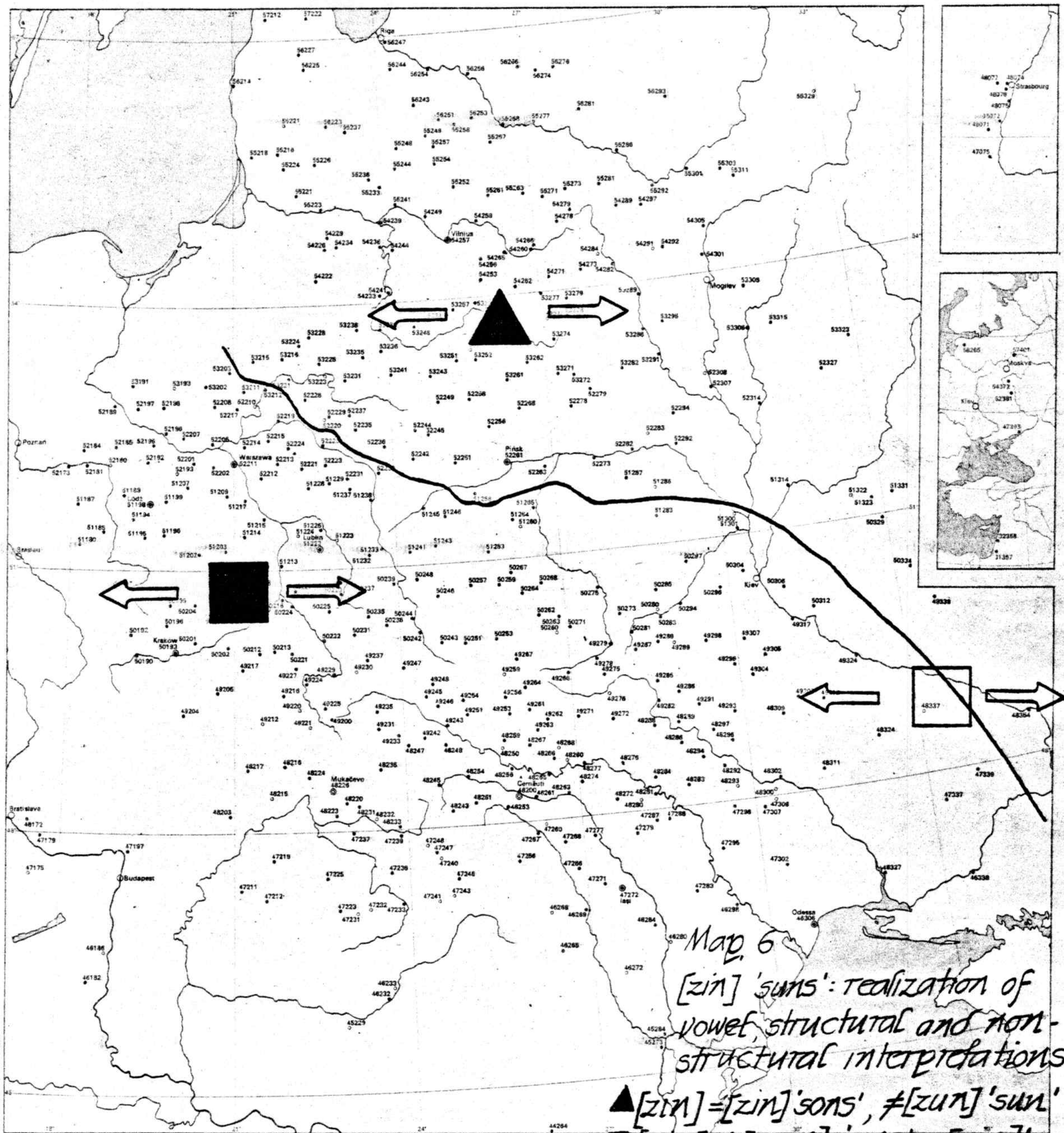

Map 4
[preglen] 'fry': occurrence
known
not known
Amsterdam
Hamburg
Berlin
Poznan
Koln
Frankfurt
Strasbourg
Nurnberg
Praha
Breslau
Lodz
Warszawa
Krakow
Lublin
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Mukačevo
Černăuţi
Iaşi
Pinsk
Kiev
Mogilev
Riga
Vilno
Moskva
Odessa

on most of our maps had we directed the entire contents of the master questionnaire at our Western informants. Map 5 however, which depicts the variant pronunciations of xosn 'bridegroom', reveals the continuity that is typical of the selected items in Volume I.

In his pioneering article of 1954 entitled "Is a Structural Dialectology Possible?" Uriel Weinreich explored the application of structural linguistics to dialect geography and affirmed his belief in the viability of a structural dialectology. As applied to the distribution of dialects in space, a structuralist viewpoint emerges from the article as follows: any given feature, whether a lexical item or a phoneme, is part of a system within its dialect. It is only "the same as" or "different from" another item in terms of its place in the system. Based on this premise the author demonstrates the presentation of phonological material in a way that rejects phonetic reality in favor of system contrasts. Map 6 zin 'suns' illustrates a possible application of this theory to Yiddish. The phonetic realization of the form in question is universal. However in Central Yiddish vowel length is phonemically significant so that zin 'suns' contrasts with zi:n 'sons'. In the northeast, no such contrast can exist so that the items are homophones. On the other



Map 5
[xosn] 'bridegroom': realization of vowel
○ [xosn]
● [xo:sn]
△ [xusn]
△ [xuəsn]
▲ [xu:sn]
Amsterdam
Hamburg
Berlin
Frankfurt
Koln
Nurnberg
Praha
Poznan
Breslau
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Warszawa
Lodz
Krakow
Lublin
Mukačevo
Cernăuţi
Iaşi
Riga
Vilnius
Mogilev
Pinsk
Kiev
Odessa
Moskva



Map 6

[zin] 'suns': realization of vowel, structural and non-structural interpretations

▲[zin] = [zin] 'sons', ≠[zun] 'sun'

■[zin] ≠ [zi:n] 'sons', = [zin] 'sun'

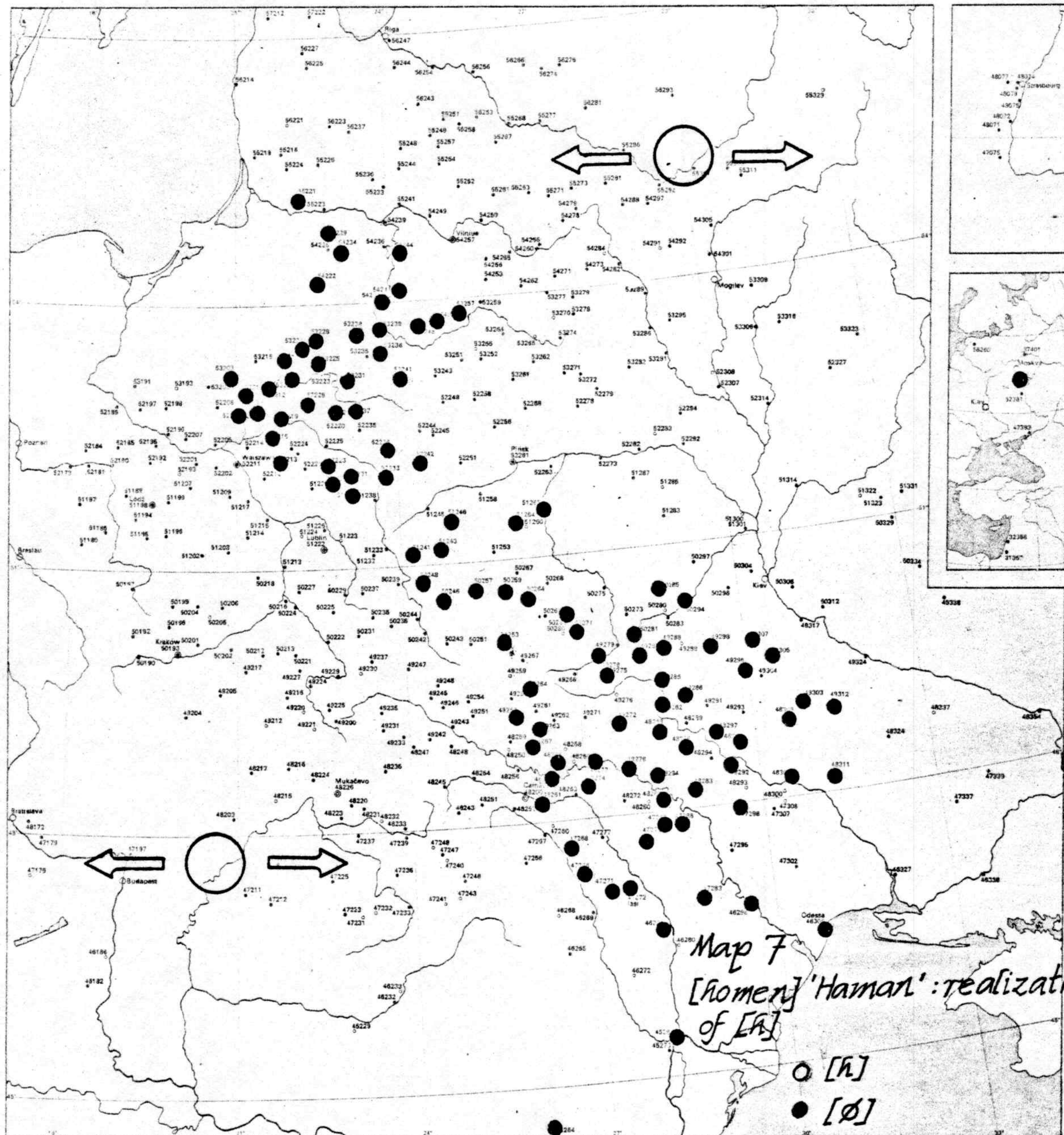
□[zin]

hand the plural _zin_ contrasts with a phonemically distinct singular _zun_ in the Northeast while it coincides with its singular _zin_ in the Central area. Therefore the structuralist could propose that on both phonemic and morphological grounds _zin_ be presented as differing on either side of the system boundary. This example represents an extreme theoretical stance which would appear to permit only the mapping of systems, not of features, and as a rule is not reflected in the presentation of our data. What is reflected in our presentation is a structural foundation laid down by Uriel Weinreich that permits us to deal with huge quantities of material and to display it in useful visual images.

The questionnaire of the LCAAJ is based on a construct known as the "systematic dialectology" in which Uriel Weinreich listed the major problems in Yiddish linguistics which he hoped the Atlas data would help resolve. The systematic dialectology reflects Weinreich's knowledge of the Yiddish dialect and his perceptions of the structural problems raised by their diversity. It represents one of two guiding principles for the organization and presentation of the maps displaying these data. Thus volumes III and IV which deal only with the Eastern Yiddish area included in the original design of the LCAAJ, are being organized according to the outline of Yiddish dialectology problems presented in the systematic dialectology, with some modifications being made as the work progresses. A second guiding principle for presentation of the maps is essentially independent of the systematic dialectology. It is reflected in the arrangement of the maps of volume I, the East- West Group, and will also probably determine the appearance

of volume II, devoted exclusively to Western Yiddish. This principle focuses on geographic areas as characterized by distributional patterns, and is thus in the spirit of much recent dialect geography, which is often concerned with the characterization of areas according to sets of linguistic and ethnographic criteria.

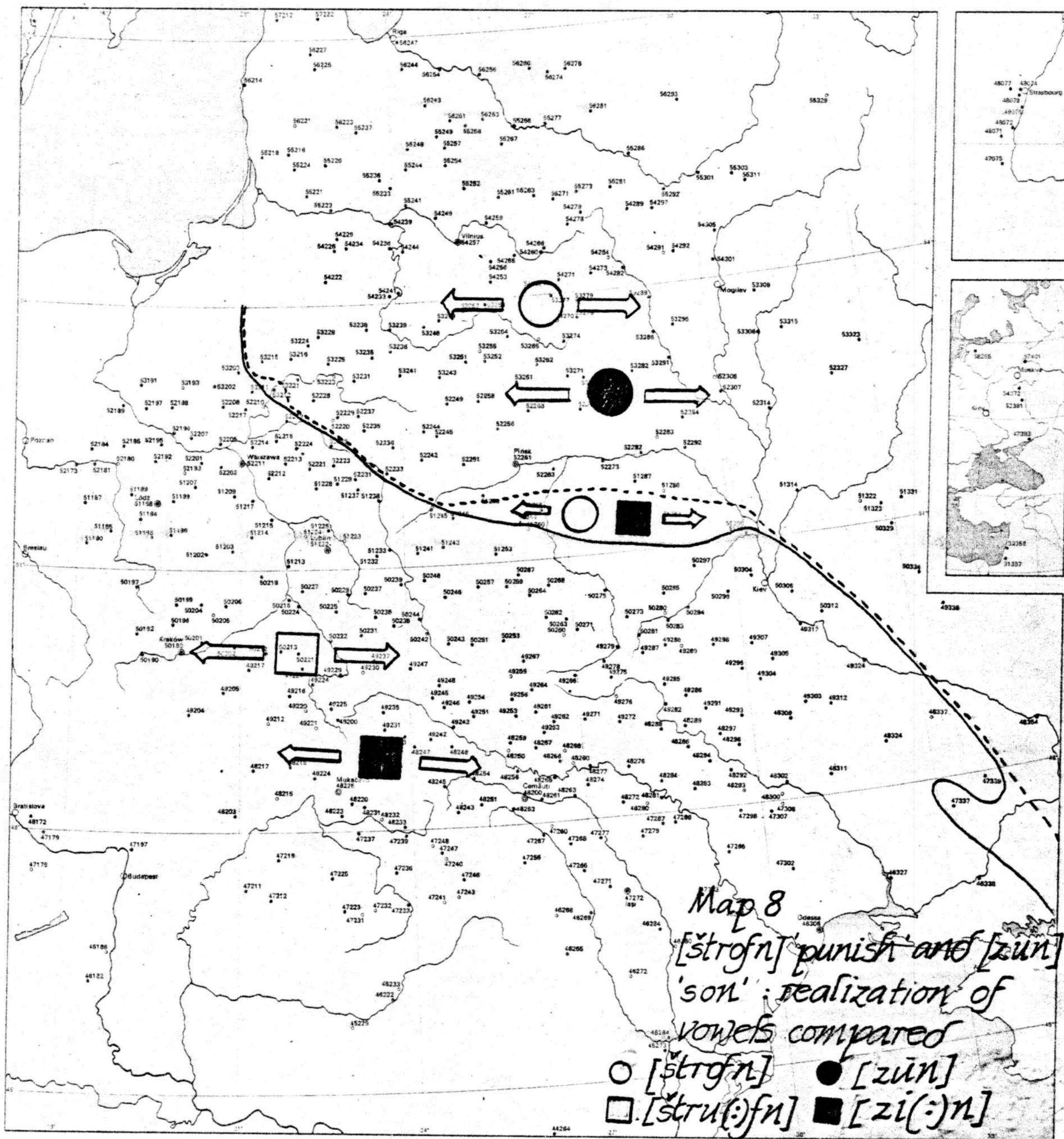
Map 4 was an example of a map from volume I in which we focused on the regionalization of Yiddish that emerges from it. It is characterized by three major areas that appear in similar constellation on many other maps-- phonological, lexical, and ethnographic. Map 7 homen 'Haman" on the other hand illustrates a phonological problem taken from the systematic dialectology where it is described as "alternation h vs. Ø". The problem may be more fully stated in the following manner: "in which area does historical h persist as a phoneme, and in which area does it merge with Ø?" Taking this problem as a starting point a number of questions were constructed for inclusion in the questionnaire that required informants to respond with items containing the historical phoneme h. The picture that emerges when the data on one such item is plotted is shown in map 7: clearly visible is an area where h merges with Ø; comparison with other items of the same kind reveals transitional locations at which this shift does not occur in every case. From a structural viewpoint, one of the interesting aspects of this pattern concerns the phonemic status of h at transitional points. To what extent are we faced with an incomplete merger of h with Ø that leaves some lexical items behind, and to what extent does h persist phonetically in spite of losing its phonemic status? These questions can be of interest



Map 7
[homen] 'Haman': realization of [h]

to the structural dialectologist quite apart from the specific geographic distribution of the linguistic feature in question. By way of contrast, the more traditional dialect geographer might have explored the same general feature (h vs. Ø) from a point of view which asks: "What is the first sound of the following words: ....", and might have come up with much the same map. However his results would have been of interest only insofar as the area defined as having lost phonemic h could be accorded geographic significance by correlation and comparison with the distribution of other linguistic and ethnographic traits.

The most highly structured elements of the Yiddish dialects are the stressed vowels. Since every stressed vowel forms part of a system of phonemic oppositions at each location, the comparison of these systems and the exploration of the transitional areas where they abutt, are subjects of key interest to the structural dialectologist. We may examine map 8 which combines information derived from maps 1 and 6. The map 1 boundary separates the area where the stressed vowel of a particular etymological class of lexical items is realized as u/u: from the area where it is realized as o. To this we have added the map 6 boundary which reflects phonological variation in a second class of lexical items. The stressed vowel of this group, as typified by zun 'son' is realized either as i/i: or u. The fact that the two isoglosses do not coincide exactly, opens up an intermediate area with o in the first set of items and i/i: in the second. A study of this intermediate system may reveal the consequences of contact between the major systems on either side including direction and relative chronology of change.

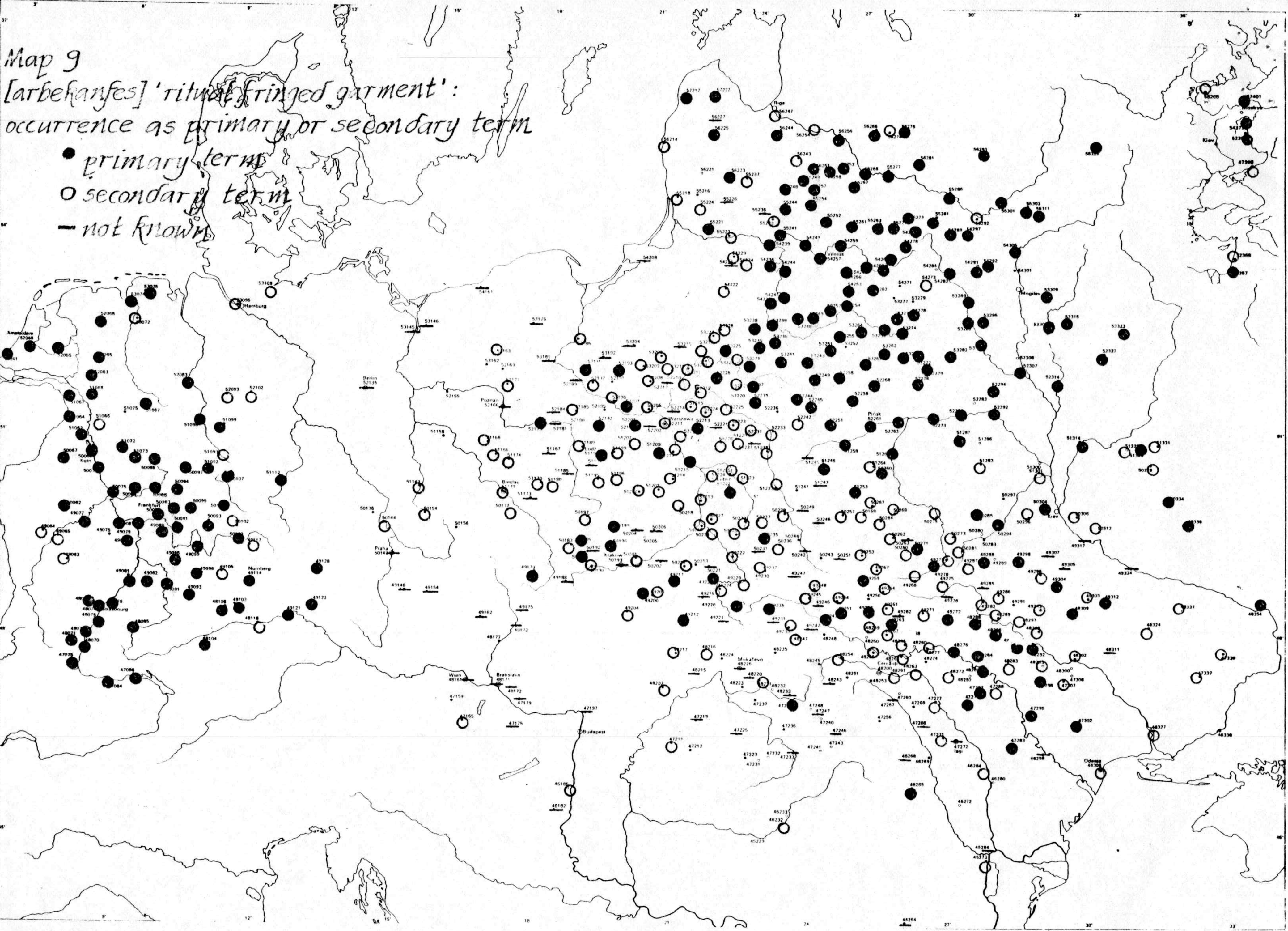

Map 8
[štrɔfn] 'punish' and [zūn]
'son' : realization of
vowels compared
○ [štrɔfn]
● [zūn]
□ [štru(:)fn]
■ [zi(:)n]
Riga
Vilnius
Mogilev
Warszawa
Pinsk
Kraków
Kiev
Breslau
Poznan
Bratislava
Budapest
Odessa
Strasbourg

Although the structuralist design of the LCAAJ is most clearly reflected in the mapping of problems of vocalic phonology, it is in this very same area that the difficulties of putting theory into practice are most apparent. From a structural viewpoint, only phonemics count: it is only the assignment of a phonetic entity to a phoneme that permits us to fit it into a system of linguistically significant oppositions. True to this point of view, Weinreich exhorted the fieldworkers for the LCAAJ to transcribe their interview material phonemically. Unfortunately, phonemic transcription has its pitfalls. It assumes a considerable amount of prior knowledge of the dialects that are being transcribed, and presupposes the interviewer's ability to assign any phonetic form instantly to the appropriate phoneme. In so doing it lends itself to confirmation of prejudices based on a small body of information, and may inhibit the recognition and recording of unusual or intermediate forms. It also suppresses phonetic information which if recorded might give cause to modify the original hypotheses. An example from the LCAAJ is that of vowel length. It was well-known that some dialects of Yiddish make phonemic distinctions on the basis of vowel length, and that some do not. As a result vowel quantity was not transcribed for those areas where it was held to be non-phonemic. Hence, unless a great deal of taped material is retranscribed, no reexamination of the role of vowel length over the entire is possible.

So far we have discussed the presentation of phonological matters only. We have seen that by identifying a set of phonological problems, often, though not exclusively, couched in either/or terms (eg. map 7), and by using a phonemic transcription for the collected data, we have in effect partly organized in advance the material to be presented on any map. If we refer back to maps 1 and 7, we note a simplicity of presentation that is

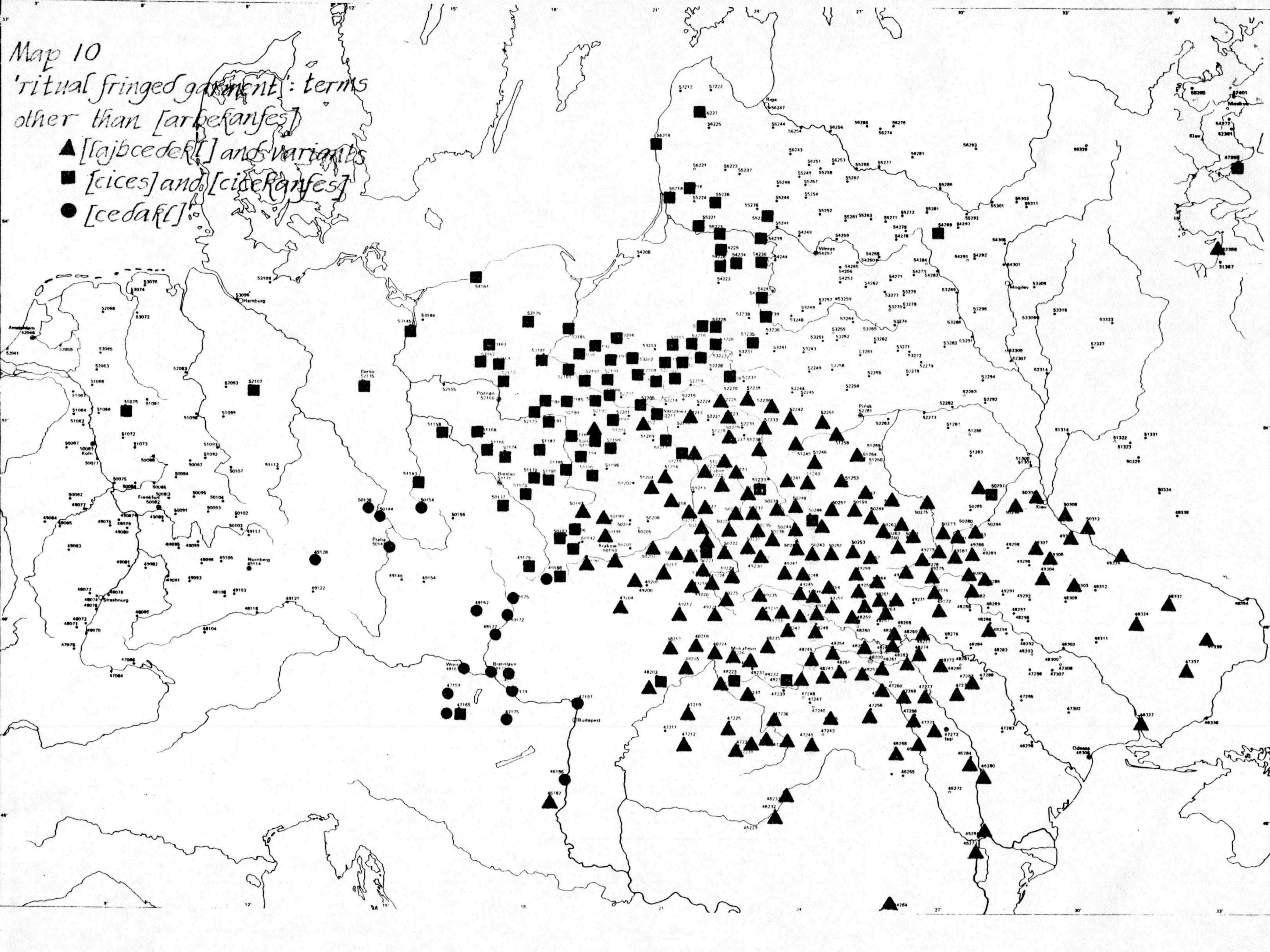
thus a direct outgrowth of the structural, that is, phonemic orientation built into the design of the LCAAJ.

On the other hand, the style of presentation of less structured areas of investigation, notably lexicon and ethnography, depends to a rather greater extent on the ingenuity of the compilers. The systematic dialectology does include problems of lexical distribution, such as 'Germanic vs. Slavic', but unlike phonological problems like '<u>h</u> vs.<u>∅</u> ', these are not easily expanded into one simple question that we can answer by plotting relevant information on a map. Many items bear on the 'Germanic vs. Slavic' issue and the question may differ from one item to the next. In one case we may, for instance, be concerned with the abandonment of Germanic terms in a particular dialect, while in another case, we may be interested in the penetration of Slavic elements into Yiddish dialects that are geographically distant from the source language. In addition, a single lexical item may contribute to many problem areas that are identified in the systematic dialectology so that judgement must be exercised in determining what information is most meaningful, and in what context it should be presented. The editors strive to base their decisions on structural criteria as far as possible, with the goal of pointing clearly to the most significant oppositions. Maps 9 and 10, both taken from Volume 1, are the result of applying structural considerations to a body of data showing many interesting variations. Both maps are devoted to the distribution of variant names for what is most widely known as <u>arbe-kanfes</u>, the traditional four-cornered fringed undergarment. Map 9 shows only the term <u>arbe-kanfes</u> itself. On this map, we have used our symbols to emphasize the distinction between those areas in which <u>arbe-kanfes</u> is the popular term for the


Map 9
[arbekanfes] 'ritual fringed garment':
occurrence as primary or secondary term
● primary term
○ secondary term
— not known
Amsterdam
Hamburg
Frankfurt
Nurnberg
Berlin
Poznan
Praha
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Riga
Vilnius
Pinsk
Kiev
Odessa
Iasi

garment, and the area in which it is a secondary, often more learned, term. The heavy emphasis on this distinction in the case of an item otherwise universally known is justified from a structuralist viewpoint, since from the distinction an additional question arises: 'If arbe-kanfes is not the popular term in this area, then what is?' Map 10 provides the answer. Here we have ignored the universally known term arbe-kanfes so that we can focus on other distinctions in the terminology. A comparision of the two maps will now permit us to consider more closely the status of arbe-kanfes in relation to the presence or absence of other terms in a given region.

Does the preceding discussion permit us to draw any general conclusions concerning the viability of a structural dialectology? Notwithstanding its structuralist design the LCAAJ is not in itself an exercise in structural dialectology. The shape that it is now taking has been determined both by structuralist thinking and by conventional dialectological concerns. The material that is thus made available will surely lend itself to further evaluation from the structuralist point of view, but the question as to whether a self-contained structural dialectology is indeed practicable must still be considered open. On the other hand, the structurally-based, problem-oriented dialectological enquiry of which the LCAAJ is an example has proven effective. In the case of the LCAAJ it provided a foundation for the collection and organization of data that would be properly accessible for the study and interpretation of its linguistic and ethnographic implications.



Map 10
'ritual fringed garment': terms other than [arbekanfes]
▲ [lajbcedekl] and variants
■ [cices] and [cicekanfes]
● [cedakl]
Riga
Vilnius
Hamburg
Amsterdam
Berlin
Poznan
Breslau
Krakow
Praha
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Pinsk
Mogilev
Kiev
Odessa
Frankfurt
Koln
Nurnberg
Strasbourg

II. The LCAAJ as a description of Yiddish

To most students of Yiddish, and to many linguists as well, a linguistic atlas, like a dialect dictionary, belongs to the more obscure exercises in language description. Anyone seeking written information would be more likely to turn to a dictionary, a textbook, or a grammar, whether prescriptive or descriptive in intent. We do well, however, to consider two limitations of these more frequently consulted works: First, they generally choose to describe only a single variety of a language. Second, they are generally associated with the teaching of language skills or of a second language; hence they are predisposed to exclude what is not considered useful. By implication, their authors set themselves up as authorities on what is proper and what is functional.

We argue today, not only that these limitations hold true for the description of Yiddish, but that they are in fact of much greater significance in the case of Yiddish than in the case of many other languages. In the first place, the selection of a single variety of Yiddish for description is fraught with unusual complications. For many languages, the identification of a widely acceptable form is not difficult. Thus, there is a fair consensus on what constitutes General American English, and it is understood that it tends to be very functional for a second-language learner who intends to speak English to North Americans. Such an acceptable form may be supraregional as is French at its most standardized, or it may represent the usage of a very large or

dominant regional community of speakers as in the case of General American English.

No variety of Yiddish meets these criteria. The only feature of Yiddish for which a standard is commonly adhered to is the orthography. The phonology of 'Standard Yiddish' as taught in the classroom is a grapheme-to-phoneme transposition of the standardized orthographic system, resembling, but not identical with, the phonology of Northeastern ('Lithuanian') Yiddish. As for the lexicon, there are signs of preference for the widely-known over the restricted, and of other kinds of selectivity, in the language of good stylists, but full analysis of acceptability and unacceptability of lexical features in different spoken and written styles is lacking. The stylistic status of the grammatical characteristics of the regional varieties of Yiddish is also only partly explored. Abandoning the search for a supraregional standard, we may opt for the selection of what we view as an important dialect, having it stand for the language as a whole. This was the path which S. Birnbaum took in his _Grammatik der jiddischen Sprache_. However, no one Yiddish dialect has been recently spoken by an absolute majority of speakers, and no single dialect has been current over the better part of the language area. But perhaps even more important than the difficulty of determining which one variant of Yiddish to describe, is the consideration that at the stage which Yiddish has reached, such a one-sided description may be far from the best possible way of documenting the language. In particular, since Eastern Yiddish has lost its home and with it its supply of native speakers, the

usual utilitarian purpose for its study have disappeared as well; there is less need to separate the functional from the erudite, little justification for focusing on the well-known and suppressing the obscure. On the other hand, in spite of the losses suffered by Yiddish, the devastation wrought on the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe has left us with a last generation of European-born native speakers from whose memories we may yet reconstruct both what was common and what was rare and elusive. We do not usually get a last chance like this, and the format of the linguistic atlas permits it to embrace this diversity of information and to make it available for study.

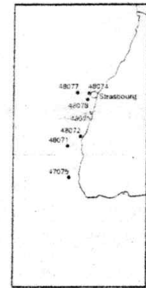
We are aware that a linguistic atlas has its own peculiar limitations. Most conspicuously, the number of entries cannot come close to matching the number of entries that other formats make possible. A single item that may be adequately defined in two lines in a dictionary is often spread over half of Europe on a map. However, in view of the unusual characteristics of Yiddish which we have mentioned we hold that this restriction is not as detrimental to a sound description of the language as are the restrictions imposed by dictionaries, text-books, and grammars.

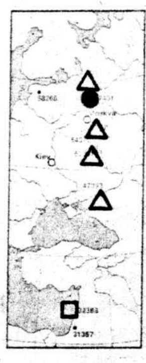
Furthermore, the geographic presentation of a language is considered to have an implicit historical dimension, thereby increasing its content. We have seen in our discussion of Map 8, for example, that identifying a geographically transitional dialect is the first step towards determining the chronology of dialect change.
In sum, we claim that in the absence of a single standard for Yiddish, the only theoretically valid way to describe the language is to describe

all of it, and that since this is impossible, it must be sampled geographically--as many items as possible in as many locations as possible. Through this procedure, we are able to present a body of material which reveals the regular patterns of phonological variation among the dialects, defines transitional areas between them, and establishes patterns of lexical and ethnographic variation. It also reveals many different kinds of opposition in the lexicon: between linguistic cognates, between derivations from different languages, and between the near-universal and the sporadic. (Maps 11 to 13 'knot (in wood)', 'dull (e.g. knife)', 'grater' provide examples). Apart from presenting material with a fine potential for illuminating linguistic and extralinguistic issues the LCAAJ is a statement on Yiddish. First and foremost, it says 'This is what Yiddish looked like.'

III. <u>Volume I of the LCAAJ in relation to Uriel Weinreich's set of dialectological problem areas</u>

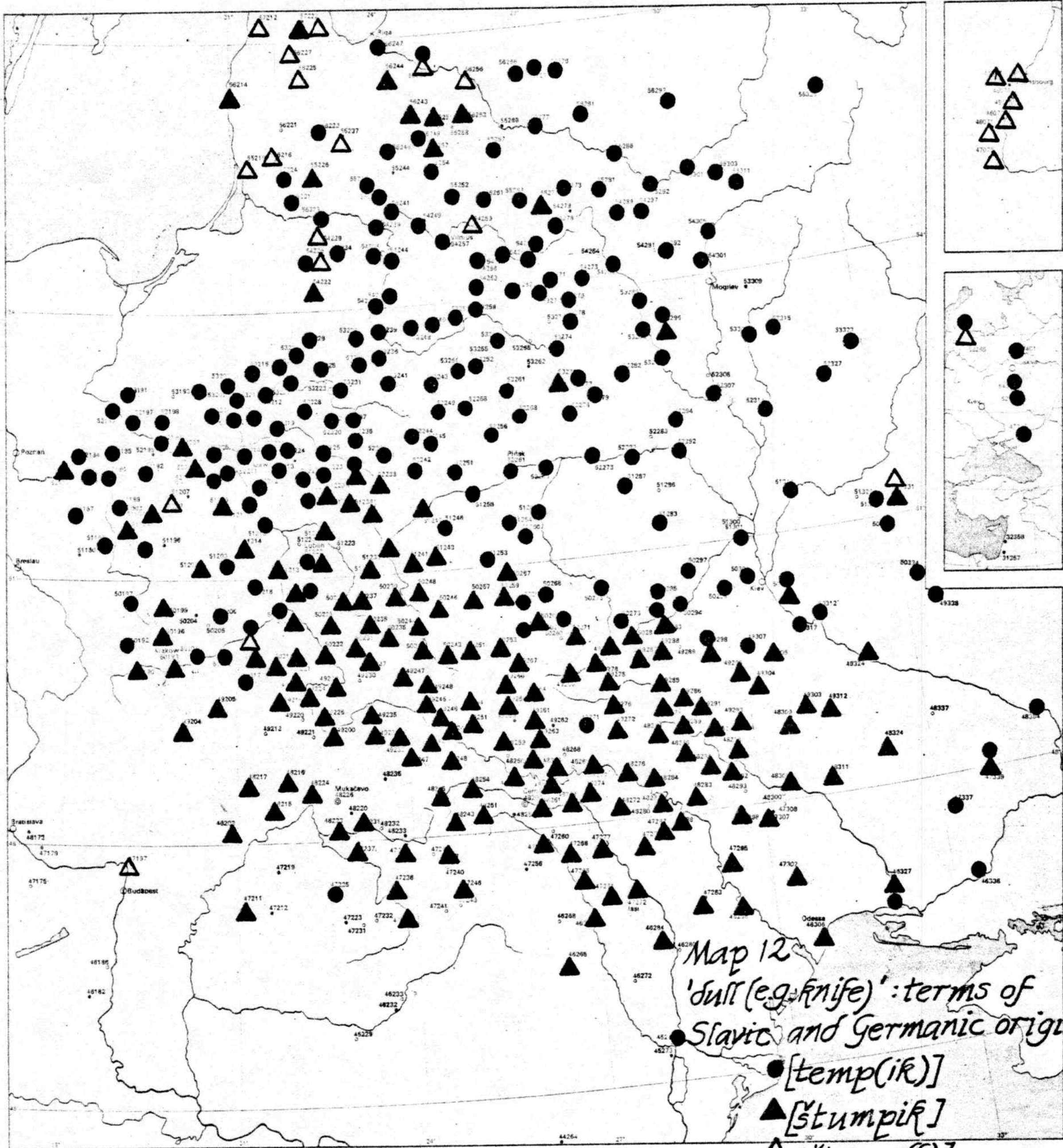
At a given time, the LCAAJ may be said to consist of three layers of information, all of them available to the prospective user. The first layer consists of the tape recorded interviews, the written transcripts, and a computerized or mechanical rearrangement of the transcript material that can be consulted question by question (as opposed to location by location). The importance of the tapes is sometimes overlooked in our enthusiasm for the data distilled from them. The vast majority of our informants do provide excellent examples of specific regional speech patterns. The second layer comprises all attempts that have been made to organize the data that





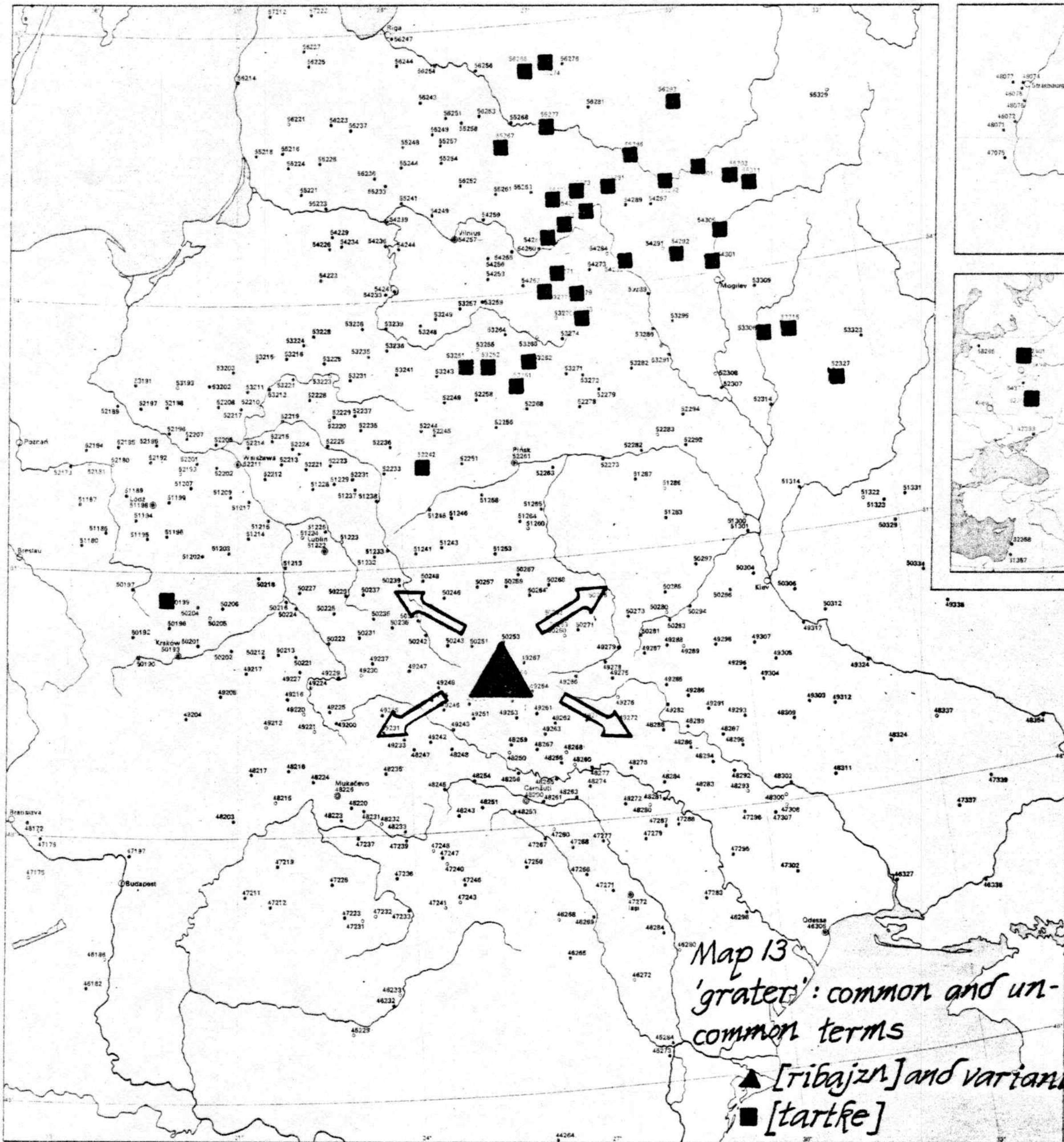
Map 11
'knot (in wood)': diverse terms
of Slavic origin

● [senk] ■ [sink] □ [sik]
[cenk] [cink] [cik]
△ [suk]



Map 12
'dull (e.g. knife)': terms of Slavic and Germanic origin

● [temp(ik)]
▲ [štumpik]
△ [štump(f)]



Map 13
'grater': common and uncommon terms
▲ [ribajzn] and variants
■ [tartke]

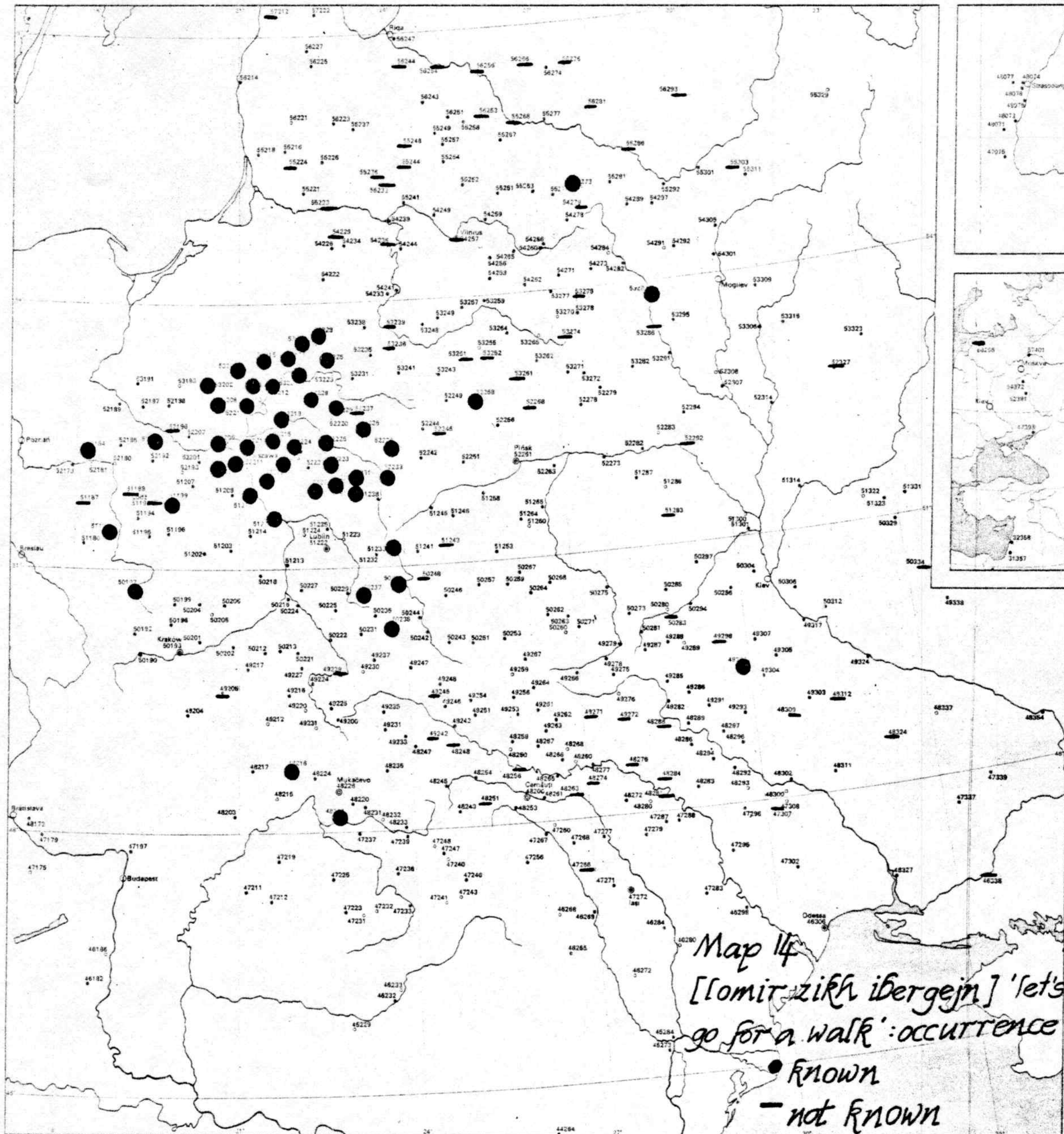
have not yet resulted in publication. The existence of this partially organised material provides raw material for future refinement, and more immediate information on the usefulness for further study of a particular item in a particular context. The third layer consists of published material, such as the articles that have appeared in the Field of Yiddish and Volume I of the Atlas now in press. We are concerned here with the significance of this collection of published maps in relation to certain dialectological issues raised by Uriel Weinreich.

When Weinreich designed the LCAAJ on the foundation of the systematic dialectology, he also presented a number of dialectological questions which he intended the analysis of LCAAJ materials to clarify. In 1960, he grouped these questions into four problem areas, which were to be examined with reference to Yiddish, while bearing upon wider issues of dialectological theory.

The first group of questions focuses on comparisons between coterritorial languages and cultures. Through the study of the geographic organization of linguistic and cultural traits in the Yiddish-speaking population of Europe and in those non-Jewish populations coterritorial with it, Weinreich hoped to determine if major linguistic and ethnographic divisions in one group coincided with or differed from those in the other, and if innovations took similar or dissimilar routes in the contrasting cultural groups. Such comparisons are of key importance for theories of language geography. A wealth of hypotheses have been established to explain linguistic and ethnographic diffusion and fragmentation in territorially isolated cultures, or cultures for which possible

coterritorial comparisons have not been explored. It is surmised, for instance, that in some language a particular linguistic change took a certain geographic route because it was carried along a major trade artery. Support for such a hypothesis may come from the observation that linguistic changes in other languages also tend to travel along trade routes, or from determining that additional linguistic and cultural developments in the same language have taken a similar path. However, most cogent confirmation of such a hypothesis would tend to come from evidence of parallel developments in a different culture sharing the same territory and trading along the same routes. In the case of the coterritorial situation of Yiddish, there is already material available on the linguistic geography of the other languages concerned, such as the Polish and Belorussian dialect atlases, and the clarity of patterns that has emerged for Yiddish has opened up the possibility of comparative interpretation of Yiddish and related (generally Slavic) material. Map 14, for example, points to an area that often stands out as a region of Yiddish linguistic innovation. Comparison with Polish materials should help us determine if corresponding innovative areas can be identified in that language and, if so, we may have the beginnings of an important contribution to the theory of linguistic innovation.

The second group of questions deals with the responses of Jewish society to outside influences, both cultural and linguistic. One feature that adds to the interest already inherent in these questions from a purely Jewish point of view is the large number of languages impinging upon Yiddish alone. For example, map 12

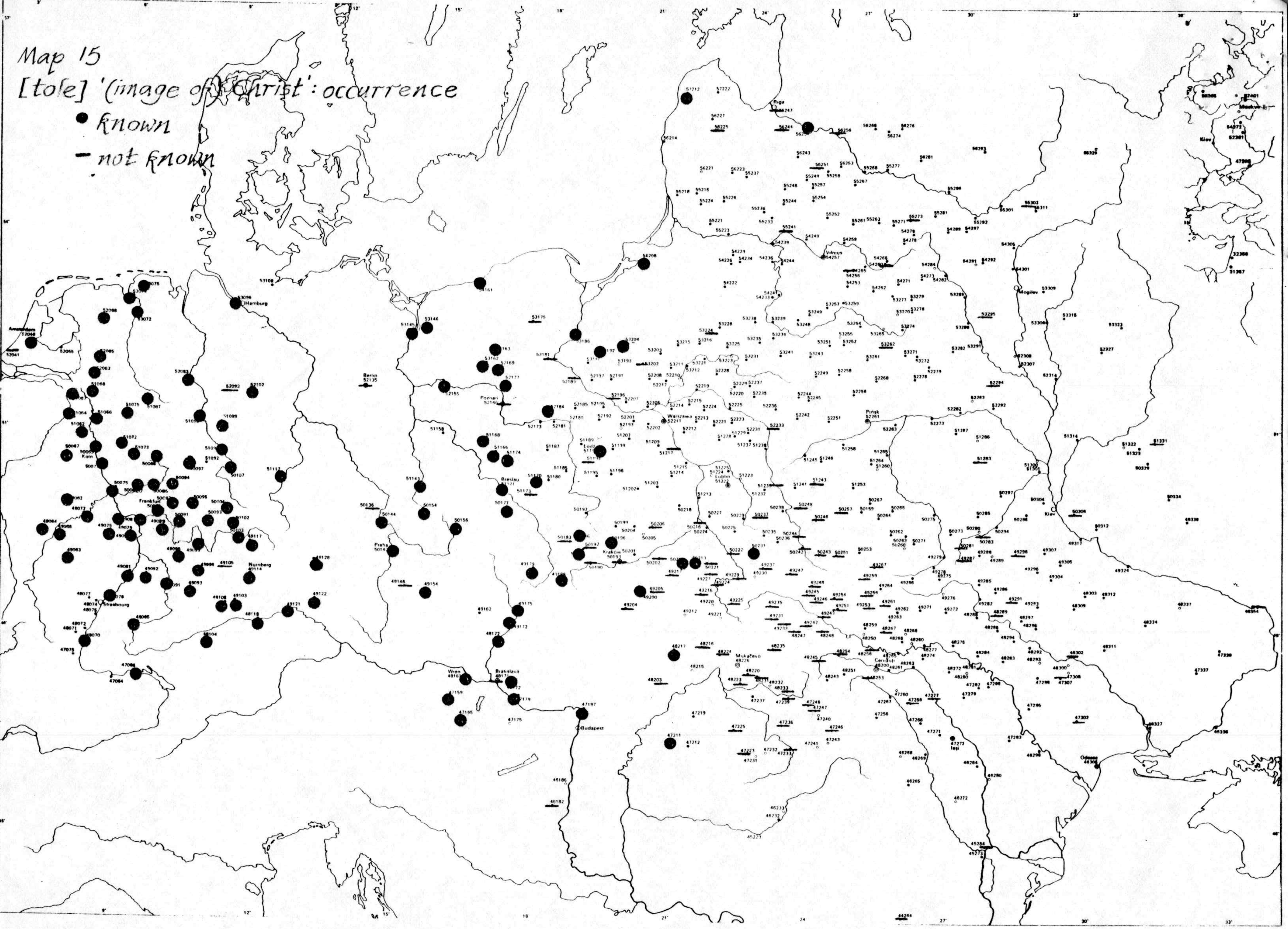


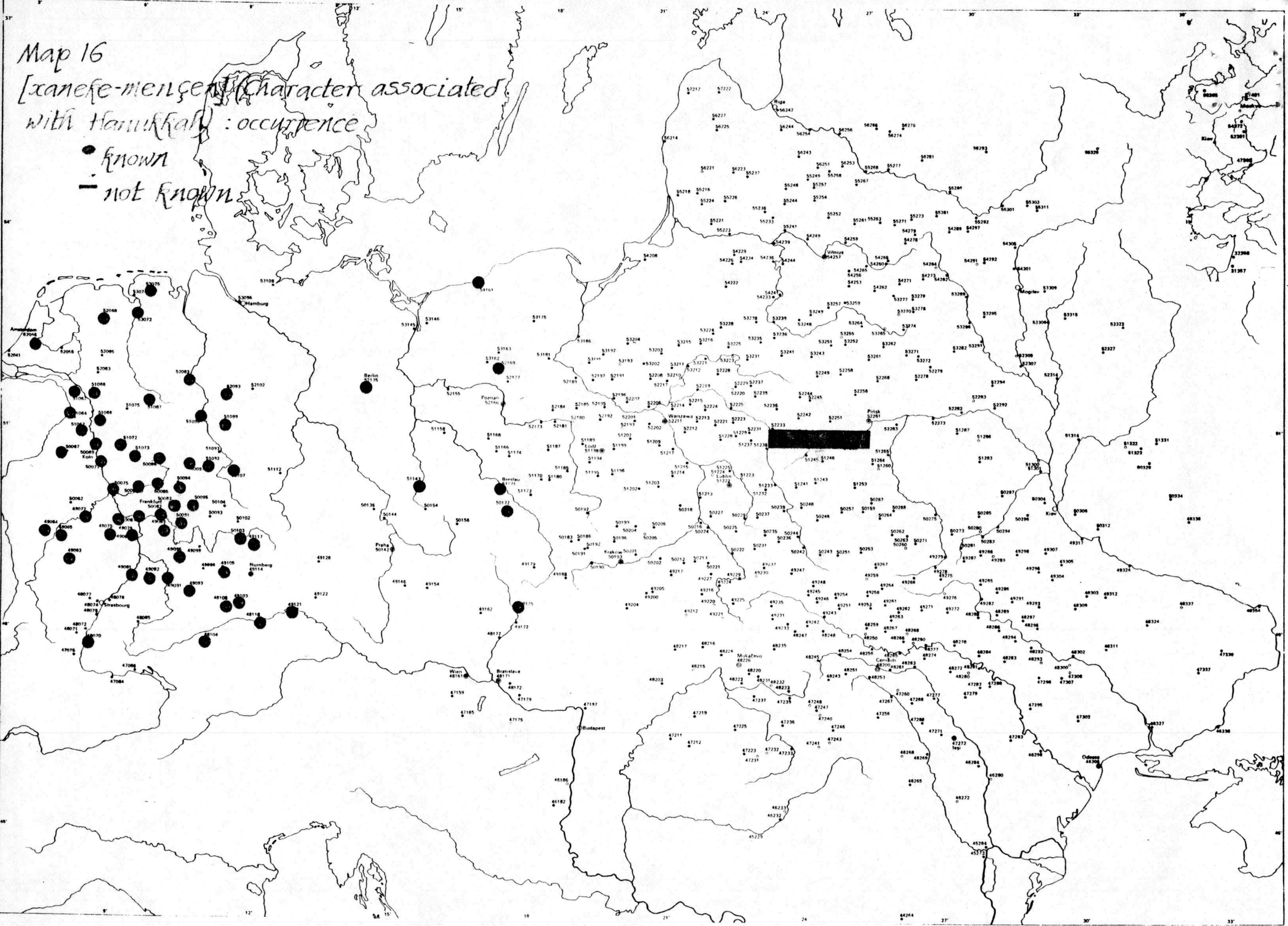
Map 14
[[omir-zikh ibergejn] 'let's go for a walk': occurrence
● known
– not known

identifies an area where Slavic-derived lexical items contrast with Germanic items used elsewhere. This map and others like it raise the question as to why Yiddish in the south-east should have been particularly permeable to the Slavic (typically Ukrainian) lexicon. Hebrew-Aramaic, as the language of Jewish learning, may also be viewed as an outside influence on the Yiddish vernacular, and our data does indeed reveal that the penetration of items from this source varies from region to region. Of particular interest in this context is the unexpected richness of the data from Western Europe, which of course illustrates this part of the lexicon almost exclusively. Map 15 tole '(image of) Christ' provides an example. Extralinguistic influences too, prove to be regionally distinctive. Map 16 shows where the xaneke-mencen, surely kin to Santa Claus (German Weihnachtsmann), is known. Curiously enough, this character is familiar to the observant communities of the southwest, but unknown to the more assimilated populations of Eastern Germany. Investigation of regional variation in other areas, such as the adoption of food preferences, will be possible in the context of coterritorial comparisons.

In the third and fourth groups of problems, Weinreich addresses matters pertaining on the one hand to commonly accepted principles of recent dialect geography, and on the other, to structuralist concerns.

In the third group he addresses the establishment of linguistic-ethnographic regions (German Sprachlandschaften). This is an issue perhaps dealt with more directly than others by the LCAAJ. Comparisons made among maps already presented here indicate, for example, that the area where Slavic items often win out over Germanic ones is the area where certain popular terms for arbe-kanfes are concentrated, and we might add that it is also the area where


Map 15
[tole] '(image of) Christ': occurrence
• known
— not known
Riga
Vilnius
Mogilev
Kiev
Hamburg
Amsterdam
Berlin
Poznan
Warszawa
Lodz
Lublin
Breslau
Krakow
Praha
Frankfurt
Koln
Strasbourg
Nurnberg
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Pinsk
Iasi
Odessa



Map 16
[xaneke-mençen] (Character associated with Hanukkah) : occurrence
known
not known
Amsterdam
Hamburg
Berlin
Poznan
Breslau
Praha
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Frankfurt
Koln
Strasbourg
Nurnberg
Warszawa
Lodz
Lublin
Krakow
Riga
Vilnius
Mogilev
Pinsk
Kiev
Moskva
Mukačevo
Černăuti
Iaşi
Odessa

čolnt often contains barley, and where the terms jojcres and jojcrim are known. The same area is defined by phonological features, and commonly known as Southeastern Yiddish. Details of the correlations among phonological, lexical and cultural features have been explored in various articles which make use of LCAAJ materials, and the organization by distributional patterns of Volume I is intended to further illuminate the relationships among these components. In contrast to this, we have already pointed out that the solution of structural questions in general will require a great deal of further interpretation of the LCAAJ maps, and this is true of the types of questions included in the fourth and final group, such as, can we identify innovations in Yiddish that come to a halt where they encounter a system with which they are incompatible? We are assuming that we will have to wait for the answers to such questions until Weinreich's concepts of discrete and transitional systems in Yiddish have been expanded and refined in the light of the data now available.

IV. New Directions

The LCAAJ was founded over 20 years ago. This paper represents the only recent attempt to refer the state of the project back to its design. However, since the project was founded there have been as many viewpoints and interests associated with the LCAAJ as there have been collaborators, and it is felt that no overview such as this one would be complete without mention of some of the thinking that has emerged in the intervening years. One example of considerations that were not part of the original design was

presented in our discussion of the LCAAJ as the best possible description of Yiddish.

A second matter: we have repeatedly emphasized the structuralist design of the LCAAJ, but there is an important implication of a structuralist orientation that still needs comment. The structuralist leans towards models, and models are ahistorical. For instance, when the structuralist contemplates Map 8, it is with an eye to determining the relative direction and the relative chronology of the sound changes implied. He is concerned neither with points of the compass nor with years and days. Similarly, 'Proto-Yiddish', to which we refer contemporary Yiddish forms, is not a historical reconstruction such as is often attempted for other languages, but a model. We do not attribute Proto-Yiddish to a community of speakers residing in a certain area at a certain time. This then is the spirit in which the LCAAJ was designed. There has, however, been a trend among those who have worked with the LCAAJ towards concern for the historical realities reflected in our data. Yiddish arose in Germany, developed alongside German, and was carried East through waves of migration. Models of linguistic change assume static populations with changes spreading here and being obstructed there, depending on structural and communicative conditions (such as the presence of a political frontier or an unpassable mountain range). They are not concerned with people carrying their language with them. We, on the other hand, are vitally interested in how Yiddish got to where it did, and how dialect features, no matter for what reasons they were established, travelled with those who

owned them. The pattern on Map 7, for instance, is repeated on other maps, and the sum of the evidence points to a relationship between the Jewish communities of Northeastern Poland and of the Ukraine. This relationship seems to derive from the settlement of the Ukraine by Jews from Northeastern Poland facilitated by a historical event--the opening of the Ukraine to Jewish and Polish settlement after the Union of Lublin in 1569.

But we are also interested in the real history of linguistic changes within the Yiddish dialects, especially in the identity of earliest Yiddish. We want to examine our data in the light of our knowledge of the history of German and of written evidence of earlier stages of Yiddish, and to set up a sound hypothesis concerning the characteristics of Yiddish as it was originally spoken. Such a reconstruction need not provide a model from which modern Yiddish forms can be derived direct since this function is performed by the Proto-Yiddish system. It is our hope, however, that well-grounded theorizing on the earliest forms of Yiddish, on the development of intermediate stages, and on the dynamics of transmission through migration and by other means will permit a large part of the modern language to be traced to its source.

We conclude that the intentions embodied in the original design of the LCAAJ are reflected in its realization, but that they have been continuously modified and expanded under the influence of viewpoints that supplement those that the designer made explicit.