Shorshei Minhag Ashkenaz
Minhag Ashkenaz: Sources and Roots
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By
Rabbi Binyomin Shlomo Hamburger

Synopsis of volumes I-IV

Machon Moreshes Ashkenaz
The Institute for German-Jewish Heritage
Bnei Brak 2010
In celebration and honor
of our husband, father, grandfather
and great grandfather

OTTO PRETSFELDER

Who has lovingly shared with us
his special appreciation for the minhagiim
and traditions of Ashkenaz

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Tamara Gottlieb, Noam Metzer and Ayala
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**Introduction**

“If there is any spiritual matter that you do not understand,” Lakewood Yeshiva Mashgi’ach Rav Matityahu Salomon once advised, “do not be in a hurry to ridicule it.” The Mashgi’ach proceeded to present an original proof to support his admonition: “As we know, over the years it became common to poke fun at the customs of the ‘Yekkes’, until someone proceeded to show the world that it is specifically the ‘Yekkes’ who continue the ancient traditions, and that their customs originated during the time of the Ge’onim and Rishonim.”¹ With this brief comment, Rav Salomon succinctly summed up the change in the general public attitude toward the heritage of German Jewry. This change has come about as a direct result of the publication of the series *Shorshei Minhag Ashkenaz*.

This series was begun during a period in which the spiritual culture of German Jews was declining and disappearing. The parent generation was shrinking from year to year, and their descendants gradually drifted away from their rich past. Few of them were aware of the great yeshivot that had existed in Germany for many generations; only a small number knew of the many thousands of outstanding Ashkenazic scholars or referred to their hundreds of books on Talmud, Midrash, Halakha and Musar. Only rare individuals preserved a small percentage of the Ashkenazic customs and the ancient, sacred halakhic traditions, as a kind of dim memory of their parents’ and grandparents’ homes.

¹ Related by those who attended his lecture in Gateshead on the last day of Pesach, 2008.
This growing trend distressed a number of prominent individuals of German descent who were still familiar with the glorious customs of German Jewry. Rav Pinchas Kohn (1867-1942), the Rabbi of Ansbach, was a towering figure. He was a prominent disciple of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, and an expert in all areas of the Torah, who earned the respect and reverence of the leading rabbis across the spectrum of the Torah world. During the Nazi era, he emigrated to Israel and settled in Jerusalem, where he sought to continue the ancient German traditions. As he embarked on this campaign, and observed that the younger generation cavalierly disregarded their parents’ customs, he lamented: “My heart aches inside me over this, that they abandon the ancient customs dating back to the beginning of Jewish settlement in Europe, adopting instead foreign, more recent customs!”

Reactions like this were typical of the German rabbis of that period. Thus, for example, Rav Yonah Merzbach (1900-1981), Rabbi of Darmstadt and teacher in Yeshivat Kol Torah in Jerusalem, presented the German Jews living in Israel with the penetrating question: “Who was it who allowed those from Germany to betray their customs and change them?” Upon observing the blatant disregard for their ancestors’ traditions, Rav Merzbach bemoaned: “Believe me, the disregard for something so sacred is adversely affecting my health.”

2 From a letter written by Rabbi Yehuda Rieder, dated 27 Tishrei, 5765, where he noted, “My father’s uncle was Rabbi Pinchas Kohn zt”l, the Rabbi of Ansbach, and this is how he expressed his anguish to my father.”

3 Manuscript of Kuntras Minhagim in the possession of the Rav Merzbach's family.

4 Heard from Rabbi Nissan Yehuda Leib Shub shelit’”a.
There were, however, individuals who resisted this trend, who did not long to be “like everyone else” and did not seek the convenience of renouncing their ancient customs. Rav Yechezkel Michel Schlesinger (1898-1949), Dayan in Frankfurt am Main who later served as the Rosh Yeshiva of Jerusalem’s Yeshivat Kol Torah, insisted on adhering to his traditions even while studying at the Mir Yeshiva in Lithuania. His peers related one particularly striking example:

By the time he arrived in Mir, his reputation had already spread throughout the yeshiva world. But everyone was surprised when he came for the shacharit service wrapped in a tallit, in accordance with the German custom, although he was not married. There were other German students in the yeshiva, but they followed the local custom. The ga’on Rav Yechezkel Michel, however, did not stray from his forefathers’ custom.5

His decision to follow his family traditions even while studying in Lithuania received the explicit approval of his renowned mentor, Rav Yosef Zvi Dushinsky (1868-1949), rabbi of Galanta and Khust, and later of Jerusalem’s Edah Hacharedit. He commented to Rav Schlesinger’s nephew who came to study in his yeshiva in Jerusalem, “You will undoubtedly see new customs here in Jerusalem, but do not change a thing from all that you saw in your father’s home, for his practices came from his illustrious father’s home, which

5 Eish Tamid: Sefer Zikaron La’kadosh Eliezer Schlesinger, Jerusalem, 1989, p. 826.
came from his father's home, and they are more ancient than the practices you see here."\(^6\)

The situation improved only slightly in the Diaspora after the Holocaust. A number of communities made discernible efforts to preserve the German tradition, but most German Jews were scattered in remote areas, far from these communities. And even these communities underwent a process of decline as the younger generation began gradually, but consistently, to leave both the communities and their customs, adopting different lifestyles from their parents, either because of convenience or because of a sense of inferiority.

Most rabbis found no basis for allowing the abandonment of the ancient German tradition. For example, a couple planning to get married were unsure whether they wanted their ceremony to follow the German custom dating back to the *Rishonim*, with a *tallit* spread over the bride and groom. They turned to Rav Ya'akov Kaminetzky (1891-1986), who replied as follows: “It is definitely proper to follow the German custom. It is a calamity for *Kelal Yisrael* that people do not follow their ancestral tradition, mistakenly thinking that they are more ‘frumm’ and rise to greater heights of ‘tzidkus’ [piety] by rejecting accepted customs. This is the destruction of our generation!”\(^7\) Rav Ya'akov openly cherished the German tradition. One of his students became engaged to a girl from a German Jewish family, and when the student told him the

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\(^7\) Related by Rabbi Asher Jacobs *shelit"a*, who heard the comment directly from Rav Kaminetzky.
news, Rav Yaakov exclaimed, “The German Jews have the most ancient tradition!”

To those who questioned whether this is in fact the case, Rav Shimon Schwab (1909-1995), Rabbi of New York’s Kehal Adas Yeshurun, said the following:

"As far as our own Kehilla is concerned we may very well consider ourselves as the successor to the old קהילות קדושות of Western Europe, the perpetuators of the thousand year old sacred Minhag Ashkenaz and the faithful pupils of the saintly חכמי אשכנז in general and of Rabbi S. R. Hirsch in particular.

It follows that we keep aloft this banner and that we keep our precious heritage forever close to our hearts. From the days of Rashi and the Tosafists to the time of R. Moshe Sofer and R. Ya’akov “Jokef” Ettlinger there has been an uninterrupted chain of tradition which was transmitted into the post-Ghetto world by the blessed genius of Rabbi S. R. Hirsch, his co-workers and followers. It is for this compelling reason that we treasure our traditional pronunciation of the sacred tongue, our age-old melodies, our סליחות and פורים, which have withstood the onslaught of time and turbulence. We embrace these time-honored forms and expressions which were dear to our forebears and we cling to their inherited Jewish way of life and we to teach it to our children with love…

8 Related by the bride’s mother, Mrs. Wurzburger from Washington Heights, New York.
It is the essential function of our Kehilla to gear all its energies, להחזיר עטרה ליושנה, to return this “crown to its ancient glory,” to bring forth the most noble and lofty possibilities which lie hidden in our heritage to its utmost potential; in line with the justified observation of the saintly Chatam Sofer: "הتراث היה ירושה לנו בני אשכנז." ⁹

In response to the Chassidic trend that spread through Eastern Europe to substitute nusach Ashkenaz with nusach Sefarad, the Chatam Sofer pointed to the uncontested authority of our Rishonim, representatives of the Franco-German tradition: “All the scholars of France – Rashi, the Tosafists, Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg, the Rosh and the Tur – all prayed according to the Ashkenazic tradition.” In a touch of sarcasm, he added, “…and their prayers still ascended to the heavens.” The Chatam Sofer then proceeded to add to this list: “The great Rabbi Shimon, whose hymns were selected by the Ari-zal… himself, prayed Ashkenazic in Mainz, and I saw his grave. The author of U’netaneh Tokef, too – his house is still there.” ¹⁰

To further substantiate his claims, he presented the statement of the Rosh, who settled in Spain to flee the deadly persecutions in his German homeland.

These are the words of the Rosh in a responsum, cited by the Beit Yosef in Tur Yoreh Dei’a, end of siman 82, regarding the signs [of kashrut] in fowl. The Rosh was then in Toledo, Spain, and he wrote as follows: "You

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¹⁰ Shu’t Chatam Sofer, O.C. 16.
¹¹ Shu’it Ha-Rosh, 20:20.
must know that I do not eat on the basis of their (Sephardic) tradition, because I adhere to our tradition and the heritage of our forefathers, the sages of Ashkenaz, to whom the Torah came as an inheritance from their forefathers since the days of the [Temple’s] destruction, as well as the heritage of our forefathers, our rabbis in France, more so than the heritage of the residents of this country."

We have much to learn as well about the spiritual tradition of Ashkenaz from the following comments of Rabbi El'azar of Worms (1160-1237), author of the Rokei'ach, regarding the proper text for prayer:

"I, El'azar Hakatan, received the prayer text from my father and master, Yehuda son of Kalonymos son of Moshe, son of our Rabbi Yehuda son of our Rabbi Kalonymos son of our Rabbi Moshe son of our Rabbi Kalonymos son of our Rabbi Yehuda.

I have also received [this tradition] from Rabbienu Yehuda Hechasid, as he received it from his father Rabbeinu Shemuel Ha-kadosh HeFFchasid, as he received it from Rabbeinu Ela'zar the cantor in Speyer...as Rabbenu Kalonymos the Elder instructed him.

And Rabbeinu Kalonymos the Elder received [this tradition] from his father, Rabbeinu Yitzchak, and Rabbeinu Yitzchak received it from his father, Rabbeinu Ela'zar the Great, son of Rabbi Yitzchak son of Rabbi Yehoshua son of Rabbi Abun – this is Rabbi Abun the
grandfather of Rabbeinu Shimon the Great of Mainz. And Rabbeinu El'azar the Great, learned Torah in the presence of [his uncle] Rabbeinu Shimon the Great…

They received the secret of the prayer text, and the other secrets, rabbi from rabbi until Ibn Aharon, son of Rabbi Shemu’el the Prince who came from Babylonia…

Behold, my witnesses are in the heavens that we have not spoken of these matters for our honor or for the honor of our ancestors, but rather so that no sinner shall dispute us. For one who disputes this is akin to one who disputes the words of the Torah given at Sinai. For we have received the secret of the prayers, from rabbi to rabbi, transmitted through the prophets, elders and pious ones and the Men of the Great Assembly who instituted the prayers. And one who adds or detracts one letter or one word – woe unto him in this world and the next! For one may neither add nor detract, for they did not institute a single word or even a single letter for naught.”

The inevitable conclusion that emerges from the comments of the Rokei’ach and his mentors, the German pietists, is that one may not stray one iota from the Ashkenazic liturgical tradition. Later, the Ari-zal [Rabbi Yitzchak Luria], (1534-1572) issued a similar ruling, forbidding Ashkenazic Jews from abandoning their ancestral tradition:

"There are many differences between the prayer books in the traditions of Spain, Catalonia, Ashkenaz and the like. Now with regard to this issue my master z”l told me that there are in the heavens twelve windows corresponding to the twelve tribes, and the prayer of each tribe rises through the gate especially designated for it, and these are the twelve gates mentioned at the end of Yechezkel. Now there is no doubt that if the prayers of all the tribes were the same, there would be no need for twelve windows and gates, with each gate having its own path. Certainly, then, it must be that since their prayers differ from one another, special gates are needed for each and every tribe, for the prayer service must be in accordance with the root and source of the souls of that tribe. Therefore, it is proper for each person to adhere to the custom of the prayer service according to his forefathers’ custom for we do not know who is from this tribe and who is from that tribe. And since one’s forefathers adhered to a certain custom, perhaps he is from that tribe for whom that custom is appropriate – and now if he seeks to change his practice, but his prayer will not be effective since it can no longer ascend upward in the path of that [prayer] service."

The ancient Ashkenazic tradition was preserved in the traditionalist German communities until the Second World War,

13 Yechezkel 48:31-34.
14 Rav Chayim Vital, Sha’ar Ha-kavanot – Derushei Aleinu Le-shabei’ach Ve-nusach Ha-tefila, 1.
when it was dealt the harshest blow in its long history. However, “the Eternal One of Israel shall not deceive” (Samuel I 15:29). While it appeared that the Ashkenazic tradition was lost in Israel, it has been reawakened through the activities of Machon Moreshes Ashkenaz.

Rabbi Asher ben Sha’ul of Lunel (12th century), composed his Sefer Ha-minhagot (“Book of Customs”) in which he began “writing the customs that the earlier generations observed and were enacted by the earlier and later rabbis, for I have seen...people disregarding them, because they do not know their reason.”15 Similarly, the presentation of the sources underlying German customs in the series Shorshei Minhag Ashkenaz has allowed many people to bring an end to the unwarranted ridicule which they had endured. This series will consist of many volumes, only four of which have been published to date. Machon Moreshes Ashkenaz has also prepared a more concise treatise to summarize the practical aspects of the customs.

Already several years ago, a distinguished scholar, descending from the rabbi of Würzburg, Rav Yitzchak Dov Halevi Bamberger, expressed the need for such a project:

"Today, a hodgepodge of customs has emerged, to the point where it is difficult for one to know which is the German custom and which is the Polish custom, and so on, unless he had looked carefully into the matter. And so, when one does not know what to do, he opens the Mishna Berura and sees what is written there, without

15 Sefer Ha-minhagot, Jerusalem, 1988, p. 9.
giving thought to the fact that although this is the view of the *Mishna Berura*, the custom of his home and birthplace was different... The primary cause for the gradual loss of the German customs is that they are not all concentrated in a single place. **If somebody would have published a work in which all the German customs were collected, I am sure that this would have yielded very positive results, and that this would have led to the renewal and strengthening of the original German customs.**”

*Machon Moreshes Ashkenaz* was founded some thirty years ago. Its main purpose has been to research, archive, preserve and disseminate the over one thousand years old magnificent heritage of *Ashkenaz*. Foremost in this effort has been the publication of the series “*Shorshei Minhag Ashkenaz*”, which provides a detailed review and analysis of the origins and particulars of the German-Jewish customs and traditions. The series currently is comprised of four (4) volumes. These volumes have been written in Hebrew, and thus are inaccessible to a significant segment of descendants of what was once the glorious German-Jewish community.

In order to make this work more widely accessible we are publishing this book which translates into English the summary of each chapter of the first four volumes of *Shorshei Minhag Ashkenaz*. We hope that this will be of interest and assistance

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16 Rav Yitzchak Adler, “*Al Minhagei Ashkenaz*”, in jubilee volume of Congregation *Ahavat Torah* in Haifa, Haifa, 1990, p. 49.
not only to members of the German Jewish community but to all those who have an interest in the rich heritage of *Ashkenaz*.

We would like to take this opportunity and thank the generous donors who facilitated this endeavor, and we sincerely hope that in the future, the *Machon* will be able to publish other important works in English.
The Pronunciation of the *Cholam* Vowel

Four pronunciations of the *cholam* prevailed among Ashkenazi Jews in recent generations up to the time of the Holocaust: two in Eastern Europe and two in Western Europe. The table below illustrates these four pronunciations in both English and German as well as in the Ashkenazi pronunciation of *Lashon HaKodesh*.

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<tr>
<th>Region of Diaspora</th>
<th>Accent in Ashkenazi pronunciation</th>
<th>Accent in German diacritic</th>
<th>Accent in English</th>
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<tr>
<td>Poland, Austria-Hungary</td>
<td>komatz chirik - אִי</td>
<td>O'</td>
<td>[t]oy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania, Russia</td>
<td>segol chirik - אָי</td>
<td>A_e</td>
<td>[p]ay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Germany, Holland</td>
<td>patach shuruk - הַי</td>
<td>A_u</td>
<td>[h]ow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Germany, Switzerland, France, Latvia, England, North America</td>
<td>komatz shuruk - אָי</td>
<td>O_u</td>
<td>[g]o</td>
</tr>
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Since the destruction of European Jewry during the Holocaust, two pronunciations of the *cholam* have been gradually disappearing: the Lithuanian-Russian pronunciation and the North-German one. Today, among Ashkenazim, we hear mainly the *cholam* of Southern Germany, which is common in English-speaking countries, and the Polish *cholam*, which is widespread in all countries.

Which is the pronunciation to which Jews of Ashkenazi descent should cling? Which is the original, most accurate pronunciation? Common sense
would dictate that the Ashkenazi pronunciation was best preserved in Ashkenaz (i.e. Germany) as has been proven to be the case with regards to other minhagim and traditions that can be traced back through the study of the works of the Rishonim and Achronim. Indeed, the ancient pronunciation of the cholam, which was lost to most Jews of other European countries, was preserved in Southern and Western Germany.

This tradition pronounces the cholam as a long "o" sound (as in the word "go"), a pronunciation that accommodates the grammatical rules established by the leading grammarians, and even has a basis in the Talmud. The Gemara in Masekhet Berakhot requires that while reciting shema one separates between two adjacent words if the first ends with the sound with which the second begins (such as between the words על לברך), so they do not sound like a single word. One example given by the Gemara is the two words אתו וזכרתם, implying that unless a pause is made, these two words would sound like a single word. Such a concern arises only if the cholam vowel at the end of אתו is pronounced as a long "o" sound, like "go", or alternatively like "[h]ow".

Further evidence for this pronunciation is found in the writings of the early German scholars, who used the cholam in place of the kamatz. In addition, Rashi refers to the cholam with the term מלאפום, which literally means "full mouth," indicating that one must open his mouth wide to pronounce this sound. This can also be verified by comparing the cholam with corresponding vowels in other Semitic languages. Similar pronunciations have been preserved among ancient, Near-Eastern Jewish communities.

Punctuated German Mishnayot of the 13th century using cholam in place of kamatz
The great classical grammarians Rabbi Yehuda ben David Hayyuj (10th Century), Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra (1092-1164) and Rabbi David Kimche, the Radak, (1160-1235) have passed down a number of rules that will help us discern the basic characteristics of the choulom. We will quote the main guidelines as summarized by Rabbi David Yitzchoki, shlita:¹

1. There exist five long vowels whose pronunciations are long and drawn-out and, correspondingly, five short vowels whose pronunciations are short and abrupt: The pairs are: kamatz gadol - patach; tzerei - segol; choulam - kamatz katan; shuruk - kubutz; chirik gadol - chirik katan. The choulam is a long vowel and its corollary, the short vowel, is kamatz katan.²

2. The pronunciation of each long vowel is similar to its corresponding short vowel, only stronger.³

3. Each long vowel carries with it the subtle, vowel-less pronunciation of any of the following three letters: aleph, vav and yud. That is, the kamatz gadol ends with a subtle ‘aleph’ sound. The tzerei and chirik gadol end with a subtle ‘yud’ sound—which is why these vowels are often followed by a vowel-less ‘yud’. And the shuruk and choulam end with a subtle ‘vav’—which is why these vowels are often followed by a vowel-less ‘vav’, pronounced somewhat like a ‘w’.⁴

¹ In his article "קטויי החולם לאור כללי הדקדוב.
² See א"קלו ע, דפוס ליק, ספר המכלול, ק"רד; ו"ק ל"א ס"ס' סיר, משנה ברורה.
³ ק"רד ibid. This is also the opinion of the majority of grammarians.
⁴ משמא בורזר, ס"ט ס"א ק"א ד"א, בדידס, ספר המכלול, דפוס ק"ט, ק"א; ו"ק א"ע. רבי אברהם אבן עזרא writes at the beginning of ‘Sefer Tzachus’ that “There should never be a dagesh after the choulam only a silent nach. It is really pronounced like a ‘vav’ but not always written that way since we rely on the way it is pronounced.”
The Vilna Ga'on favored the South German pronunciation, and writes this explicitly in his works. Several halakhic authorities and leading figures of the musar movement in Lithuania followed the Gaon’s position, in contrast to the Lithuanian custom to pronounce the cholam as a tzeirei (a long "a" sound). Polish communities originally pronounced the cholam as a long "o" sound, but later the pronunciation of several vowels in Poland underwent significant changes, including the pronunciation of the cholam.

Approximately two hundred years ago in northern Germany, the custom developed to pronounce the cholam as an "ow" sound (as in the English word "how"), and this custom reached the Orthodox community of Frankfurt am Main through the indirect influence of Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch. However, many communities in southern Germany and nearby regions preserved the original German pronunciation.
In Anglo-Saxon countries, the long "o" sound became the widespread pronunciation supported by the surrounding English language. After the Holocaust, however, many children and grandchildren of German Jews were subject to unwarranted ridicule for their pronunciation, and thus adopted one of the other pronunciations.

The Torah luminaries of Ashkenaz – not only those who lived in Germany throughout their lives, but even those who lived in other countries as well – held on to their pronunciation of the cholam. The accent with which the Chatham Sofer, Rav Moshe Sofer (1762-1839), spoke Lashon HaKodesh was the same as the one he was accustomed to from his parents and grandparents back in Frankfurt, including the cholam which he pronounced like the Jews of Ashkenaz. That is how he spoke, davened and delivered his shi’urim throughout the many years he lived in Hungary. The same was true of a number of other great Torah leaders who left Germany.

The world conference – Knessia Gedola – of Agudat Yisrael in Mariánské Lázně 1937
Behind the top table a big banner with the Yekkish transliteration:
KENESSIO GEDAULO
There have been some who complained about the discomfort they experience when pronouncing the words as their parents did. Rav Shimon Schwab, Rav of *Khal Adath Jeshurun* in Washington Heights, Manhattan (1909-1995), drew attention to this phenomenon and took it to task:

“It is human nature that minorities are embarrassed by the masses and that is why the few German Jews that are left today are embarrassed by those who poke fun at their pronunciation. Many of them have already changed from their parents’ tradition and their pronunciation of *Lashon HaKodesh*, which has been passed down from generation to generation. They have deserted the ‘small jars’ (i.e. the embellishments), the tunes, and traditions that were passed down to them from their ancestors, pious Jews who preserved their holy heritage for more than a thousand years.”

To those who shy away from the pronunciation of their ancestors, on the basis that it would be more modest not to stand out because of their differences, Rav Schwab expressed the opposite point of view:

“To be humble does not mean to be shy... It also applies to those who lead the divine worship in a House of Prayer. To act as *shelli'ach tzibbur*, even for one *tefillah*, means to lead the congregation in prayer... Therefore, he must make an effort to read the passages clearly, audibly, pleasantly and with dignity. That means to first become acquainted with the traditional tunes and to **accentuate each word with the traditional pronunciation**. If the would-be *chazzan* is unable to do so, humility should prompt him to decline. But if he is at all capable, he should consider it a sacred

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5 From a letter written by Rabbi Shimon Schwab, zt”l, to ‘Machon Moreshes Ashkenaz’, dated 1st of Rosh Chodesh Tammuz 5749.
assignment to stand before the amud and to offer the prayers of the congregation with proper devotion and without display of arrogance.5

Rav Ya'akov Kaminetzky (1891-1986) who, himself, read Kri’ath Shema with the cholam of Ashkenaz once wrote to a close acquaintance who wished to publish clarification of the correct accents and pronunciation, that he would have to put up with the reality that people will mock and discredit him: “Certainly, your words will not be accepted by the entire public,” wrote Rav Ya’akov. “Yet, if even some people acknowledge it, it is worthwhile. Chazal explain7 the words of the posuk,8 – For that is all of man’ that the entire world was created for individuals. In truth, being that today there are so many different communities where both the Sefaradic and Ashkenazi pronunciations are used publicly, a person who pronounces some of the letters or vowels differently from the accepted pronunciation has nothing to be embarrassed of.”9

Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, shlita, ruled regularly that people of German or Anglo-Saxon background should continue to follow the way of pronunciation of their ancestors or families, explaining firstly, that one “should not forsake the teachings of your mother”, and furthermore because the cholam as pronounced by Jews of Ashkenaz is the most grammatically correct and therefore the most ideal.

Those bnei Torah who were educated in today’s yeshivot do not conform to the Lithuanian cholam but to the Polish one. This comes to show that their choice of pronunciation is due not to an understanding of the subject, but merely the wish to follow their peers. They all chose the same yeshivish style which has become widespread only in this generation.

6 Rav Shimon Schwab, Selected Writings, Lakewood 1988, p. 207.
7 בר庫ט ת.ב: שב､ת ל.ע.
8 קהלת ת.ב, ע.
9 From R’ Ya’akov Kaminetzky’s approbation of R’ Yehoshua Ovadia Bresler’s booklet, Safah Berurah, on the pronunciation of Lashon HaKodesh, Brooklyn, 5742.
My Rebbi, the late Mashgi’ach Rav Shlomo Wolbe, was asked more than once whether it is appropriate for people who descend from Ashkenaz to change their pronunciation to the one prevalent in yeshivot today. Rav Wolbe would typically reply that one should stick to the pronunciation of Ashkenaz. He encouraged those who adhered to this pronunciation explaining that this was, in fact, the preferred yeshivish pronunciation, seeing that the masters of the Lithuanian Musar movement educated in Kelm adopted this pronunciation.