SAIDIC COPTIC VOWEL PHONEMES

BY

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List of Abbreviations.

AJSL  American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures.
BSAC  Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte.
ZÄS  Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde.
ZDMG  Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

INTRODUCTION

1. Coptic is the latest stage of the ancient Egyptian language. Soon after the conquest of Egypt by the Arabs in the seventh century Coptic began to lose ground in favour of Arabic. Sometime between the 15th and the 17th century it became virtually extinct. In isolated localities in Upper Egypt it survived as a second language till about the beginning of the present century. As late as 1901 the existence of Coptic speaking communities in
Upper Egypt was reported by J. E. Quibell. Unfortunately he was not able to trace them. It was not until 1936 that a community of this kind was actually found. But at this time the language was no longer based on a living spoken tradition. Arabic had then become the spoken language of the community. Coptic is still used as the ritual language of the Egyptian church and attempts are being made to revive it as a spoken language.

Saidic Coptic became the written language of the whole of Upper Egypt from the fifth till about the tenth century. Gradually it spread as the spoken language of the area. About the tenth century it was superseded by the Bohairic dialect which is the dialect now used for religious purposes. Saidic Coptic was written in Greek letters. The letter values were those of classical Greek as taught by the grammarians, not those of contemporary Greek. The following modifications should be noted:

\[ \hat{a} \] voiced bilabial spirant \([\beta]\). Phonemic notation /h/.
\[ \alpha \] unvoiced velar stop \([g]\), in Coptic words an allophone of the \(k\) phoneme.
\[ \gamma \] unvoiced unaspirated dental stop \([t]\), equivalent to Coptic \(\tau\) /\(t/\).
\[ \dot{\gamma} \] unvoiced dental sibilant \([\zeta]\), equivalent to Coptic \(\varsigma\) /\(\zeta/\).
\[ \varepsilon \] may stand for either \(\zeta\) or \(\dot{\zeta}\).
\[ \omega \gamma \] either vowel /\(u/\) or semivowel /\(w/\).
\[ \gamma \] used for /\(w/\) after the vowels \(\hat{a}, \alpha, \varphi, \gamma, \sigma\).

The voiced dental stop \([d]\), an allophone of the \(l\) phoneme, is written \(\varepsilon\).

A few sounds of the Egyptian language had no symbols in the Greek alphabet, and so Coptic had to take over the corresponding Demotic symbols. In their Coptic forms these are:

\[ \mu \] unvoiced palatal sibilant \([\varepsilon]\). Phonemic notation /\(\varepsilon/\).
\[ \eta \] unvoiced bilabial sibilant \([\varsigma]\). Phonemic notation /\(\varsigma/\).
\[ \chi \] unvoiced glottal sibilant \([\eta]\). Phonemic notation /\(\eta/\).
\[ \varepsilon \] unvoiced dental affricate \([\varepsilon]\). Phonemic notation /\(\varepsilon/\).
\[ \sigma \] unvoiced palatal stop \([\sigma]\). Phonemic notation /\(\sigma/\).
\[ \varepsilon \] monogram for the sequence /\(\varepsilon\)/.

**Saidic Vowel Graphs**

2. Saidic vowel orthography distinguishes eight graphs, all but one taken over from the Greek alphabet: \(\alpha, \epsilon, \iota (\epsilon\iota), \omicron, \omicron\gamma, \omega\), and the supralinear stroke \(\gamma\). The distribution of vowel length among these graphs and their positions in stressed and unstressed syllables can be tabulated in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>short</th>
<th>long</th>
<th>stressed</th>
<th>unstressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(\alpha)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\epsilon)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\iota)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\omicron)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\omicron\gamma)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\omega)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\gamma)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All vowel graphs are found in stressed syllables. Three of them, \(\iota, \omicron, \) and \(\omega\), do not occur outside this position. The Greek letters have the same quantitative values as in Attic and Koine Greek with the exception that \(\alpha\) is always short. \(\omicron\gamma\) is used as a digraph for a vowel of the type /\(u/\). The fact that the supralinear stroke was intended to serve as a vowel letter, at least in some positions, is borne out by the following arguments:

\[\text{According to J. Vergote, } \textit{PHE} 36 (1954) \text{ and W. C. Till, } \textit{Orientalia NS} 23:157 (1954) \text{ Saidic } \sigma \text{ is a palatalised } k. \text{ This is also the view of F. Hintze, } \textit{Zeitschrift für Phonetik} 1:199 note 1 (1947). \text{ Cf. already H. P. Blok, } \textit{ZÄS} 62:59 (1927).\]
1. It is never used in connection with vowels, but is found with all consonants.
2. It is never used in connection with the semivowels j and w.
3. It is found to occur in free variation with e in unstressed final syllables: gohec for gohec, oumeq for oumeq, and with θ in the same position when preceding θ or h: eiopag for eiopag, oumeq for oumeq.

At the time of its introduction Coptic orthography may be reasonably compared with a phonetic transcription. It must, however, be kept in mind that this implies no claim to phonetic completeness. As far as the vowels are concerned it may be stated that the Saedic system of writing shows eight graphs with at least ten different values (two vowel symbols, i and ι, have quantitative bivalence).

PHONETICS

3.1 Introduction. The present investigation into Saedic vowel phonemes is intended to be a synchronous description. Historical grammar has, as a rule, not been taken into consideration. In some cases, however, it would seem desirable to make an exception owing to the shortcomings of Coptic orthography as a basic phonetic transcription. In Egyptian linguistic history two main stages of the language should be distinguished: Coptic and Precoptic. Precoptic is defined as the stage of Egyptian in which the rules of syllable formation presupposed by Coptic syllabic structure were still operative. The Precoptic phase corresponds to Middle Egyptian and possibly also to Old Egyptian. In this connection Late Egyptian, the language of the New Kingdom, will have to be classified as Early Coptic. In absolute chronology

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Precoptic was spoken before the middle of the second millennium B.C.

In Egyptian no syllable and consequently no word began with a vowel. Egyptian words which Coptic orthography renders with initial vowels show a set of initial consonants in Precoptic. This same set of consonants corresponds in some positions to Saedic [zero], in other positions to ['] as represented in the graphic sequence vowel + vowel. Since Saedic orthography has no means of expressing the glottal stop in positions other than postvocalic, it would seem preferable to accept the evidence of historical grammar and assume a phonetic value ['] instead of [zero] for the initial position, at least in post-pausal forms. Initial prevocalic ['] may be considered non-phonemic as its presence is apparent from the position of the following vowel. The existence of postconsonantal ['] is probable, though without equivalent in writing. In each case it must be inferred either by analogy with derived forms or by etymology. Thus εξον 'to be pure, innocent' (infinitive) must be analysed as having an initial consonant cluster [w'] on the analogy of such derived forms as εξολεη 'pure, innocent' (qualitative) and εξομιλε 'priest', and because of its etymological connection with Egyptian wcb, Precoptic *wçab/ 'to be pure, clean' (infinitive).

3.2 The values of the letter ε. Coptic infinitives distinguish three states, status absolutus, status pronominalis used with a following pronominal suffix, and status nominalis used with a following noun. Differences between these states are indicated by internal change and in some cases also by affixation. Forms in the absolute and the pronominal states are fully stressed, while those in the nominal state are unstressed and attached to a following stressed noun, thus forming a stress unit. The distribution of stress units within a phrase can be seen only from the quality and quantity of vowels.

The quality and quantity of vowels in the absolute and pronominal states are best explained by syllable division in Pre-
coptic. The case may be illustrated by the verbs κωτι to choose’ and μικε ‘to bear, to beget’, the two main types of verbal formation in Coptic:


The vowels ο and ο developed from positional variants of Preptic α and ά developed from positional variants of Preptic ι. From a strictly synchronous view the pronominal state of μικε is formed by internal change and affixation. Historically the quoted forms can be explained by Preptic */misat/ and */mishat/, the latter form showing the regular sound change ι > α. The unstressed forms in the nominal state are κωτι and μικε. Thus Preptic α and ι in stressed position can be seen to correspond to Sādīc ε in unstressed position. In view of parallels from living languages it seems reasonable to assume that this ε represents a centralised vowel of the type [a]. This vowel will be referred to as ε.

The graph ε is not in all cases to be identified with the vowel ι. Not infrequently ε and ι occur as positional variants of one Preptic phoneme. In ιε ‘heaven, sky’, pl. πωτε (base + grammatical morphemes /w/ ‘plural’ and ε ‘feminine’) the presence of ι for ε is conditioned by position in an open (free) syllable in Preptic: */pet/, pl. */petat/. A morpheme variant ε for normal ι is found in the qualitative of the irregular verb ομο ‘to conceive’. The irregularity can be explained by syllable division in Preptic:

ομο, qualitative κετ < Egyptian ιωρ.ια, Preptic */erη/α. Position in closed (bound) syllable in Preptic. Compare the corresponding regular formation in κωτ ‘to build, form’, quali-

1 The stressed vowel of the qualitative may have been u rather than ε thus involving a change ι > ε between Preptic and Coptic, but the evidence is inconclusive. A vocalisation with ι instead of ε was supposed by T. O. Lambdin, The Biowale of Coptic Eta and Related Problems in the Vocalization of Egyptian, JNES 17:187 (1958).

On account of variation between e and ι K. Sethe assumed the value of this ε to have been that of German a. This vowel will be referred to as e. Whether e phonetically was of the type [e] or [ε] cannot be determined (cf. § 3.4). e occurs only in stressed syllables.

3.3 The supralinear stroke. The supralinear stroke is often said to represent a so-called ‘Murmelvokal’ or murmurvowel transcribed ʼ. W. H. Worrell was the first to doubt this generally held view. He assumed that the stroke was used to indicate sonority of a following consonant. After the theory of syllabic consonants in Coptic was set forth, there was a discussion of the whole problem in Egyptological literature. In this discussion W. C. Till adopted the view that the supralinear stroke represented the vowel written i in modern Turkish, i.e. a centralised i. This may be one value of the stroke in Sādīc. As shown above § 2, in some positions the supralinear stroke stood for a vowel. Worrell was, however, undoubtedly right in assuming this symbol to indicate a syllabic element, at least in connection with a following b, l, m, n, or r. With other consonants a syllabic element is possible, though not probable. In modern living languages a syllabic element is common with m, n, and the different types of l and r but rare with other consonants. In view of the evidence it seems likely to assume the following values of the supralinear stroke in Sādīc:

1. A short centralised vowel of the type [a]. This vowel will be referred to as ε. In cases where they occur in free variation ι and ε may be graphical representations of one and the same sound [a].

10 ZAS 47:31 with note 1 (1910). Cf. also the forms with e where ι should be expected as quoted by Sethe.
11 For references, see Till, Gramm. p. 44 note 8.
12 Der Murmelvokal, ZAS 68:121 f. (1932). Till referred to the Old Nubian use of the supralinear stroke for short i, ibid. note 4 and Till, Gramm. p. 44 note 8 where also a reference is found to the Old Coptic use of i in cases where later Coptic has the supralinear stroke.
2. A syllabic element in connection with syllable final \( b, l, m, n, \) and \( r. \) This element will be referred to as syllabic element.

**3.4 Possible additional values of some vowel letters.** In the Bohairic dialect the distinction between long and short vowels was probably not a distinction of quantity only but also of quality. The long vowels represented by the graphs \( \text{h} \) and \( \omega \) seem to have been more closed (higher) than the corresponding short vowels represented by the graphs \( e \) and \( o \).\(^{13}\) Whether this Bohairic feature applies to Saidic also, is not known.

Modern Upper Egyptian traditional pronunciation of Bohairic has preserved a double value of the letter \( \text{h} \) which is pronounced either \( a \) or \( i \) (both of which may be long or short)\(^{14}\). The distinction between \( a \) and \( i \) values seems to be phonemic and the informants apparently agreed in all cases\(^{15}\), although there are some inconsistencies in the transcribed biblical texts. These inconsistencies may be due to a literary tradition different from the local spoken tradition of the language. In some words modern \( a \)-values can be seen to go back to Preoptic us, but the material hardly justifies the assumption that Preoptic us in all cases is the prototype of this \( a \).\(^{15}\) It is quite possible that a similar distinction existed in earlier Bohairic as well as in Saidic, but Coptic orthography is inconclusive in this respect. In view of this it would seem reasonable here to disregard possible additional values of Saidic \( \text{h} \).

**3.5 Final analysis of vowel elements.** The preliminary analysis of Saidic vowel orthography (\( \S \) 2–3.4) led to the setting up of twelve different vowel elements: the ten vowels quoted in \( \S \) 2, \( a_1 \) (\( \S \) 3.2), and the syllabic element (\( \S \) 3.3). Some of these elements can be further analysed into a vowel segment + vowel length [\( v:\) ]. By means of this procedure four graphs can be analysed as representing a combination of a vowel segment and vowel length: \( \text{h} \) [\( e:\) ], \( \text{i} \) [\( i:\) ], \( \text{y} \) [\( u, u:\) ], and \( \omega \) [\( o:\) ]. The difference between \( a_1 \) and \( a_2 \) was possibly a difference of quantity. Whether there was also a difference of quality is not known (cf. \( \S \) 3.3). The graphic representation of \( a_2 \) as a diacritic on the following consonantal symbol rather than a separate vowel sign would suggest that \( a_2 \) was not considered a vowel on a par with \( a_1 \). This is also suggested by another feature of Coptic vocalisation. Stressed \( o \) and \( i \) in the absolute state of infinitives correspond in the nominal state to unstressed \( a_2 \) or the syllabic element, never to \( a_1 \). The variation between \( a_1 \) and the syllabic element is conditioned by the phonetic environment. So \( a_2 \) may be analysed as a compound vowel element segment \( [\text{a}] \) + a feature of shortness as compared with \( a_1 \). Thus we have:

\[
a_1 = [\text{a}],
\]
\[
a_2 = [\text{a}].
\]

The final analysis of Saidic vowels has reduced the number of segmental elements from twelve to six: \( [\text{a}, \text{e}, \text{e}, \text{i}, \text{o}, \text{u}] \). To these should be added three suprasegmental or prosodic features: vowel length, syllability of a following consonant, and ultra-shortness (occurs only with \( [\text{a}] \)).

The absolute phonetic positions of the vowel elements of a living language can be established by comparison with a fixed set of eight cardinal vowels. For languages, which like Saidic are known only in their written form, such absolute values are unattainable. All phonetic values are approximate. Only the relative positions of the vowel elements can be stated with certainty. The relative positions of the six Saidic vowels can be tabulated in the following way:

1. High: \( i, u \)
2. Mid: \( \text{e}, \text{a}, \text{o} \)
3. Low: \( \text{a} \)

14 W. Vycichl, *Pi-Sotiel* 171 I. (W. H. Worrell, *AJSL* 54:5–7 (1937). *Popular Traditions* 314–318. The symbol \( a \) most often stands for phonetic \( [\text{a}] \), but \( [\text{a}] \) and \( \text{e} \) apparently occur in free variation with \( [\text{a}] \). The phonetic value of short \( i \) is \( [\text{i}] \), see *ibid.* 320 § 32. For the modern bivalence of \( \text{h} \), cf. now also W. Vycichl, *ZAS* 85:74 (1960).
1. Row (high vowels). Two members: Relative distinction front-back.
3. Row. This row has only one member, the low vowel a, which is undefined as to the front-back distinction.

**PHONEMICS**

4.1 Syllabic structure. Saidic syllables are of two kinds, open and closed. Syllable formations work according to the following main patterns: consonant + vowel or consonant + vowel + consonant (CV or CVC). To this should be added that double closed syllables of the type CVC exist. The first element of the consonant cluster may be /s/, /j/, or /w/, the last may be /w/. The two groups of cluster elements are mutually exclusive. Examples of this syllable pattern are: mawm [am] 'bad', pevec [jes] 'to be awake, watch', cooyg [wh] 'to gather, collect', and snoton [tw] 'lips; edge, shore'. There appears to be no indication in the writing of these clusters that the graphic sequence CC was pronounced cC or the like. For syllables of the type CV(C), see below § 4.3. Syllables consisting of one or two consonants also occur (c or cc). This syllable pattern is used only with certain consonants. The syllabic consonant of the type cc may be one of the phonemes b, l, m, n, or r. The type c is found only initially. c may be l, m, n, or r (see below § 4.3).

4.2 The vowel length phoneme. In Preptic vowel length was phonemically non-distinctive. Vowels in open stressed syllables were always long, in other positions vowels were always short. Owing to the later tendency of sound reduction vowel length became a distinctive feature in Coptic. Evidence of the earlier system is still preserved, as in comb 'brother', comb 'sister', the latter to be analysed base + grammatical morpheme c 'feminine'. Vowel length is grammatically distinctive, as in comb 'to hear' (infinitive) and corn 'heard' (qualitative). Otherwise doublets are rare. In order to keep the number of vowel phonemes as low as possible it seems preferable to regard vowel length as a phoneme of its own. In phonemic notation a macron will be used as a diacritic symbol for this phoneme. This notation is in agreement with the system of transcription commonly used for Egyptian and other Hamitic languages. Outside monosyllables vowel length never occurs in closed syllables except before /l/. Vowel length is found in stressed syllables only.

4.3 Distribution of the initial allophones 'stroke' and 'zero'. In word initial position before another consonant l, m, n, and r are written with the supralinear stroke and were accordingly pronounced syllabically. In this position other consonants are usually without the stroke17. With consonants other than l, m, n, and r there is free variation between 'stroke' and 'zero'. This variation may be purely graphical. No special notation is needed for the initial position: /msah/ 'crocodile' (two syllables) against /snat/ 'to fear' (one syllable).

4.4 The a phoneme. The syllabic element and the vowels e/\[a_1\] and \[-a_2\] can be grouped together as allophones of one phoneme. This phoneme will be given the symbol /a/. The distribution of e/\[a_1\] and \[-a_2\], and the syllabic element can be seen from the following table. As no Saidic syllable begins with a vowel (cf. § 3.1), positions are in all cases medial or final.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position of</th>
<th>stressed open syllables</th>
<th>stressed closed syllables</th>
<th>unstressed open syllables</th>
<th>unstressed closed syllables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e/a[a_1]</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[-a_2]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The syllabic element occurs in closed syllables before b, l, m, n, and r. In unstressed closed syllables e/a\[a_1\] and \[-a_2\] occur before another consonants. The tendency is, that within a morpheme group18 e/a\[a_1\] is found in initial syllables, \[-a_2\] in final syllables.

18 The term 'morpheme group' is used here as a subdivision of the unit 'word' (word = minimum free form). The case may be illustrated by the phrase apòkó̂m /he killed'. If analysed this phrase can be divided into two immediate constituents...
So the distribution of the units \( z_1 \) and \( z_2 \) can be made complementary by setting up a juncture phoneme. Juncture falls on some but not all morpheme boundaries, whereas all word boundaries are characterized by juncture. In connected phonemic notation juncture can be indicated by spacing. An exception to the above principle should, however, be stated. In unstressed closed syllables following another closed syllable \( e/z_1 \) is found after \( b, l, m, n, \) and \( r, \) as in \( 
abla \text{t} \) to hear him against \( c \text{t} \) to choose him.\(^{19} \) Variation between \( e/z_1 \) and \( e/z_2 \) still occurs but is in all cases non-distinctive (for the possibility of graphical variants, cf. § 3.3). \( /a/ \) never occurs before vowel length. All cases of \( e \) in stressed syllables probably belong to the \( e \) phoneme.

4.5 List of vowel phonemes. Examples.

Apart from monosyllables Saidic words are, as a rule, stressed on the penult.\(^{20} \) Whether in penultima position or not \( /o/w \) length, \( /e/, \) and \( /o/ \) are always stressed. These phonemes occur in ultima and penultima position only. Saidic Coptic was probably no tone language although earlier Egyptian may have been so. According to J. Vergote Saidic plurals of the type \( s\text{nap} \) may go back to older forms with tone distinction between singular and plural. The infixed plural morpheme \( /t/ \) possibly reflects an earlier toneme.\(^{21} \)

The \( v \) length phoneme.

\( c \text{t} \) to choose. \( \text{f} \text{c} \) b\( \text{c} \) ‘falcon’. \( t\text{w}\text{o} \text{b} \) to re-pay. \( c \text{o} \text{ri} \) s\( \text{w} \)h ‘to gather, collect’.

or morpheme groups \( /at/- \) and \( /h\text{tap}/. \) If analysed down to morpheme level \( /at/- \) can be seen to constitute the two morphemes \( /a/- \) prefix of the perfect I and \( /N/- \) nominal suffix ‘3rd person masculine singular’.

\(^{19} \) H. J. Polotsky, \( \text{ZAS} \) 69:129 (1933).

\(^{20} \) For exceptions to this general rule, see W. C. Till, \( \text{BAS} \) 13:13–32 (1951).

\(^{21} \) Observations sur la vocalisation de l’\( \text{Egyptien} \), \( \text{Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Orientalists} \) (1956), p. 79. Other irregularities in Coptic plural formation have been tentatively explained by the presence of tones in Egyptian, see W. Yvich, \( \text{Zur Tonologie des Somalischen, Rivista di studi orientali} \) 31:227 (1956). Cf. also W. C. Till, \( \text{BAS} \) 13:16 note 2 (1951).

Only in stressed syllables. Never in closed syllables except in monosyllabic words and before \( /'/. \)

The \( a \) phoneme.

\( \text{t} \text{b} \) ‘ten thousand’. \( \text{b} \text{c} \text{c} \text{d} \) ‘crocodile’. \( \text{a} \text{l} \) ‘to mount, go up, go on board’ (intr.). \( \text{c} \text{w} \text{o} \text{t} \) ‘he heard’ (perfect I).

The \( e \) phoneme.

\( \text{e} \text{e} \) ‘ox’. \( \text{h} \text{r} \) ‘placed’ (qualitative). \( \text{h} \text{r} \text{p} \) ‘wine’. \( \text{e} \text{t} \) ‘conceive’ (qualitative).

Only in stressed syllables.

The \( o \) phoneme.

In stressed syllables: \( \text{t} \text{o} \text{t} \) ‘fish’.

In unstressed syllables: \( \text{w} \text{e} \text{n} \) ‘stone’. \( \text{c} \text{w} \text{c} \) ‘to pray’. \( \text{c} \text{c} \text{w} \text{c} \) ‘to be troubled’. \( \text{w} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \) ‘to start’.

For the non-distinctive (graphical?) variation, cf. \( \text{w} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \). \( \text{w} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \) ‘prefix of the negative perfect I’ (nominal state)

\( \text{w} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \) ‘3rd person masculine singular’ (Till, \( \text{BAS} \), § 315). In a few words \( i \) is found as an allophone of \( /a/. \) Position is always in unstressed syllables after the palatals \( /c, t/. \) \( \text{c} \text{e} \text{c} \) ‘half of’ (nominal state). \( \text{w} \text{c} \) ‘nominal state of \( \text{w} \text{c} \text{c} \text{c} \) ‘to say’.

In unstressed position before \( /h/ \) \( a \) is found as an allophone of \( /o/ \). \( \text{w} \text{c} \text{c} \) ‘variant \( \text{w} \text{c} \text{c} \) ‘onah’.

The \( i \) phoneme.

\( \text{w} \text{e} \text{w} \) ‘to bring’. \( \text{t} \text{f} \) ‘to give’, nominal state \( t i \).

In stressed closed syllables Precoptic \( i \) developed Saidic \( a: t i \), nominal state \( t i \), pronoun state \( t a \).
The o phoneme.

omyo nöpra 'to become', qualitative myon só'p. go ho 'face', xo töo 'to say'.

Only in stressed syllables.

The u phoneme.

noytr nüta 'god'. ogoth hün 'inward part'. bohgoy bubu 'to shine'. tonyo luo 'to remove'.

Outside stressed monosyllables /u/ does not occur in closed syllables.

CONCLUSION

5. An analysis of written Saidic shows that the vowels of this dialect can be grouped with six phonemes, viz. /a, e, o, i, o, u/. Owing to the rather wide distribution of /a/ and the setting up of juncture and vowel length as separate phonemes, it has been possible to keep the number of vowel phonemes relatively low.

ADDENDUM


In Orientalistische Literaturzeitung 52:224 note 3 (1957) H. J. Polotsky argued against the interpretation of written WT as [d]. Phonic value [nd]? The distribution of [d] is similar to that of [g] (assimilation to a preceding voiced nasal through indirect contact).

§ 3.3. To the discussion of the values of the supralinear stroke, add references to J. Vergote, Bibliotheca Orientalis 11:105 (1954) and H. J. Polotsky, op. cit. 221–225.


STUDIES IN THAI DIALECTOLOGY

BY

SØREN EGEBROD

A. Introduction.

During a stay in Thailand and Burma¹ in 1956–57 I worked especially with the languages of Yuan (Chiangmai), Khün² (Kengtung), and Shan³. In addition to these studies a basic questionnaire was checked with about thirty persons speaking a number of different Thai dialects and subdialects of Thailand and Burma. The questionnaire was in many cases supplemented by special word lists illustrating local sound developments. Short word lists, especially such as would illustrate tonal development, were checked with additional informants. Many of the informants were students at the Secondary Teacher's Training Colleges of Bangkok and Songkhla. The data on the languages and dialects of Yuan,

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I have hesitated somewhat before publishing this material, because it largely consists of notes incidental to other research and of greatly varying scope from dialect to dialect. Also important papers covering partially the same ground (Haas 1958, Henderson 1959 of the bibliography below) have appeared since the completion of the first draft of this manuscript. Still the present paper contains additional data and viewpoints, enough, I hope, to warrant its publication.

² see Egerod 1959.

³ see Egerod 1957.