

קריאת שמע OF ברכות WITHIN THE פיוטים RECITING

The explanations we provided in last week's newsletter for beginning the first ברכה of קריאת שמע in תפלת שחרת on שבת with פיוטים failed to account for two differences in practice between Ashkenazim and Sephardim. First, Sephardim begin the first ברכה of קריאת שמע in תפלת שחרת with הכל יודוך and ל-א ארון not only on שבת but also on יום טובים that fall on weekdays but omit ל-א אשר שבת. Ashkenazim do not recite any of the aforementioned פיוטים in the first ברכה of קריאת שמע on ימים טובים that fall on weekdays and begin with the ברכה of המאיר לארץ. Second, Ashkenazim add פיוטים to the first ברכה of קריאת שמע in תפלת שחרת on special שבתים such as the ארבע פרשיות and יום כיפור and ראש השנה while the Sephardim do not. (Yes, the Sephardic מהזור for ראש השנה is very thin). The second difference in practice is easier to explain than the first. The dispute between the נוסחאות is clearly expressed in the following:

שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות קריאת שמע סימן סח'—סעיף א'—יש מקומות שמפסיקים בברכות קריאת שמע לומר פיוטים, ונכון למנוע מלאמרם משום דהוי הפסק. הנהגה: ויש אומרים דאין איסור בדבר (הר"י ס"פ אין עומדין והרשב"א והטור) וכן נוהגין בכל המקומות לאמרם, והמיקל ואינו אומרם לא הפסיד ומכל מקום לא יעסוק בשום דבר, אפילו בדברי תורה אסור להפסיק ולעסוק כל זמן שהצבור אומר פיוטים, וכל שכן שאסור לדבר שום שיחה בטילה. ומכל מקום מי שלומד על ידי הרהור שרואה בספר ומהרהר, לית ביה איסורא דהרהור לאו כדיבור דמי, אלא שמתוך כך יבואו לדבר ויבואו לידי הפסק. ועל כן אין לאדם לפרוש עצמו מהציבור במקום שנהגו לאמרם, ויאמר אותם עמהם.

Translation: Some places follow the practice of interrupting the Brachos of Kriyas Shema in order to add Piyuttim. It is preferable not to add Piyuttim in the middle of the Brachos of Kriyas Shema because adding Piyuttim creates an improper interruption. RAMAH: Some opinions disagree and find that it is not an improper practice to interrupt the Brachos of Kriyas Shema in order to add Piyuttim. Therefore many places follow the practice of reciting Piyuttim in the middle of the Brachos of Kriyas Shema. Those who do not recite those Piyuttim have not done anything improper. It is important to note that those who are present in places where Piyuttim are recited in the middle of the Brachos of Kriyas Shema should not occupy themselves with other activities, even discussing matters of Torah, while the Piyuttim are being recited. In particular one should avoid holding idle conversations. Those who choose to study Torah by glancing into in books while the congregation is reciting those Piyuttim are not acting improperly since reading is not like talking. However doing so increases the likelihood that you will share what you are learning and thereby cause an improper interruption. It is always preferable that one not deviate from the practices of the congregation. If the congregation in which you are participating recites Piyuttim, you should join in with them.

It is clear that the Sephardim follow the opinion of the **מהב"ר**, Rabbi Yosef Caro, and the Ashkenazim follow the opinion of the **רמ"א**, Rabbi Moshe Isserles. The disagreement between the two does not represent the first debate on this issue. In fact their comments are merely the continuation of a debate that has been going on in Halachic circles since the time of the **גאונים** and is still debated today. An excellent review of the Halachic sources on both sides of the discussion can be found in the chapter entitled: The Language of Prayer: The Challenge Of Piyut, pages 110-187 in Ruth Langer's book: *To Worship G-d Properly*, Hebrew Union College Press, 1998.

The debate concerning whether to recite **פיוטים** concerned not only the issue of inserting **פיוטים** within the **ברכות** of **קריאת שמע** but inserting **פיוטים** within **שמונה עשרה** as well. It resulted in opinions that the one line insertions in the first three and last three **ברכות** of **שמונה עשרה** on **ראש השנה** and **יום כיפור** were also an improper practice. Remarkably absent from the debate was any discussion as to the propriety of changing the first **ברכה** of **קריאת שמע** in **תפלת שחרת** on **שבת** according to both Ashkenazim and Sephardim and on **יום טוב** according to Sephardim. The only voice to express an opinion on the subject was the **ספר העיתים** whose comments we reviewed last week. Even Ruth Langer in her extensive review of the debate avoided any discussion of that issue.

What is the primary source for the objection to reciting **פיוטים** in the middle of the **ברכות** **קריאת שמע** in **תפלת שחרת** on **שבת**?

משנה מסכת ברכות פרק א' משנה ד'—בשחר מברך שתיים לפניו ואחת לאחריה ובערב שתיים לפניו ושתיים לאחריה, אחת ארוכה ואחת קצרה. מקום שאמרו להאריך אינו רשאי לקצר, לקצר אינו רשאי להאריך, לחתום אינו רשאי שלא לחתום, ושלא לחתום אינו רשאי לחתום.

Translation: MISHNAH. In the morning two blessings are to be said before Kriyas Shema and one after it. In the evening two are said before Kriyas Shema and two after it, one long and one short. Where the Sages provided that a long Bracha should be said, it is not permitted to say a short one. Where the Sages ordained that a short Bracha be said, a long one is not permitted.

Adding **פיוטים** to the first **ברכה** of **קריאת שמע** in **תפלת שחרת** was viewed by some as the act of lengthening a **ברכה** that was not meant to be long. The **משנה ברורה** explains the words of the **משנה** in a way that allows for the recital of **פיוטים** in the first **ברכה** of **קריאת שמע** in **תפלת שחרת**:

משנה ברורה סימן סח ס"ק א-דאין איסור – שזה שאמרו [בברכות י"א] מקום שאמרו להאריך אינו רשאי לקצר אינו רשאי להאריך לא אמרו אלא בברכות ארוכות שפותחות

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בברוך וחותרמות בברוך אינו רשאי לקצר שלא לפתוח או שלא לחתום. וכן להיפך קצרות אין רשאי להאריך דעל ידי זה משנה ממטבע שטבעו חכמים בברכות אבל שאר נוסח הברכה לא נתנו בו חכמים שיעור שיאמר כך וכך מלות דוקא, דאם כן היה להם לתקן נוסח כל ברכה במלות מנויות ולהשמיענו כל ברכה וברכה בנוסחתה וזה לא מצינו.

Translation: That which is found in Brachos 11 that in those parts of the prayers where Chazal composed long Brachos, it is improper to shorten them and where Chazal composed long Brachos one should not shorten them, the Gemara was referring to the Brachos themselves; the part that opens long Brachos and the part that ends the Brachos. In those sections of the Bracha, it is improper to change the words of the Bracha. Doing so results in a change to the form of the Bracha from the manner in which Chazal composed them. But in the remainder of the Bracha; i.e. the words in the middle, Chazal did not delineate the exact words that must be said. If Chazal meant to fix the words for the middle of the Brachos, Chazal would have provided the exact wording. Instead we do not find that Chazal intended to provide the exact words of the middle of Brachos.

כתב הרמב"ם פ"א מק"ש כללו של דבר כל המשנה ממטבע שטבעו חכמי בברכות הרי זה טועה וחוזר ומברך כמטבע. וכתב הכסף משנה פ"א מברכות דוקא אם פתח בברכה במקום שלא תקנו לפתוח או חתם במקום שאמרו שלא לחתום או שחיסר מברכות הארוכות התחלת הברכה שמתחלת בשם ומלכות או שלא סיים בשם אבל אם שינה בנוסח הברכה ולא אמר אותו לשון ממש אלא שאמר בנוסח אחר בענין הברכה אפילו חיסר כמה תיבות יצא בדיעבד הואיל והיה בה אזכרה ומלכות וענין הברכה לבד התיבות שפרטו חכמים שהם מעכבות כגון שלא הזכיר ברית ותורה בברכת המזון ומשיב הרוח וכל כיוצא בו.

Translation: The Rambam provided in the first Chapter of the Laws of Kriyas Shema the rule that anyone who changes the form of a Bracha that Chazal composed is in error and must repeat the Bracha in the form composed by Chazal. The Kesef Mishna interpreted the words of the Rambam to be limited to the case of a person opening a Bracha or closing a Bracha with words that are different from those composed by Chazal. However if the word someone missed is found in the middle of the Bracha, the rule would be that he still fulfilled his obligation since he used the correct words in the beginning and at the end of the Bracha. This does not include the type of Brachos for which Chazal required specific content; i.e. referring to Bris and Torah in Bircas HaMazone and reciting Mashiv Ha'Ruach and other similar requirements.

Let us return to the first issue: why do Sephardim recite הכל יודוך and א-ל אדון in the first ברכה of קריאת שמע in תפלת שחרת on שבת and on יום טוב while the Ashkenazim do so only on שבת? It is clear that since the Sephardim accept the position of the מחבר and do not add פיוטים in the ברכה of קריאת שמע, they do not view the sections of הכל יודוך and א-ל אדון as פיוטים. They consider those sections to be part of the מטבע הברכה that חז"ל composed. The Ashkenazim view those sections as פיוטים. Since they follow the opinion of those who hold that it is permitted to insert פיוטים in the ברכות קריאת שמע, it is permissible to do so on שבת. Why do Ashkenazim not recite

these sections on **פיוטים**? Probably because they were **פיוטים** that were composed to be recited on **שבת** alone.

How likely is it that the sections of **לא-ל אשר שבת** and **א-ל אדון, הכל יודוך** were part of the original **מטבע הברכה** and not **פיוטים** that were later added? Consider the following:
 רב שמואל דוד לוצאטו (שד"ל)-מבוא למחזור בני רומא (Goldschmidt edition pages 19-20):
 והנה כבר בימי רבנו הקדוש מצאנו כי ר' אלעזר בר' שמעון היה פייטן . . . ובתחלת מדרש שיר השירים ובמדרש קהלת על פסוק ונתתי את לבי לדרוש ולתור בחכמה, מצינו שהפייטנים היו עושים שירים על סדר אל"ף בי"ת, ולפעמים היו משלימין הא"ב, ולפעמים לא היו משלימין אותה. נראה מזה כי גם בימי האמוראים נעשו פיוטים על סדר א"ב, ואנחנו לא נדע אם נאבדו כלם, או אולי נשארו מהם בידינו, כגון א-ל ברוך גדול דעה, א-ל אדון על כל המעשים, ואשמנו בגדנו, ועל חטא, ועל סדר תשר"ק, תקנת שבת.

Translation: Note that as early as the time of Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi who compiled the Mishna we find that Rabbi Elazar son of Rav Shimon was a composer of Piyuttim . . . In the beginning of Midrash Shir Ha'Shirim and in Midrash Kobleh on the verse: V'Nasati Es Libi Lidrosh V'La'Sur B'Chochma, we learn that at the time those Midrashim were written, the practice of composing Piyuttim was prevalent in that we find sentences that follow each other in Hebrew alphabetical order. Sometimes they wrote enough lines to cover every letter of the Hebrew alphabet and sometimes they did not. We can conclude from this that in the days of the personalities in the Talmud people were already composing Piyuttim with sentences that followed each other in Hebrew alphabetical order. We do not know whether most of them were lost over the years or some of them are still part of our liturgy like the Piyut of Kail Baruch Gedol Dai'Ah, Kail Adon Al Kol Ha'Ma'Asim, Ashamnu, Bagadnu, V'Al Chiet and the paragraph of Tikanta Shabbos with lines that follow each other in reverse Hebrew alphabetical order.

אך פיוט א-ל אדון על כל המעשים נראה בעיני שנעשה אחר שנתחדשו הנקודות, כלומר אחרי שנכתבה תורה שבעל פה על ספר (כי גם קריאת ספרי הקדש בתנועות ובטעמים היא מן הדברים שהיו הקדמונים מלמדים לתלמידיהם בעל פה, עד שבאו רבנן סבוראי והמציאו הנקודות והטעמים לבלתי תשתכח הקריאה המקובלת, ולפיכך ספר מנוקד פסול, שאינו כנתינתו מסיני).

Translation: But the Piyut of Kail Adon Al Kol Ha'Ma'Asim appears in my eyes to have been composed after Hebrew vowels were inserted into texts. In other words, after the Oral Law was reduced to writing. (I say this because the method of reading the Torah with vowels and notes was one of those matters that our early ancestors taught their students orally and not from a written book. It was not until after the completion of the Talmud that the Rabbis added the vowels and notes to facsimiles of the Torah so that the proper way to read the Torah would not be forgotten. That is the reason that a Sefer Torah that has vowels in it is considered unfit because it is not in the form in which it was given at Mount Sinai).

כי הנה בתהלים ובקינות מצינו השי"ן השמאלית נחשבת לאות אחת עם הימנית, הלא תראה באני הגבר, שלשת הפסוקים שאחר הרי"ש, הראשון והשלישי מתחילין בש"ין (שמעת, שבתם וקימתם), והאמצעי מתחיל במ"ין (שפתי קמי); וכן במזמור קי"ט מצינו ג'

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פסוקים בס"ין (שרים רדפוני, שש אנכי, שברתי לישועתך), והחמשה הנשארים מתתילין בש"ין ימנית (שקר שנאתי וגו'), וכל זה היה יען קודם המצאת הנקוד אף על פי שכבר היו שני מיני הש"ין נבדלים במבטא, הנה לא היו נבדלים כלל במכתב; אבל אחר שנתחדש הנקוד נעשו שתי הש"ינין כשתי אותיות שונות זו מזו, זו מנוקדת על ימינה וזו על שמאלה.

Translation: Notice that in Tehillim and in the book of Eichab we find that the letter "Shin" that has the dot on the left side is written the same way as the letter "Shin" that has the dot on the right side. That is what we find in the third chapter of Megilas Eichab that begins with the verse: Ani Ha'Gever. The lines follow each other in Hebrew alphabetical order. Three verses begin with the letter Shin. In the first and third verses the letter is pronounced "Shin" (Shamata, Shavten V'Kiyamtem) while in the middle verse, the letter is pronounced "Sin" (Sefasai Kami). Similarly, in Mizmor 119 of Tehillim, we find three verses that begin with the letter "Shin" being pronounced "Sin" (Sarim Ridfuni, Sos Anochi, Sibarti L'yishuascha). The five others begin with the letter being pronounced "Shin" with the dot on the right (Sheker Sinaisi, etc.). All this occurred because until the words of Tanach were put into writing and vowels were added to them, there were two ways to pronounce the letter "Shin" even though the letter appeared the same for both pronunciations. After vowels were added to the written versions of Tanach, the two letters that derive from the letter "Shin" could be distinguished by their vowels; one had the dot on the right side and one had the dot on the left side.

ומאז והלאה התחילו להשתמש בש"ין שמאלית כאלו היא סמ"ך. והנה בפיוט א-ל אדון על כל המעשים מצינו שמחים בצאתם וששים בבואם, עושים באימה רצון קוניהם, הם"ין משמשת במקום סמ"ך, וזו בעיני ראייה שנתקן השיר הזה אחר חתימת התלמוד ("). ומדי דברי בפיוט א-ל אדון, לא אכחד תחת לשוני כי מליצת ראה והתקין צורת הלבנה אין ספק שלא היתה כן מתחלתה, אבל והתקין אינו אלא תקון שתקנו האחרונים, והגירסא הראשונה לא כך היתה, אלא ראה והקטין צורת הלבנה, ועדיין בימי רבותינו חכמי התוספות היתה גירסת והקטין נוהגת קצת, עיין דעת וקנים דף א' וגם במחזור בני רומא כ"י על קלף שבידי מצאתי והקטין (").

Translation: From that time forward they began to use the letter "Sin" that had the dot on the left side as a substitute for the letter "Samech" in Piyuttim composed with lines that followed each other in Hebrew alphabetical order. Notice how in the piyut Kail Adon Al Kol Ha'Ma'Asim we find the line: Semaichim B'Tzaisom V'Sosim B'Vo'Am, Osim B'Aima Ritzon Konaibem. In that line, a word that begins with the letter "Sin" is a substitute for a word that should begin with with the letter "Samech". In my eyes this is proof that the Piyut of Kail Adon was composed after the completion of the Talmud. While discussing the Piyut of Kail Adon, I will not hold back my thought that the line: V'Hiskin Tzuras Ha'Livana is undoubtedly not the original line as well. The word: V'Hiskin was introduced as a substitute for another word. The original line was not written in that manner. Originally the line read: Ra'Ah V'Hiktin Tzuras Ha'Livana (G-d looked and reduced the size of the Moon). During the time of our Rabbis the Tosafists we find versions of the line in which the word: V'Hiktin". So is the line found in Da'As Zekainim and in the Machzor Bnei Roma in a handwritten manuscript which I have where the line includes the word: V'Hiktin.

וכן על חמא נכתב אחר חתימת התלמוד, כי מצאנו בו הם"ין משמשת במקום סמ"ך, על

הטא שחטאנו לפניך בשיח שפתותינו, וכן אמת ואמונה בשביעי קימת גזרת דברת, שאומרים האיטאליאני בליל שבת, נתקן גם הוא אחר המצאת הנקוד, כי מצאנו בו מעת ניתנה שמה בה לב ישורון, הסי"ן משמשת במקום הסמ"ך.

Translation: So too the Piyut of V'Al Cheit was composed after the completion of the Talmud because we find in that Piyut as well a word that begins with the letter "Sin" being used as a substitute for a word which begins with the letter Samech: i.e. Al Cheit Sh'Charanu Liphanecha B'Siach Sifaseinu. Also in the Piyut: Emes V'Emunah Ba'Shivi'i Kiyamta Gazarta Di'Barta (see Newsletter 6: 43) that Italian Jews recite on Friday nights was also composed after the introduction of vowels in writing because we find within it the words: Mai'Ais Nitna Sameach Bah Leiv Yeshurun. In that line a word that begins with the letter "Sin" is used as a substitute for a word that begins with the letter "Samech."

ONE SOURCE FOR THE ASHKENAZIC CUSTOM

מחזור ויטרי סימן שכה – גרסי' בברכות פ' אין עומדין: אמר רב יהודה אל ישאל אדם צרכיו לא בשלש ראשונות ולא בשלש אחרונות: יש שפוסקין מיכן שאין להאריך בתפילה לא קרובות ולא סליחות ואין להפסיק סדר תפילות בשביל פיוטין: ורבינו יעקב בר' מאיר פוסק דבכל י"ח ברכות יכול אדם לחדש בין דברים שהן הודאה ותפילה, בין דברים שהן צרכיו, הואיל ומעין ברכה הוא מחדש. ולא הוי הפסק ברכה כלל. ומותר להאריך בהן כעין קרובות תפילות וסליחות שמסרו לנו רבותי' אנשי השם מימות שמעון כיפה שיסד סדר של יום הכיפורים, אתן תהלה. ור' אלעזר בירבי קליר שהיה תנא ויסד קרובות למועדי השנה . . . כי רוב דבריו לפי תלמוד ירושלמי. ובימיו היו מקדשין על פי הראייה. ומארץ ישראל היה, מקרית ספר, ותנא היה. וראיות יש מדאמרינן [כד דמך] ר' אלעזר בר' שמעון פתח עליה ההוא ספרדנא. מכל אבקת רוכל. דהוה תנא וקרא דרוש ופייטן. בעל קרובות. ודרשות. ופיוטין. שמא מינה בימיו היו קרובות. ונראה לי דר' אלעזר קליר הוא ר' אלעזר בר שמעון.

Translation: We learned in Maseches Brachos: Rav Yehudah said: A person should not make requests for his personal needs in neither the first three or last three Brachos of Shemona Esrei. Some concluded from that statement that it is inappropriate to interrupt the repetition of Shemona Esrei with Piyuttim or Selichos. Rabbi Yaakov son of Mayer reached the opinion that in all 18 Brachos of Shemona Esrei, it is permitted to add original material whether they are requests for needs or words of praise or thanksgiving provided that what he is requesting reflects the theme of the Bracha to which he has added material. That would not be deemed to be a prohibited interruption. It is therefore permitted to add the Piyuttim and Selichos that our forefathers passed on to us such as the Piyutt that describes the order of the Avodah on Yom Kippur that was composed by Shimon Kipah, Etain Tehila, and the Piyuttim of Rabbi Eleazar son of Ha'Kalir who was one of the people mentioned in the Mishnah who composed Piyuttim for the holidays . . . Most of what he wrote followed the opinions contained in the Jerusalem Talmud. We can tell from his Piyuttim that during his lifetime, the Jewish court was still establishing the New Moon by eyewitness testimony. He lived in Eretz Yisroel, in Kiryas Sefer and he was a Tanna. Proof for this is found in that we learn that when Rabbi Elazar son of Shimon was enlogized he was described as a Tanna and as a composer of Piyuttim. We can conclude that during his lifetime, Piyuttim were already being composed. It appears to me that Rabbi Elazar Ha'Kalir is the same person as Rabbi Elazar son of Shimon.

SUPPLEMENT**RUTH LANGER'S CONCLUSION TO HER ARTICLE:****The Language of Prayer: The Challenge Of Piyut**

Piyyut originated as an expression of kavvanah, a characteristic that early rabbinic traditions established as necessary for prayer to be meaningful and effective. The Palestinian hazzanim, by infusing prayer with ever-renewing content, provided their congregations with a source of this kavvanah. However, the resultant poetry was culture-specific, and although Jews in Palestine persisted in reciting their corpus of piyyut and Jews in other communities imported and imitated it, some Jews no longer understood it or valued the heavily aggadic content it conveyed. Others found meaning only in interpretation of the statutory prayers themselves. Nevertheless, piyyut persisted—out of habit, because it was an established part of the minhag, because of the aesthetic qualities it added to the service, and because of the value placed on it by a rabbinic elite who interpreted it and wrote new compositions.

This persistence brought the recitation of piyyut to various points of crisis during its long history. The Geonim and various Sefardi sages, both Rishonim and Aharonim, hurled halakhic arguments against it, criticizing its interruption of the statutory prayers and its introduction of inappropriate, sometime incomprehensible, content into the liturgy. Supporters of piyyut countered with arguments that tried to create a halakhic basis to support the existing custom as a legitimate addition to the statutory prayers with sanction from antiquity. Both sides were ultimately arguing about the impact of piyyut on the acceptability of the community's prayer.

Ultimately, though, through the ages it was not the pure halakhic arguments that determined a community's ritual course, but the general cultural milieu of its worshipers. If the corpus of piyyut in the liturgy had meaning and associations for them, if it was not perceived as burdensome and aesthetically offensive, then it was likely to persist in spite of objections by halakhic authorities. Recognizing this reality, some sages struggled to find ways to understand and legitimate the custom, establishing the precedents that later broadened into full-scale authorizations for recitation. Others, quietly broadcasting their concerns about piyyut and avoiding its recitation themselves, refrained from ruling directly against the minhag of a specific community.

Thus cultural shifts were the real catalyst to changes in the custom. Jews in Muslim Spain ceased to value the aesthetics of eastern-style piyyut they replaced it with new poetry that not only employed different linguistic and aesthetic norms, but also replaced midrashic allusions with more philosophically acceptable content. Maimonides, as an immigrant to Egypt, was ready and, because of his personal stature, able to abolish much of the local practice. Jews in parts of Christian Spain apparently lost their regard for their corpus of piyyut by the fourteenth century and were already eliminating it or reciting it outside of the

statutory prayers. The Baal Haturim was able to capitalize on this lack of interest in Toledo to create a strong halakhic precedent accepted without apparent opposition in Castile. The dislocations of Jews during the Spanish persecutions and expulsions spread this process further; Jews looking to create a new, uniform rite in a new place could easily eliminate piyyut.

The most significant cultural change to affect its recitation in the later Sefardi world was the popularization of kabbalah. The mystical concerns for the purity and inner meaning of the statutory liturgy, combined with the direct criticism of Sefardi piyyut by the Ari—especially as those concerns and that criticism were reiterated over the next two centuries—led to the sidelining and elimination of piyyut even in those rites that had most carefully preserved it. Were these arguments halakhic? At some level, yes, but their implementation depended on a totally new attitude to prayer on the part of the populace. Average Jews now felt themselves encouraged to participate in the grand task of repairing the world and preparing for the coming of the Messiah by meticulous observance of halakhah—and that halakhah, in the Sefardi realm of influence, happened to frown on the insertion of piyyut into the statutory prayers. In addition, the standardization of prayerbooks brought about by printing and the turning of new Jewish communities of former Marranos to rabbinic authorities for direction in the development of the minhag of their new communities also militated against piyyut.

The advent of modernity in the Jewish communities of Europe had a revolutionary effect analogous in many ways to the exposure of Sefardi Jews to Arab culture hundreds of years earlier. The received corpus of piyyut simply ceased to have meaning for many Jews who, comparing the liturgical life of their Christian neighbors with their own, found the incomprehensible poetry and lack of decorum that often accompanied its recitation particularly irksome. The studies of the Wissenschaft historians made it clear that Kalir was by no means a Tanna; arguments supporting the authority of his poetry above all others had to be jettisoned. The renaissance of modern Hebrew poetry must also have affected the attitudes of some.

As a result, most but not all of the most strictly orthodox communities simply ceased to recite much of their piyyut restricting it to days of highest significance in the liturgical calendar. By the late twentieth century, very few prayerbooks even include piyyut for the four special Sabbaths (and even fewer congregations recite them); piyyut for the statutory prayers of the festivals, except for the announcements of rain and dew, is printed in the back of mahzorim if at all, and only orthodox congregations maintain a full array for the High Holy Days. Again, it is not halakhic arguments that determined the change. Ashkenazim did not remove their piyyut to halakhically neutral sites while continuing to recite it, but rather removed it totally from the communal liturgy. No longer a source of kavvanah, it distracted people from serious prayer.

Thus, in all sectors of the Jewish world, a liturgical revolution took place. But only when the minhag was ready for change could the halakhah effectively play an active role.