PART 2 – JUDAICA OBJECTS

2.1 On the Definition of Judaica Objects

In a broader sense, the term Judaica denotes material cultural assets relating to Judaism. In a narrower sense, Judaica refers, on the one hand, to objects of an inherently holy quality such as the Torah itself and, on the other hand, to objects necessary to perform Jewish rituals.
In the field of art history, Judaica objects fall into the category of religious art. They are objects that are used in Jewish ritual, both in the synagogue and at home. They would lack usefulness in any non-Jewish ritual; rather, they make sense only in the context of Jewish tradition. Their character is above all functional, but decorative and aesthetic as well. The closer their manufacturing date approaches the modern era, the more the importance of decoration increases.

Synagogal Judaica objects are usually set in a hierarchical order according to their sacred character: The most sacred item of all is the Torah scroll containing the Five Books of Moses. As the core of Jewish religion revealed by God, it endows materials that touch it with a degree of its sacredness: the staves it is attached to on both ends, the binders that fasten it, and the mantle that envelops it, the decorating crown and finials, the shield that indicates its time of use in the annual cycle, and the pointer with which one follows the holy text while reading, as well as the ark with curtain where the Torah is kept, the Eternal Flame that hangs in front of the ark, and finally the desk and its cover on which the Torah is placed for reading. Further objects used in religious practice are the *Shofar* horn blown on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, the Levite pitcher and bowl for the ritual priestly cleansing, the *Kiddush* cup and *Besamim* container for a holiday's starting and concluding ceremonies, the Hanukkah candelabrum for the Feast of Dedication as well as the Esther Scroll read during Purim and donation boxes for the support of the indigents.

The *Kiddush* cup and *Besamim* container, Hannukah candelabrum and Esther Scroll are also among those objects used in the private household. Also used at home are all objects needed for Shabbat, Passover, and Sukkoth as well as phylacteries and prayer shawls, the *Mezuzah* on the doorpost, calligraphies indicating the direction of prayer toward Jerusalem, marriage contracts, and *Yahrtzeit* plaques for the commemoration of the dead. The more prosperous a society, the more elaborate these objects become.

Jewish cult objects are signs of identification. They symbolize affiliation with the Jewish religion. But beyond that, they can also signify identification with the majority society. The closer an object's manufacturing date to the era of emancipation, the more likely that its design will signify identification with the majority society.

2.2 Identification of Judaica Objects

Identification of Judaica objects is the first step or steps in provenance research. Inscriptions, dates, material, style, size, hallmarks, and old labels are indicators of the origin of Judaica objects and therefore have to be thoroughly examined.

2.2.1 Inscriptions

The most obvious evidence indicating an object to be an object of Jewish ritual use is an inscription. In general inscriptions on Judaica feature Hebrew letters. This does not necessarily mean that the language of the inscription is Hebrew, however. In Ashkenazi communities it can be Yiddish, in Germany also German, especially from the era of the emancipation onwards; in Sephardi communities Ladino or Judeo-Espagnol; in regions of Italy the Judeo-Italian dialect Italkian; in Romaniote communities a Greek dialect called Yevanic; in Arabic countries Judeo-Arabic; in Iranian communities Judeo-Persian or Dzihdi; in eastern Caucasus communities Judeo-Tat or Yuhuri; as well as Judeo-Marathi in Indian communities, Judeo-Tajik in Bukharan communities, the neo-Aramaic Hulaulá in Kurdish communities. All of these are written in Hebrew letters. But there are also Judaica objects which have inscriptions in Latin letters. Inscriptions referring to a donation are mostly set into cartouches or on hanging plates.

Inscriptions may hide different meanings, larger dimensions of letters, a dot or a small dash upon it may be an indication of a year or an owner's name. Emphasized letters may also form an acrostic bearing relevant information. The inscriptions to be found on Judaica objects may indicate their purpose (e.g., this beaker is „for the sanctification of the Shabbat"), the specific community it was used in (e.g., this object was given „here, in the holy community of Vienna"), the donors (e.g., this is a donation „by the humble man N.N. and his wife N.N.") or a private owner (e.g.„this belongs to N.N."). Donations sometimes commemorate an individual life-cycle event or a special occurrence crucial to a community.

2.2.1.1 Names of Individuals

Prior to the 20th century numerous spellings could be used for the same name. Be aware that names of individuals may appear in their Hebrew version as well as Yiddish or other form: e.g.., a person with the first name in Hebrew of „Yitzhak", may have been known in Yiddish or German as Isak, Eisik, Segil or Sekkel. A person by the Hebrew name of „Ariel "may have been called Löw in German (because „Ariel" means „lion"). The latter might be transliterated in different forms, either on the object in question or on documents to be researched: Loebh, Lebh, Löbh, Loew, Lew. The Hebrew name Sara may have been Serle or Serel in Yiddish.[377] In many cases publications have to be consulted for ideas.[378] The transliteration dilemma is true for last names, too: i.e. the last name Heimann can be transliterated as Heyman, Heymann, Haiman, Haimann, Hayman.

[377] For German names the following website might be helpful: http://spurensuche.steinheim-institut.org/inallgemein.html

[378] Alexander Beider, *A Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names. Their Origins, Structure, Pronunciation, and Migrations*, Bergenfield 2001.

Sephardic first names may be written in their Aramaic rather than in their Hebrew version. For example the common Hebrew name Malka will be spelled with an „heh" (ה) at the end in Ashkenazi lands, but with an „Aleph" (א) in Sephardi communities. As Malka means queen, the civic name may have been Regina in Ashkenazi communities and Reyna or Reina in Sephardi ones.

In both Ashkenazi and Sephardi tradition, the last name may provide hints as to the origin of the family: e.g., the famous Oppenheimer family has its origin in the Upper Rhine town of Oppenheim, the Morpurgo family italianized their hometown Marburg (today Slovenian Maribor), wheras Elias Canetti's family originated in Spanish Cañeto. For the longest period of time though, family names were not common, rather people called themselves „N.N. son/daughter of N.N." In Ashkenaz this would read N.N. ben David, in Sephardi and Arab communities N.N. ibn Daoud, both meaning son of David.

In case there are traces to an emigration of individuals they may have naturalized/anglicized their names, i.e. the female name of Raisel may have been changed into Rose, the last name Austerlitz into Astaire to give a more complicated example. In case of emigration/flight to Palestine/Israel, German names may have changed into Hebrew ones, i.e. Gerhard to Gershom, Hermann to Zwi, Susanne to Shoshana or the last name Eskeles to Eshkol. The genealogy website http://www.jewishgen.org/ features thousands of databases, research tools, and other resources which may be of help.

For a case in which genealogical research resulted rather easily in establishing provenance see Appendix 2.A

2.2.1.2 Names of Communities/Towns

Many Judaica objects donated for community purposes give the name of the respective community preceded by the abbreviation for „kehillah keddushah", i.e. „holy community". These names are very valuable sources to trace the provenance of objects but are often highly complicated to identify. There are different reasons for this:
The name given on an object may refer to a town which was called differently in Yiddish than in the national language – e.g., the Yiddish "Bumsla" referred to the Bohemian city of Jungbunzlau, „Tselem" to the Austrian town of Deutschkreuz, and „AMokum" to Amsterdam. Some towns were given in Yiddish in an abbreviated form - i.e. „Asch" for Austrian „Eisenstadt". Others may go back to their Latin origin – i.e., „Spira" and „Magenza" for the German cities Speyer and Mainz.

The name given on an object may also refer to a former national name, but the different shifts of national borders in the course of the 20th century have caused name changes – i.e. what was once called Klausenburg in German and Yiddish was called Kolozsvár in Hungarian and is today Romanian Cluj. Another example: Yiddish Shtanislav or Shtanisle was Stanislau in German Galicia, Iwano-Frankowsk in Polish and is today Ukrainian Iwano-Frankivs'k.

There can be also a combination of difficulties, the Yiddish name having differed from the German one and the German one differs from today's national one – i.e. the town of Stampfen was called Stampe in Yiddish and is today called Stupava in Slovak.

A first finding aid might be: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_city_name_changes. Extremely useful is: Gary Mokotoff and Sallyann Sack with Alexander Sharon, *Where Once We Walked: A Guide to the Jewish Communities Destroyed in the Holocaust*. Revised Edition, New Haven 2002.

In cases where the community name is given, further steps would be to research the specific community and its history. Where not, the inscription might tell the special occasion on which the object was donated – e.g., „for the inauguration of this synagogue, May 18th 1858". If you have been able to characterize the object as an Austro-Hungarian one, Google could help to find out which synagogues in the empire were inaugurated on this specific date. In this case, it was the so-called Leopoldstädter Tempel in Vienna.

To draw as much information as possible from an inscription, it needs to be examined very carefully. For an example, see Appendix 2.B.

Make sure that the Hebrew characters match the overall style of the object. A Hebrew inscription might have been added to „Judaize" an object and increase its market value.

2.2.1.3 Dates

Albeit written in Hebrew characters, some Judaica objects show the date of their donation not in Hebrew but in Arabic numerals. Still, the date given will be according to the Jewish calendar, which counts from the assumed creation of the world in 3761 B.C. E.– e.g., „5. Sivan (a Hebrew month) 5618" equals the civil date of May 18, 1858. May 1, 2016 equals the 23rd of Nissan (another Hebrew month), 5776. Especially in Ashkenazi communities the thousand digits are often ommitted (which can be a hint to the provenance on its own) and an abbreviation for the term „according to the minor reckoning" is added. A number of online date converters are comfortable aids. You could use https://www.hebcal.com/converter/.

Figure 1: Ashkenazi Torah shield with chrest Nürnberg, 18th century
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum Switzerland, Basel, inv.no. JMS 1177

Make sure that the date given on an object matches its overall style. An earlier date may have been added to increase the object's value and might be a fake date.

2.2.1.4 Crests

Especially Italian objects and those of Sephardi provenance may feature crests at pretty early times, namely from the 17th century, which does not always mean that people were ennobled. In the Ashkenazi world, Jews were ennobled only beginning in the 19th century with peaks in the middle and the end of the century. Their crests were as proudly integrated in some Judaica objects as the Sephardi ones. Crests are highly valuable leads for research if you have established the regional origin of the object. You may find Jewish crests in publications on heraldry of the country in question. If you do not find the crest, this may indicate that it was not a sign of official nobilitation.

For an example of an unofficial crest integrated into an Ashkenazi Judaica object see figure 1.

2.2.2 Sizes

The size of a ritual object can give hints as to its provenance - i.e. a Torah ark curtain which has a width of 2.5 meters and a length of 4.5 meters can only stem from a significant, big synagogue in a metropolis. One can figure out the dimensions of Torah arks of important synagogues in online or printed publications.[379] In contrast, a curtain which measures 90 cm wide and 80 cm high will probably have been used in a small shtibl or in a private prayer room.
The same is to be assumed for a Torah set consisting of a Torah shield and a pair of Torah finials of which the shield is 37 cm high and 30 cm wide, weighs 3 kg and the finials 1.5. A set like this must have been located in a wealthy, upperclass community that wanted to demonstrate its self-awareness with representative objects. In contrast, a shield with dimensions of less than 20 x 18 cm will have had its origin in a small, perhaps rural community or in a private shtibl.
A very small shield covered with a Hebrew inscription might, by the way, not be a Torah shield but a so-called Shaddayah, a dedicatory plate unique to Romaniote communities. Tiny shields, engraved with the abbreviations for the Ten Commandments were also used in Kurdish communities. Here it was custom for the warden to present it to the participant in the service who was called up to the Torah. After the reading this plaque was returned.

Figure 2: Austrian Torah Mantle; Habsburg Monarchy, 1892; http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=4581 Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

2.2.3 Material

Figure 3: Sefardi Torah mantle; Izmir 1932 http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=18258 Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 4: Torah curtain dedicated 1774/75 to a Berlin synagogue by Moses Mendelssohn Courtesy of the Jewish Museum Berlin, inv.-no. KGT 97/1/0

The majority of Judaica textile objects which have survived up until the present are made of precious materials like brocade, silk, damask, and velvet, and of Torah ornamenets and other ritual objects silver, often gilded, sometimes even gold.

2.2.3.1 Textiles

In general Torah textiles reflect the regional tradition in which they were produced. Thus an Austrian Torah mantle or desk cover from the end of the 19th century will be made in a secessionist style (figure 2), whereas covers from the Ottoman Empire often were reworked textiles originally used in a domestic context like bedspreads and cushions and feature traditional Ottoman thick gold thread embroidery (figure 3). Torah curtains were – especially in the upper classes – often reworked wedding dresses dedicated to a synagogue in honor

[379] i.e. for Germany http://www.tu-darmstadt.de/universitaet/selbstverstaendnis/profil_geschichte/verantwortung/thema_verantwortung_k04.en.jsp; for Vienna: Bob Martens, Herbert Peter, *Die zerstörten Synagogen Wiens. Virtuelle Stadtspaziergänge*, Wien 2009; for Hungary: Rudolf Klein, *Zsinagógák Magyarországon 1782–1918: fejlődéstörténet, tipológia és építészeti jelentőség.* Synagogues in Hungary 1782–1918. Genealogy, Typology and Architectural Significance, Budapest 2011.

of the festive event (figure 4). The more elegant and extravagant a Torah textile is, the more likely is its origin to have been a wedding dress. This can be verified by examining the backside under the lining material and revealing the seams.

Figure 5: Kashan rug with Hebrew inscription and depiction of Salomon and the queen of Sheba Courtesy of Anton Felton, Herzlia Pituach

A unique type of textile was developed around 1830 in Galician Sasow, namely a lace incorporating silver and gold threads, called *shpanyer arbet* in Yiddish which was apparently made exclusively for a Jewish clientele: http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Shpanyer_Arbet. Different clothes were decorated with shpanyer arbet, such as mens' kippot, cuffs of their festival clothes and collars of their prayer shawls (Hebrew: atarot), as well as women's brusstikhl (kerchief) and caps. Depending on ideological orientation, Jewish groups ordered specific patterns - i.e., Zionists commissioned shpanyer arbet with integrated stars of David. Although shpanyer arbet, which saw its heyday from the end of the 19th century until the 1930s, was not only produced in Sasow, the origin of such an object is Galician.

Another textile type was produced in the first quarter of the 20th century in Kashan style, namely a knotted tapestry with Hebrew inscriptions and traditional Jewish motifs (Fig. 5). At least one of them was definitely produced in Jerusalem, others may have been produced in Persia. The Jerusalem Bezalel School of Art also produced Jugendstil rugs with motifs of the Menorah and Jerusalem. Also in Palestine wall hangings with Zionist motifs were produced.

2.2.3.2 Metal

Silver was and still is the most popular material for Judaica production all over the Jewish world. It is easy to process, to work, to polish and it can be easily combined with other precious metals and stones. Especially European Torah ornaments were – sometimes completely but mostly partly - gilded for aesthetic reasons and to fulfill the requirement of the „adornment of the commandment". It is self-evident that gilt and partially gilded objects hint at a Jewish community with wealthy members. Gilding techniques might provide hints to the date of production: Mercurial gilding was the most common gilding technique up until the beginning of the 19th century,when galvanic techniques began to replace the traditional mechanical techniques of gilding with gold leaf or fire-gilding.

A Torah ornament made of (plated) copper or brass might indicate a region where Jews were restricted from possessing precious metal. Pewter was used, especially for ritual objects in private households, to replace more costly silver - i.e., in Germany, Austro-Hungary and the Alsace. But pewter plates for different occasions may come from all over Europe.

Other copper objects, especially Hanukkah lamps, may hint at a Dutch origin, in some cases also to a Greek one. Brass lamps and candlesticks may attest to an East European one, mainly to what is today Poland and Ukraine, but can have been made also in the Nuremberg region. Copper reflectors in the synagogue were popular in Eastern and Central Europe.

Cast bronze was popular in Eastern Europe too, as it was also in Italy. A Niello work, i.e. an inlay of a black coloured alloy on silver, often was made in the Russian town of Tula. The related damascene work, which means inlaying different metals into one another, may stem from Syria, Persia or Spain, and from the early 20th century onwards also from Eretz Israel.

Popular at different points in time and in different regions was (and still is) silver or gold filigree. A filigree Torah finial type was developed in Amsterdam at the end of the 17th century. Elaborate silver-filigree spice towers with enamel plates are especially known from 18th century Schwäbisch Gmünd, but also - without enamel work - in Austro-Hungary, especially in Galicia, but filigree spice containers of different forms were greatly appreciated also in Vienna, Brno and elsewhere in cental Europe. Small silver filigree boxes were made also in Italy, Russia and Hungary as souvenirs and utilized as spice boxes, bigger ones to store objects needed for ritual circumcision. Filigree caskets to store the etrog fruit are known from Italy, as are filigree containers for amuletts. Besides for spice towers, in Galicia and Poland filigree was used especially on so-called Baal shem tov Hanukkah lamps and on bookbindings. Objects of filigree, sometimes gold-filigree, were also made in the Ottoman Empire from where filigree then spread to the Balkans. Gold filigree containers for Esther scrolls are known from Turkey, and a distinct filigree decor was developed in 19th-century Greek Ioannina. The elaborate, often partly gilded cases for Esther scrolls produced here feature attached leaves and rosettes and often terminate in a cone, knob and bead, sometimes integrating colorful glass stones.
Filigree or silver wire combined with enamel work, so-called Cloisonné, is known in Italian finials and wedding rings.
There are rare extremely precious jewelled gold Judaica objects produced in Austria or in Poland for Hassidic courts in Galicia.

2.2.3.3 Wood

Wooden objects, especially carved Torah pointers and mezuzot (small containers put on doorposts) may hint to an Eastern European provenance, whereas Esther scrolls mounted on a wooden handle in general imply a North African origin. Wooden Torah ark tops and wooden omer boards may come from all over Europe, whereas carved wooden plaques and panels indicating the direction of prayer hint to a Central or Eastern European provenance. Spice- and etrog- boxes, finials and kiddush cups carved from olive, sometimes from sandalwood, probably have their origin in the Land of Israel. Inlaid containers may have been produced in Syria or Egypt. Wooden Torah cases stem from the Near East, North Africa and Inner Asia as well as from Romaniote Greek communities where they were adorned also with painted wooden finials. In many Italian synagogues, the interior furnishing was made entirely of wood, including the Torah ark.

2.2.3.4 Paper

Decorated works of paper are mainly to be found as so-called shiviti plaques, marriage contracts, sukkah booth decorations, omer calenders and amulets. A most popular craft is the art of papercutting. In Eastern Europe mizrah papercuts were made indicating the direction of prayer and using traditional folkloristic elements, as were shiviti plaques, meditative representations of he seven-branched Menorah to contemplate over God's name. Smaller, round papercuts called roisele in Yiddish were used as ornaments for special holidays such as the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Weeks. Shiviti papercuts with a foiled background refer to a North African provenance.

2.2.3.5 Other

There have of course been glass objects in private Jewish ritual use. Due to the fragility of the material, the alleged old age of a Judaica glass object should be questioned. However, exceptions confirm the rule - for example, contemporary Hebrew inscriptions and illustrations were put on many Biedermeier glasses to raise their value.
The same must be said about works of ceramics and porcelain. But some pieces of folkloristic Judaica ceramics from around 1900 were collected in the Lemberg region and survived, as did

Pesach plates from that time made in Bohemia. A quantity of porcelain Judaica from the late 19th century onwards, which were produced in Austria, Hungary, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and England are known, too.
Ivory was used for handles of Torah scroll staves and to top them in Turkey, as well as in Greece and other Sephardi communities. Ivory inlays decorated Torah scroll handles in Eastern Europe and ivory integrated in bookcovers was used in the whole of Central Europe.
Carved objects made from soapstone, mainly souvenir objects like beakers, were produced around 1900 in Jerusalem.

2.2.4 Style

2.2.4.1 Art-Historical Considerations

The ability to identify the regional provenance of a Judaica object requires some fundamental knowledge of art history, aesthetic styles and traditions. While major European eras and their specific features may be known, specific regional characteristics and non-European styles may not. So the first stylistic question to an object should be: Does it look familiar? Can it be roughly classified as an object featuring Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo, Neo-Classical/Empire, Neo-Renaissance, -Roman, -Gothic, Art Nouveau/Secession/Jugendstil, or Art Deco elements? The next one: Does it look European at all, or does its style and ornamentation hint at the Near or Far East, the Ottoman Empire, Central Asia? Does it look like a folkloric piece from a rural region? Or does it feature elements of a specific folkloric tradition? Does it look like it was made by a learned craftsman or by a layman?

2.2.4.2 Inner-Jewish Differences

As important as art-historical criteria are for identification, similarly important are references to customs, traditions, and languages specific to the different Jewish ethnic divisions. The variety of parts of the world and countries in which Jews have been and are still living implies an enormous variety of styles found in Jewish ceremonial objects. Through migrations, economic crises, lootings, redistributions, and military conflicts, objects with remote origins may have found their ways into European and/or American collections or popped up on the market. To trace their provenance, you should familiarize yourself with at least the main Jewish divisions and their material culture. Be aware that there exist many further differences within the divergent Jewish life worlds: mainly between capitals, smaller towns and rural regions; rich and poor; enlightened, reformed, orthodox, political and mystical-oriented groups; North and South; West and East.
The different groups can be defined by and large as follows:

2.2.4.2.1 Ashkenazi Jewry

Ashkenazi Jews: Ashkenaz designates the lands of Western, Central and Eastern Europe; Jews living in this common cultural region are called Ashkenazim. Their traditional areas of settlement are France, the Lowlands, the historic German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Switzerland, Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia. Ashkenazi culture mirrors Western, Central, and Eastern European culture with a Jewish fashioning.

2.2.4.2.2 Sephardi Jewry

Sephardi Jews: Sepharad designates the land of Spain, in a broader sense the Iberian peninsula. After their expulsion around 1500 they settled in the Ottoman Empire from where they reached the Balkans and Austria, North Africa, Italy, Northwest Europe, Malta and eventually the Americas.

They are called Sephardim. For different reasons, European Sephardim were generally socially better off than Ashkenazim, and their material cultural heritage - which is influenced by Dutch, English, Italian and North-German aesthetics, though in keeping with old Sephardi traditions - reflects their economical success. Sephardi Ottoman and North African culture mirrors the Islamic molded culture in these countries.

2.2.4.2.3 Oriental Jewry
Another group is formed by Oriental Jewry, which is subdivided further into another two groups: Those of North Africa (if they are not Sephardim), namely Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia (including Djerba), and Libya, where they have partly settled since before the Christian era.
The second group are Middle Eastern Jews living in Iraq, Iran, Kurdistan, Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. Oriental Jewish culture mirrors the Islamic-molded culture in these countries, with Italian influences in North African objects and Indian influences in some Middle Eastern objects.

2.2.4.2.4 Caucasian and Crimean Jewry
Jews from the Caucasus and the Crimea are considered a further group: They comprise Georgian Jews, mountain Jews from Daghestan and Azerbaijan and Krymchaks whose material culture reflects majority culture, while there are typical Jewish costume traditions.

2.2.4.2.5 South-, East- and Central-Asian Jewry
South-, East- and Inner-Asian Jews used to live in different areas of India, in Bukhara, Pakistan, Afghanistan and China, mainly in Kaifeng. Their material culture also mirrors majority culture.

2.2.4.2.6 Others
Further non-Ashkenazi groups in Europe are the Bne Roma or Italkim who have been living in Italy since late antiquity (NB: there are also Ashkenazi and Sephardi Italian communities) and the Romaniotes who stem from the late antique Greek world in the lands of the Balkans.

2.2.5 Symbols

Many Judaica objects are identifiable because they feature symbols specific to Judaism. The most common ones are the following:

Crown - The crown symbolizes the „Crown of the Torah." It is set on a multitude of ritual objects and stresses the Torah's claim to authority. As many of the illustrated crowns are characteristic for different European dynasties, their form is often a lead to establish provenance.
(A first finding aid is:
https://www.google.at/search?biw=1600&bih=712&noj=1&site=webhp&tbm=isch&sa=1&q=european+crowns&oq=european+crowns&gs_l=img.3..0i19.43851.47214.0.47493.15.14.0.1.1.0.162.949.11j2.13.0....0...1c.1.64.img..1.14.951...0j0j0i30i19j0i8i30i19.1z-R3rCEMoc)

Tablets of the Law – Often showing the Hebrew beginning of the Ten Commandments, these in the middle of many ritual objects not only refer to the central element in the Five Books of Moses but also to where they were originally kept, the Temple in Jerusalem.

Drawn Back Curtain - The European heraldic tabard served as the basis of modern national and aristocratic coats of arms, which in turn were used for the design of a lot of Torah shields,

Hanukkah lamps etc., the edges of which imitate cloth. In this way, it obviously refers to the royal status of what it adorns, namely the Torah, and turns the object itself into a symbol of power. At the same time, the cloth conjures up the association with the curtain in front of the Holy of Holies in the Temple. The leaned-on form of the heraldic tabards used may help to establish provenance. (A first finding aid is: https://www.google.at/search?q=european+heraldry++coat+of+arms&client=safari&rls=en&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiEw7P70eHNAhXJNxQKHUzyCdwQsAQILw&biw=1600&bih=712)

Torah Shrine – The Torah shrine belongs to the Temple symbols. Being integrated into Torah shields or Hanukkah lamps, its doors may be opened. All Temple symbols are not only commemorative links to the past but also links to a believed future reconstruction of the Temple in the world to come.

Ark of the Covenant – With two guarding cherubs as known from depictions of reconstruction of the sanctuary during the wandering in the wilderness, this symbolizes the essence of the Torah.

Table with Show-Breads - This is another symbol for the sacrificial service in the time the Temple in Jerusalem existed.

Altar – Two different altars may be seen on an object, the incense altar and the fire altar. They both refer to Jewish cult in the era preceding the destruction of the Temple.

Aaron's Priestly Garment – The garment, which is decorated with small bells at the lower seam, may be featured. It also refers to the Temple and the priestly service.

Hoshen - The High Priest's breastplate was sacred. The symbol again commemorates the time of the Temple and expresses the hope of a Messianic era to come.

Headgear – The headgear of the High Priest, commonly in the shape of a tiara, belongs to the Temple symbols.

Censer – Without the censer and its fragrant incense, Aaron could not complete his priestly work.

Menorah - The lighted seven-branched candelabra is one of the best known Temple symbols. It is often to be seen on Hanukkah lamps, as it is linked to the historical events on which the festival is based. But it also appears on many shiviti- and mizrach- plaques and other objects.

Flames – Flames leaping out of amphoras symbolize that light in the Temple, which according to tradition was never extinguished and which lives on in the "small sanctuary," as the synagogue is also called, in the Ner Tamid, the Eternal Light.

Columns – In front of the Jerusalem Temple stood the columns Jachin and Boaz. Remembering those, columns frame the Tablets of the Law or the ark on ritual objects.

Tree - Equating the Torah with the "Tree of Life," sprouting trees are often to be seen.

Moses and Aaron – With their specific attributes - i.e. Moses with the rod and the Tablets of

the Law and Aaron with the censer wearing his priestly garment – these go back to the time of and prescriptions concerning the building of the tabernacle.

Lions – Lions were associated with the Tribes of Israel, Judah and Dan, at an early date. In numerous depictions from late antiquity, the "Lion of Judah" is already shown guarding the Torah shrine. They often come as escutcheon holders as in coats of arms. The appearance of lions on Jewish ritual objects may possibly come from a popular saying in the Mishnah, Pirkei Avot, V:20: "Judah the son of Teima would say: Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, fleeting as a deer and mighty as a lion to do the will of your Father in Heaven."
The appearance of the lions is often typical for the region in which the object was made.
(A first finding aid is:
https://www.google.at/search?q=Lion+Europe&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiVzdX20uHNAhVFzRQKHY3gC8EQ_AUICCgB&biw=1600&bih=712#tbm=isch&q=Lion+european+iconography)
A lion may also symbolize the name of the owner of the object in question: Löw/Ariel. A Lion, an Eagle and a Deer - may feature on an object to illustrate the above mentioned quotation more completely.

Griffins - instead of lions, griffins are often placed on Eastern European objects.

Deer – may replace lions as an indication of the donor's or owner's name: Zvi (Hebrew), Hirsch (German), Herschl (Yiddish)

Magen (מָגֵן - Hebrew: shield) David – The Shield or Star of David is a symbol of modern Judaism. As such it became representative of Zionism. In the early modern period the hexagram is known only to have been used as a Jewish symbol by the Jewish community in Prague. Please note: Not every six-pointed star has to be a Star of David. Hexagrams were used in Christian Kabbalah, served as fire protection symbols and also as beer or brewing stars in tapping signs.

Shofar – A ram's horn symbolizes the High Holidays.

The Priestly Blessing – The priestly blessing is often featured on objects by two raised hands. The symbol expresses that the donor or owner of the object is a Cohen (priest), a descendant from Aaron, the first High Priest.

Pitcher (and Basin) – A pitcher (and basin) is/are shown on objects to hint to the Levite (descendants of the Tribe of Levi) status of the donor or owner. It refers to the Levites' traditional duty of cleaning the hands of the Temple Priest prior to a religious service.

People Leaving a City – The Israelites leaving a city symbolizing Egypt is to be seen on objects related to Pesach.

Lamb – The Paschal lamb may be found on a number of Pesach-related objects, alone or lying on a table with girdled Israelites circling it.

People Passing through a Sea – This refers to the parting of the Red Sea through which the Israelites passed and the Egyptians drowned. The scene is depicted on objects related to Pesach.

Women Dancing and Playing Instruments – Miriam, joined by other women, played the tambourine after the Israelites safely crossed the Red Sea. The scene may be depicted on objects relatd to Pesach.

Sacrifice of Isaac – Abraham nearly sacrificing Isaac but being stopped by an angel or a heavenly hand may be seen on objects related to male circumcision.

Judgment of Solomon – Solomon's judgment is mainly depicted on plates used in the ceremony of the redemption of the first-born son.

Men with Grapes – Depiction of the two scouts bringing back a big bunch of grapes as proof of the fertility of the Promised Land is to be found on different Judaica objects.

Harpist – King David is often depicted playing the harp, especially in connection with psalms, since according to tradition he is the author of the Psalms, which were to be sung with musical accompaniment.

Pelican Feeding its Brood – The pelican ripping open its breast to feed its children with its own blood is especially to be found on Sephardic objects and symbolizes the Jewish mother.

Phoenix – The mythological bird is a symbol of rebirth and immortality.

Unicorn – The unicorn is a hunted animal, but in contrast to Christian folklore never captured.

Elephant – The elephant is a symbol of the Torah, wisdom and lovingkindness.

Squirrel – The squirrel is a symbol of wise foresight.

Bear - The bear is a symbol of strength; the male name of Baer/Ber/Dov (Hebrew)

The Temple Mount – This may symbolize the place of the actual sanctuary of the past, the place of the heavenly sanctuary of the future, or the place where the binding of Isaac took place.

The Temple - In modern times the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount is often represented as symbolizing the site of the First and the Second Temple. The Dome of the Rock served also as depiction of the Temple on the printer's mark of Marco Antonio Gustiniani in Venice.

Western Wall – Mostly in combination with David's Tower or Citadel, the Dome of the Rock, and cypresses, the Western Wall has become an iconic symbol for the city of Jerusalem.

Zodiac Signs – These symbolize constellations - called „Mazalot" in Hebrew, the singular meaning „luck" - the cycle of the year with its established cyclic holydays according to the Jewish calendar. In a number of cases, especially on wimpels, the zodiac sign designates the constellation under which the child was born. In other cases, i.e. on calendars, the zodiac sign accompanies the illustration of the monthly agricultural activity.

Some of the symbols enumerated above are far from being Jewish symbols only. Non-Jewish religious objects may feature identical/comparable symbols and images and refer generally to the Old Testament; some of them may also refer to Islamic content and some to mythological narratives.

2.2.6 Colors

The color white symbolizes purity. White or cream-colored textiles are used in the synagogue on the High Holidays Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur.
Black or dark Torah textiles are related to death and mourning.
Purple is a popular color for Torah textiles because it was used extensively in the decoration of the Tabernacle and for the priestly garments.
As crimson symbolizes blood, special Torah curtains for the circumcision ceremony may be of a red color.

2.2.7 Hallmarks

Silver is too soft to be used in its "fine" or "pure" form but has to be alloyed with copper. For centuries in Europe the fineness of silver ranged from about 70% to 95.8 % (700, 800, 925). In former times guilds regulated and controlled standards, then governments took over. They approved and still approve the stated fineness by use of hallmarks.
A hallmark is an official mark or series of marks struck on items made of precious metals. It serves as a guarantee of a certain purity or fineness of the metal as determined by formal metal testing by an independent body or authority. In general, it is made up of several elements such as a mark denoting the type of metal, the maker's or workshop's mark, and the city and year of the marking. To test the metal purity a small sample of it is taken by the assayer and subdued to a chemical process to verify the fineness. Thus, the assay mark is often a zigzag line, but it can also be the assayer's initials or the date. Tax free census marks were introduced after the invalidation of Napoleonic hallmarks in countries formerly under French occupation. A re-hallmarking from 1806 confirmed tax payments in relation to the metal value of objects in Austro-Hungary which otherwise would have been seized by the state and melted down. National regulations could and still can vary considerably.
Hallmarks are struck onto the objects with a steel punch. Most punches are stamps with letters, numbers, symbols, or ornaments executed reversed and raised. Their sizes may differ depending on the object size. By holding the stamp on to the object and hammering it, its image is transferred to the workpiece. As the striking often displaces material, the workpiece has to be refinished afterwards. Today laser markings are available.
The presence of a hallmark on a silver object is not only an official sign of approval. Hallmarks are also an invaluable aid for identifying the date, the regional provenance, and the maker of a silver object.
Unfortunately, not every metal object is hallmarked. In particular, filigree objects often lack hallmarks, as do objects from Galicia, the Ottoman Empire, Inner Asian and Oriental countries.
The identification of a hallmark is not always easy, but there are a lot of finding aids.[380]

[380] http://www.925-1000.com/index.html; Tardy-Lengellé (ed.), *Les Poincons de Garantie Internationaux pour l'Argent*, 222 édition, Mayenne 2004; Marc Rosenberg, *Der Goldschmiede Merkzeichen*, 4 Bde, Frankfurt am Main 1922.

Pewter is hallmarked, too. Special finding aids exist.[381] As they were not as tightly controlled as precious metal objects, many pewter pieces were never marked.

Marks on porcelain are also common.[382]

Be aware that from the date there was a market for Judaica objects - i.e. from the early exhibitions of Judaica objects at world fairs, the beginning of private collecting, and the founding of Jewish museums around 1900 - fakes came also into being. One should differentiate between historical remakes, which did not pretend to be older than they were in fact (i.e. pseudo-hallmarks from the 17/18th century combined with a known Hanau trademark from around 1900)[383] and faked hallmarks which pretend to be historical ones. Faked Judaica especially with faked Russian hallmarks emerged in the 1970s when private collectors in the US and in Europe showed new interest in Judaica and boomed in the 1980s when post-war Jewish museums in Europe were established. To date counterfeiting Judaica makes for good business.

2.2.8 Labels/Stamps

Every trace on an object must be examined thoroughly and kept, as it might hint to the provenance. Labels, stamps, stickers, engravings, and numbers may indicate:
(Former) Museums' inventory numbers
Former Jewish community inventory numbers
Numbers from auction houses
Numbers from galleries
Vugesta numbers (Verwaltungsstelle für jüdisches Umzugsgut der Gestapo - Gestapo Administration Point for Jewish Removal)
JCR-tags: As explained in Part 1 of this *Handbook*, Jewish Cultural Reconstruction was founded in 1947 to function as the agent of the JRSO, the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization for heirless Jewish cultural property. It collected heirless cultural assets at designated collection points for redistribution mainly in the United States and Israel. As previously noted each object and book collected by the JCR received a JCR metal tag respectively a JCR bookplate.
Numbers for which no (immediate) explanation can be found may refer to an internal Nazi system, to a nationalization system, or to a system set up by a department of monuments/national heritage agency.
In the framework of the Holocaust, when objects were moved to central points of administration - not only to Nazi bodies but also to Jewish communities for safekeeping - they were often marked with labels containing a private or institutional name.
Every possibility to store a hint must be explored - i.e., an old note might be found in a charity or any other box or object that can be opened. Another example would be the clearance for the holiday plaques on Torah shields, which can be opened to change the plaques. Preventing the plaques from falling around in the clearance after a plaque was lost, they sometimes were stabilized by a small

[381] http://www.pewtersociety.org/collecting/european-pewter, Stará, Dagmar, *Zinnmarken aus aller Welt*. Aus dem Tschechischen übersetzt von Kurt Lauscher, Hanau/M. 1987. Erwin Hintze, *Die deutschen Zinngießer*, Vols 1-7, 1921-1927, Reprint Aalen 1965; the last volume includs Austria, Hungary, Switzerland and Alsace. Howard Herschel Cotterell: Old Pewter. Its Makers and Marks, London 1929.
[382] http://www.ceramic-link.de/icd/pages/marks/marksindex.htm; http://www.haberey.info/gold/keram-mk.htm.
[383] http://www.925-1000.com/Fgerman_hanau_marks_01.html.

object or often by a piece of paper. This paper may shed light on the time and the locality the object was used when the paper was inserted.

You might find traces of attempts to erase former engraved numbers or letters.

2.3. Types of Objects

2.3.1 Synagogue and Communal Objects

Torah Scroll

Figure 6: Etz chayim/Torah scroll staves
Poland, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=16325
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The term Torah (תּוֹרָה - Hebrew, literally „teaching“) refers to the Five Books of Moses (also known as „Chumash“ in Hebrew). The Torah scroll or „Sefer Torah“ in Hebrew refers to a handwritten copy of the Five Books of Moses on parchment or vellum (figure 6).

It is written entirely in Hebrew without vowels or punctuation by a quill dipped in ink and contains 304,805 letters, generally with forty-two lines of text per column (50 lines according to the Yemenite tradition). Decorative crowns, called tagin, on special letters are characteristic for first appearance. The pages of the parchment are sewn together by hair or sinew of a kosher animal. The Torah scroll is mounted on two wooden rollers, called Etz Chayim (Hebrew „Tree of Life“), each of which has handles to scroll the text according to the portion which is read.

The Torah scroll is used on Shabbat and festivals in the synagogue service.

Torah Ornaments

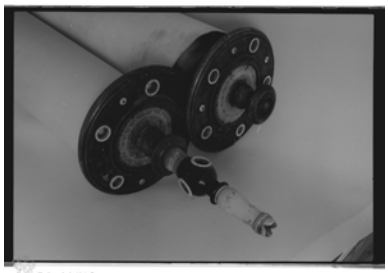

Figure 7: Eastern European Etz chayim/Tora scroll staves
Lithuania, Panevėžys, 1908
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=116
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 8: Silver etz chayim
Italy, Piedmont, 1775-1799?
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=5316
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Atzei Etz Chayim (עץ חיים) are needed to mount the Torah scroll. In general they are turned wooden poles with discs on the upper and lower ends to keep the scroll in place (see figure 6). Especially in Eastern Europe they can be decorated with inlays of different types of wood or ivory (figure 7). In rich communities, the handles might have been made of or covered with silver (figure 8). In cases of

luck they bear a Hebrew inscription providing information about the congregation to which they belonged.

Figure 9: Wooden Tik
1908, Georgia, Raja
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=11424
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 10: Carved + painted Tik
Tunisia, Djerba, Hara al Kabira, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=159570
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 11: Baghdadi Tik
1885/86
Courtesy of the Gross Family Collection, Tel Aviv, inv. no. 048.001.001_001

Figure 12: Egyptian Tik
Late 19th century
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum London, inv.no. C 1980.3.10.1

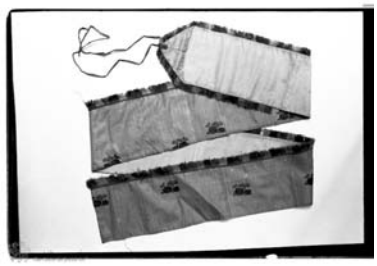

Figure 13: Torah binder
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=15055
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Tik (תיק - Hebrew „case“) means a hinged round or polygonal container in which the Torah scroll is placed and read from in Oriental, Greek, Inner Asian, and Indian communities. Its interior is covered with cloth. The casing can be a simple wooden structure (figure 9) or an ornate carved and painted one (figure 10). Oriental and Indian Tikkim (plural) are often covered with decorated silver sheet, sometimes partly gilded, and coral beads (figure 11). Egyptian Tikkim may feature mother-of pearl insets (figure 12). Some Tikkim bear Hebrew inscriptions referring to Biblical psalms, they sometimes also indicate a donor and/or year.

Figure 14: Torah binder with inscription
Italy, Piedmont, c. 1800
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=5293
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A Mappah (מפה, Hebrew, Torah binder; Yiddish, Gartel) is a kind of belt which ties the two halves of the Torah scroll together. It is often very

Figure 15: Torah Wimpel
Germany, 1780
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=1154
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

simple (figure 13) but can feature a Hebrew year or the name of a donor or community (figure 14). Among German Jews it was costumary to use a linen Torah wimpel for this purpose. A standard benediction is written on a wimpel, giving the date of birth and the name of the boy (figure 15). The name noted down is the Hebrew name. As time progresses the civil name of the boy is given in German too on the textile. A wimpel is often embroidered or painted and beautifully decorated. In general it is only around 17 cm high, but its length varies from two to four meters. The German custom of using the swaddling cloth upon which the boy had been circumcised as a binder spread to the Czech lands, Switzerland and Austro-Hungary, as well as to Denmark. In Italian and Sephardi communities the binder, mainly made of costly material like silk, is known as a „fascia".

Figure 16: Yeriah
Not dated
Courtesy of the Portugees-Israëlitische Gemeente Amsterdam, inv. no. T 10

A Yeriah (יְרִיעָה - Hebrew: wrapper) is used in Italian, Greek or communities of the Sephardi Diaspora. Its height equals the height of a Torah scroll and it is rolled up together with the scroll (figure 16).

A Meil (מְעִיל - Hebrew: mantle) covers the Torah scroll (in addition to those kept in Tikkim). Italian and

Figure 17: Sephardi Me'il Portuguese mantle, 1715 (with Teixeira de Mattos monogram)
Courtesy of the Joods Historical Museum, inv. no. JHM B00105

Figure 18: Ashkenazi Me'il 1867
Courtesy of the Joods Historical Museum, inv.no. JHM 000467

Figure 19: Rural Ashkenazi Me'il 1800-1900
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum Switzerland, Basel, JMS 1085

Figure 20: Ashkenazi Torah crown Austria 1872
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

Sephardi Me'ilim (plural) are mostly made of precious textiles such as brocade, they are wide and open at the front. At their
upper end they have an interior reinforcement to keep the mantle's shape (figure 17). Ashkenazi mantles are sewn together out of two rectangular pieces of cloth, often velvet, but often also of a not costly textile (figure 18). They have two openings at the upper end to pull them over the Torah poles. They often bear Hebrew inscriptions indicating the date of a donation, the names of the donor, sometimes even the name of the community. The least inscription on a Torah mantle is the Hebrew letters kaph כ and tav ת, the abbreviation for „Keter Torah", i.e. „Crown of the Torah" (figure 19).

Figure 21: Eastern European silver gilt Torah crown
Galicia, early 19th century
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum London, inv. no. C 2001.5.5

Figure 22: Italian Torah crown
Venice, 18th century
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum Venice

The Keter (כֶּתֶר - Hebrew: crown) adorns the Torah. It is mounted on the Torah staves. In general its shape reflects regional aristocratic traditions (figure 20). In Eastern Europe a distinctive two- or three-tiered form developed (figure 21), whereas in Italy a coronet form prevailed, known as „Atarah“ (figure 22). A Torah crown may but does not have to bear Hebrew inscriptions indicating the date of a donation, the names of donors, sometimes even the name of the community.

A pair of Rimmonim (רִמּוֹנִים - Hebrew: pomegranates) mounted with their cylindrical shafts on the upper poles of the Torah staves add to the adornment of the Torah. Because of their original fruit form they are called „Tappuchim“ - i.e. „apples“ - by Sephardim. The fruit-like form survived mainly

Figure 23: Central Asian Finials
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=14463
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 24: Dutch Torah Finials
Amsterdam, ca. 1700
Courtesy of the Jewish Historical Museum, inv. no. JHM B00075

Figure 25: Italian crown and finials
Jewish Museum Venice

in Oriental, Inner Asian and Austro-Hungarian communities, where the main body was ornated with bells (figure 23). In the greater part of Europe their form was influenced by church objects, thus architectural Rimmonim were developed, many of which reflect more or less specific towers (figure 24). Bells were added to them, too. Rimmonim may or may not bear Hebrew inscriptions.

There are also combinations of a Crown and Rimmonim (figure 25).

A Tass (טס - Hebrew: Torah-shield) hangs in front of the dressed Torah in Turkish, Italian and

Figure 26: Interchangeable plaques for Torah shield
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

Ashkenazi communities. It features the name of a holiday, indicating which scroll is used for the portion of the Torah read on specific occasions. It often has a rectangular recess with interchangeable holiday plaques (figure 26). At the back there are hinges for a chain to be hung around the Torah staves. Torah shields vary stylistically depending on the place of their origin. Middle and Western European Torah shields often feature motifs which are linked to the Temple in Jerusalem such as architectural elements, the Menorah and the altar or the table for the showbread. Also Aaron and Moses may appear (figure 27). Eastern European shields mainly feature motifs inspired by flora and fauna, partly symbolic, namely in their folkloristic variants (figure 28). Many Tassim (plural) bear Hebrew inscriptions indicating the date of a donation, the names of donors, sometimes even the name of the community (figure 29).

Figure 27: Torah shield with Moses and Aaron
Breslau, second half of 18th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=2429
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 28: Ukrainian Torah shield
Last quarter of 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=632
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 29: Torah shield with donor's inscription
Nürnberg 1763
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=4067&sort=DESC&many=20&start=20
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

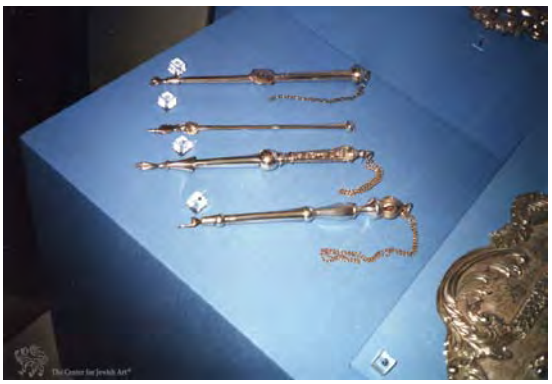

Figure 30: Torah pointers
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=246680
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A Yad (יָד - Hebrew: hand), a longer or shorter rod with a pointing hand at its lower end, serves the Torah reader as a pointer to keep track of the the line he is reading (figure 30). It is often made from silver, but in Eastern Europe wooden pointers, sometimes artifically carved, were also very common (figure 31). At its upper end the Yad has a hinge or hole for a chain to hang it in front of the Torah shield. In Sephardi communities, the Yad is held by the Torah binder beneath the mantle and therefore has no need for a ring and chain (figure 32), and is known as a „moreh“ (Hebrew: pointer). In Oriental communities, it is known as a „Kulmus“ (Latin/Arabic: quill). The majority of Torah pointers do not have inscriptions.

Figure 31: Ukrainian Torah pointer
Zakarpatska obl.
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=204
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

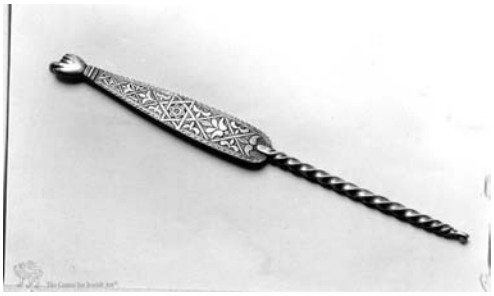

Figure 32: Sephardi Torah pointer
Israel, 20th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=19692
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Aron Kodesh (אָרוֹן קדֹשׁ - Hebrew: Holy Ark) is the shrine in which the Torah scrolls are kept in the synagogue (figure 33). Among Sephardim it is known as „Ehal“. It can be a stone structure but also a wooden cabinet. In the latter case it often is a two-part construction, the upper part taking in the scrolls, the lower and smaller one for keeping Torah ornaments. Most Torah arks are topped with the Tablets of the Law but can often be additionally decorated. Italian arks with Renaissance decorations are known, German ones with Temple motifs and Eastern European ones with deer, lions, eagles and so on. Also small Torah arks for private use or for travelling are known from the Baroque era onwards (figure 34). Some of them are even made from silver.

Figure 33: Holy shrine
Wood, 17th century Piedmont, Italy
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum London, inv.no. 14

34: Holy shrine for travelling

Figure 35: Parokhet
Zagreb, Croatia, 1895
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=17310
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 36: Parokhet for High Holidays
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum Vienna, Inv. No. 7445

The Parokhet (פרוכת - Hebrew), a textile curtain, hangs in front of the Torah shrine, going back to the partition between the Holy of Holies in the Temple sanctuary (figure 35). It can but does not have to be decorated. It can but does not have to show a dedication inscription. But it mostly features at least two Hebrew characters, the abbreviation for „Keter Torah", „Crown of the Torah". On the High Holidays and Hoshana Rabbah, the last day of the Festival of Sukkoth, the Parokhet is of white or cream color. For use on the High vHolidays it may also feature Shofar horns (figure 36). In Central and Western European communities special Torah curtains for the Brit Milah, the ritual circumcision ceremony, were common, with an inscription of the blessing for the occasion. They also may feature the Akedah, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac (figure 37). In Western Sephardic synagogues there is no outer but rather an inner Parokhet except on the holiday of Tisha B'Av, commemorating the destruction of the Temple, when a black mourning Parochet is installed.
In Romaniote communities Shaddayot, also called Takhshitim (תכשיטים - Hebrew: ornaments), small silver votive plaques, are fastened to the Parokhet.

Figure 37: Parokhet with Aqedah
Silesia 1792
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=460
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Kapporeth (כַּפֹּרֶת - Hebrew: mercy seat), a short valance, is often placed above the curtain. It seems to have its origin around 1700 in Eastern Europe from where it spread to the West. As it refers to the gold lid with two cherubim coming out of the ends of it to form a covering over the Ark of the Covenant, it often shows the Hebrew inscription "He made a cover of pure gold" (Exodus 37:6) and/or features the Temple symbols (figure 38).

Figure 38: Kapporeth
Germany, 1796
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=158
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A Ner Tamid (נֵר תָּמִיד - Hebrew: Eternal light) hangs above the Holy Ark in every synagogue in use (figure 39). It represents God's presence with the presence of the Torah. Its form depends on the regional style and time it was made in. Some bear Hebrew inscriptions. Without an inscription, it is hard to determine whether it is a Judaica object as it resembles respective church objects.

Figure 39: Ner Tamid
Croatia, c. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=17309
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

On the Bimah (בִּימָה - Hebrew: elevated place) stands the desk from which the Torah is read. The desk is covered by a textile, called a reader's desk cover or Bimah cover, in Sephardic communities Tevah cover, in Western and Central Ashkenazic communities Almemor cover (figure 40). It can be as decorated as the Torah ark curtain and the mantle and often bears comparable inscriptions. The desk may also feature decorative endings of different materials at its corners.

The Amud (עמוד), the lectern (Yiddish: shtender) in front of the Bimah from which the cantor leads the prayers, may also be covered by a textile which can bear inscriptions (figure 41). Often a Menorah, a seven-branched candelabra, is placed on or near the Amud.

A Shiviti (שויתי - "I have placed [the Lord always before me]", Psalms 16:8) plaque is often placed above the Amud. The meditative Shiviti is usually made of paper and displays the Tetragrammaton and Hebrew Psalms forming the seven-branched Menorah (figure 43). Shiviti plaques can be rather

Figure 40: Bimah cover
Piedmont, Italy, last quarter of 18th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=5340
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 41: Reader's desk cover
Hungary 1912
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=7089
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 42: Shiviti
Eretz Israel, first half of 20th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=10590
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 43: Shiviti
Hungary (?) 1930
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=7077
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

simple but also highly decorative and elaborate, depending of the writer's skills. Artistic Shiviti plaques may give the scribe's name (figure 43), the date and even the name of the community to which it belonged. There are also Shiviti plaques in the form of reverse glass paintings or inscribed wood panels.

The Circumcision Bench in Ashkenazi communities traditionally consists of two seats, one for the Sandek, the godfather on whose lap the baby boy is circumcised, the other one is reserved for the prophet Elijah (figure 44). These benches may be carved and often bear inscriptions referring to their purpose. In other communities two separate chairs are used, and Elijah's chair is designated as such. These special benches and chairs are not known from earlier than the 18th century. In Sephardic communities Elijah's chair is designated as such by covering it with purple and gold braided materials.

Figure 44: Circumcision bench
Iasi, Romania, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=15638
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 45: Circumcision cushion
Germany, c. 1700
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum Frankfurt, inv. no. JMF 96-2

A circumcision cushion or cushion cover on which the baby is placed is usually beautifully decorated. In East, West and Central Europe, embroidered inscriptions relate to the occasion by quoting the biblical narration of the covenant between God and Abraham and referring to Elijah as the guarding angel of the covenant (figure 45).

Figure 46: Elijah's rod
Afghanistan, c. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=23332
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Elijah's rods are known from Afghanistan, the Caucasus, Uzbekistan, and Iran from the 19th century (figure 46). They bear Biblical inscriptions invoking the prophet.

The Chuppah (חוּפָּה - Hebrew: nuptial chamber) is beginning in the 16th century the portable bridal canopy under which a couple is married (figure 47). It is attached to four poles and often shows the Hebrew text: „A sound of joy, a sound of gladness, a sound of the bridegroom, a sound of the bride," Jeremiah 33:11. It also may depict the sun, moon, and stars.

Figure 47: Chuppah
Poland, last quarter of 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=17767
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Chuppah stones (German: Traustein) are known from Germany after it became common in Ashkenazi countries in the 16th century to have the wedding ceremony take place in the courtyard of the synagogue. They were set in the northern wall of the synagogue and carved with the Hebrew abbreviational letters for the verse Jeremiah 33:11, often also with a star. They are usually made of sandstone (figure 48).

Figure 48: Chuppah stone
Jochsberg, Frankonia, Germany, 1804
Courtesy of the the Jewish Museum of Franconia in Schnaittach, inv. no. 2013-002

Ceremonial marriage rings, known from Germany, Italy and the Near East, show the Hebrew words: „Mazal Tov", „Good Fortune" or its abbreviatonal letters. They may feature a roof or an architectural structure. The Italian ones are of gold filigree, and some are enameled. The very few authentic German and Italian rings date from the 14th to the 17th century.

Figure 49: Alms box
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

Alms boxes are found in every synagogue. They are usually shaped like tankards with a slot in the lid and a handle (figure 49). They may be of silver, but more often they are made of copper, tin, iron, pewter, or wood. But bowls and dishes are also common. They are often inscribed revealing the society they belonged to (very often to burial societies) or designating the specific area of charity (i.e., for poor brides or the Jewish National Fund). Many charity containers feature the Hebrew inscription: „Charity averts Death". In Italy fabric bags were used to collect money. In Sephardi congregations collection plates are known which are extremly prestigious, their decoration not necessarily linked to their purpose.

Figure 50: Laver and Basin
Prague, Czech Republic, 19th century
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

Laver and basin for priestly and ceremonial washing are common symbols on objects belonging to a family of Levites. As sets for liturgical use they are hard to distinguish from baptism jugs and basins unless there is a specific inscription (figure 50). In the Sephardi world, they may be engraved with a coat-of-arms.

Figure 51: Kiddush cup
Hungary, c. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=2573
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Kiddush (קידוש - Hebrew: sanctification) is the blessing over a cup of wine preceding the meal of every holiday including the Shabbat (figure 51). In synagogue, Kiddush is made, too, in case somebody is not able to recite Kiddush at home. Traditionally silver cups are used as Kiddush cups and are dedicated to the congregation, which means that they bear a dedication inscription. Many of them also feature the Hebrew inscription „Remember the Shabbath day, to keep it holy".

Figure 52: Omer board
Bordeaux, France, 1882
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=33260
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Omer (first sheaf of barley harvested) boards are hung in the synagogue as a reminder of the number of days counting the Omer from the second night of Pesach for seven weeks. They feature numbers, often in Arabic, and some Hebrew text. They are often handwritten on paper and some are beautifully decorated. They may be mounted in a wooden box (figure 52), or the text may be written on plaques made originally as commemorative plaques for churches. They also may come as simpler rolls.

A Shofar (שׁוֹפָר), an ancient wind instrument, is made of a ram's horn (figure 53). It is blown on different occasions in the synagogue. Shofar horns may come in various forms and sizes. They are sometimes decorated with carvings and inscriptions.

Figure 53: Shofar
Poland, c.1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=2447
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Pidyon HaBen (פדיון הבן- Hebr.: redemption of the first-born son) plates are mainly known from Galicia. They are linked to the ceremony of symbolically redeeming the first-born male from priestly duty. In most cases, they feature a representation of Solomon's judgment or the sacrifice of Isaac and the signs of the Zodiac (figure 54).

Figure 54: Pidyon HaBen plate
Lviv, Ukraine, first quarter of 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=145
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Hanukkah lamps serve for the celebration which commemorates the victory of the Maccabean rebels against the Greek rulers in the 4th century BCE. The holiday is celebrated in the synagogue as well as at home for eight days, and the lamps respectively show eight lights with an additional separated ninth which serves as a servant light to light the other eight (figure 55). Hanukkah lamps in the synagogue are often large candelabrum types of lamps. They feature a central stem flanked by four arms on both sides and showing the servant in front of the stem. They may be simple iron lamps but also decorated silver ones, especially in rich West European communities. In Eastern Europe, gigantic Hanukkah lamps with classical, floral, branching arms topped with an eagle from cast bronze on lion feet were popular.

Figure 55: Synagogue Hanukkah lamp
Transylvania, Romania, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=17413
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 56: Washbasin and faucet
Czech Republic, Prague
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=13474
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Washbasins serve ritual as well as practical purposes at the entrance of the synagogue. Sometimes they come with a faucet (figure 56). Some of them bear inscriptions. They are mostly made of copper, brass, or ceramics.

2.3.2 Objects of Private Use

The Mezuzah (מְזוּזָה - Hebrew: doorpost) is a piece of parchment on which the beginning of the Shema-prayer (Jewish Credo) is written. It is rolled up tightly and placed inside a small oblong case with a little opening through which the word „Shaddai" (Hebrew: Almighty) is to be seen. The case is affixed to the right doorpost of a space designated for a Jewish purpose as well as of a Jewish home. Mezuzah cases can be made of any material. Most Eastern European cases are made of carved

Figure 57: Wooden Mezuzah
Galicia, first half 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=1538
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 58: Mezuzot
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

Figure 59: Moroccon mezuzah pouch
Morocco, second half 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=18060
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

wood (figure 57) or simple sheet metal (figure 58). Few old silver ones exist from East, West, and Central Europe. But also in the latter region simpler materials were chose
n such as tin and sheet iron. A specific object was developed in North Africa, namely in Morocco: Here flat embroidered pouches are used to fix the Mezuzah at the doorpost (figure 59), sometimes a decorated silver cover is used for the same purpose. These pouches and covers are much bigger than the Mezuzah cases.

The European Shabbat lamps (so-called Judenstern) developed from a hanging bowl with originally four, later six, sometimes eight, radiating nozzles. Below the star shape a pan hangs to catch oil drips. The lamp is suspended from a rod, which is in Germany saw-shaped to raise and lower it according to its use (figure 60). Most of them are made of brass or bronze. Decorated silver Shabbat lamps with a baluster stem were produced in Frankfurt/Main. Italian, Dutch and British silver Shabbat lamps are not ornamented, do not feature a stem, and are suspended from chains.

Figure 60: Hanging Shabbat lamp
Germany, 18th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=23447
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Kiddush (קידוש - Hebrew: sanctification) is the blessing over a cup of wine preceding the meal of every holiday including the Shabbat. Any glass, beaker, cup, or goblet may serve for Kiddush, but traditionally silver cups are used as Kiddush cups. They do not necessarily have to have been made as Judaica objects per se; they may possibly have been put to use at a later date as Kiddush cups and an inscription added at that time. Most of them feature the Hebrew inscription „Remember the Shabbath day, to keep it holy", if added later. It often is the only indicator that the piece was used in a Jewish ritual context.

Figure 61: Kiddush cup (wedding present)
Tüchersfeld, Fränkische Schweiz Museum, Inv. Nr. E 1708

Figure 62: Shemira Cup;
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum, Vienna;
Inv. No. 7760

Figure 63: Double cup
Nürnberg 1769-73, silver gilt, 12 x 6,6 cm
Courtesy of the Ariel Muzicant Collection, Vienna, inv.no. 869

As Kiddush cups were (and still are) popular wedding presents, they may have an additional commemorative inscription (figure 61).

Shmira (שמירה - Hebrew: protection) cups stem from the Hasidic world. They are made of a coin blessed by a Tsaddik, a leader of the Hasidic world. The inscription tells this. Especially in the Eastern European centers of Hasidism the bowl of these beakers were shaped in the form of three quarters of an egg, a Talmudic measurement (figure 62).

Double cups, two identical bowls joined at the rim, may be used for ceremonies during which two people drink from the same vessel. This is the case during wedding and circumcision ceremonies (figure 63). Identifying them as Jewish ritual objects demands a Hebrew inscription or abbreviation, otherwise they are friendship cups.

Hevrah Kaddisha (חֶבְרָה קַדִישָׁא - Hebrew: Holy society) cups are specific for burial societies. They may come as goblets or tankards and can be of rather representational appearance as they serve annually for a society's banquet commemorating the death of Moses. They show inscriptions telling to which burial society they belonged, often by whom they were dedicated, sometimes even the names of the members (figure 64). In general, they are made of silver, though from Bohemia, Moravia, and Hungary ceramic and glass objects are known.

Figure 64: Hevrah kaddishah cup
Frankfurt/Main, 18th century
Private collection, Munich

Figure 65: Hallah plate
Frankfurt am Main/Berlin (?), c. 1900
Courtesy of the Ariel Muzicant Collection, Vienna

A Challah (חלה) is a plaited loaf, two of which are blessed before the Shabbat and/or festival meal. In modern times, specific plates were produced for them. They may feature a pair of plaited loaves and bear an inscription alluding to the ceremony (figure 65).

Figure 66: Hallah cover
Courtesy of the Gross Family Collection, Tel Aviv, inv. no. 004.027.001

A Challah textile is used to cover the two plaited loaves before the blessing. It also often features the pair of loaves and bears the respective inscription or a Kiddush cup and the text for the wine blessing (figure 66).

Special knives to cut the Challah are known from Central Europe. They bear the inscription „Holy Shabbat" or "for Shabbat" (figure 67).

Figure 67: Shabbat and Holiday pocket knife
Poland, first quarter of 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=170037
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Besamim (בְּשָׂמִים - Hebrew: spices) boxes are used for the Havdalah (Hebrew: distinction) ceremony which separates the ending holiday including Shabbat from the newly beginning secular period. It includes the sniffing of and blessing over spices. In many Sephardi and Oriental communities, branches of aromatic plants are used. In Ashkenazi communities, predominantly cloves are used for

this purpose, in Italy also mace. They are kept in special spice boxes. The simplest form, a small rectangular box with a sliding lid made of silver or pewter (figure 68), has its origin in Frankfurt/Main. The most popular form, developed in Germany, is a turret with a door-like opening to insert the spices. Filigree spice towers come from Eastern Europe, especially from Galicia (figure 69), but also from central Europe, Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, and Austria. Bells often are added to Polish spice towers which frequently are a combination of filigree, if of rather thick wire, and sheet metal. Solid metal Polish spice towers may be waisted and come with bells (figure 70). Filigree spice urn-shaped boxes have been produced in Russia, in Hungary and in Italy. Romaniote spice containers are mainly plain cylindrical boxes which are pierced and have a lid. Objects produced as sugar casters may have been used as spice containers all over Europe as well as egg- or pear-shaped perfume containers. Without specific abbreviations or symbols, they cannot be identified for sure as Judaica objects

Figure 68: Spice box
Pewter, Germany, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=7263
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 69: Filigree spice tower
Galicia, c. 1780
Courtesy of the Gross family Collection, Tel Aviv, inv.no. 015.001.001

A spice box combined with a Havdalah candle holder, thus forming a Havdalah compendium, has been produced mainly in Germany in the 18th and 19th century. It consists of a flat drawer-spicebox

Figure 70: Polish spice tower
Warsaw, last quarter of 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=2263
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 71: Havdalah compendium
Frankfurt/Main, Germany, c. 1775
Courtesy of the Gross family Collection, Tel Aviv, inv. no. 015.001.053A

which is topped by a simple movable candle socket set into four bars (figure 71). Sometimes a small figure lifting a cup and designating the final blessing over wine at the end of Shabbat serves as a stem between the spice box and the candle holder.

As the most important family-based festivity of the religious year, a variety of ritual objects have been developed for Pesach. The celebrations in private homes are called the seder evenings. Seder (סֵדֶר - Hebrew: order, sequence) refers to the fixed order in which the ritual evening is held and is written in the Pesach Haggadah (הַגָּדָה - Hebrew: narration). During the ceremonial meal, the head of the table has a plate before him surrounded by five symbolic dishes. The plate is for the three Matzot (מצה - Hebrew: unleavened bread) being a reminder of how hurriedly the Exodus from Egypt took place, not allowing enough time for the dough to rise before being baked. The material of the seder plate is often pewter, but wooden and ceramic plates also exist. They are large and often feature complex ornamentations derived from scenes of the illustrated Haggadah. Thus one may find an illustration of the questioning four sons (figure 72) or the festival meal from the Pesach Haggadah. A naturalistically depicted matza can be found too or a lamb marked with the title of the song "A little lamb" sung at Pesach. Often quotations from the Haggadah are found on seder plates, i.e.: "And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders", or "This is the bread of poverty". They were produced in Germany, Austria, Hungary, the Netherlands, Bohemia, Moravia and in Switzerland. Be aware that the date of the production of a pewter plate and the date of its engraving may not be identical; often illustrations or quotations were added at a much later time.

Figure 72: Seder plate
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

Figure 73: Matzah cover
Romania, c. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=17586
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Matzot are covered by a matzah cloth or put into a three-tiered matza bag, usually embroidered and featuring a Paschal symbol like the lamb or an inscription hinting to the Paschal liturgy. Often three flaps are to be seen bearing the names of the three Matzot: „Cohen", „Levi" and „Israel" (figure 73).

Figure 74: Center piece for Pesach
Hungary, c. 1940
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=7074
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A table centerpiece, a three-tiered rack, is frequently used instead of a seder plate or platter (figure 74). Inside, there are three tiers for the three matzot, with bowls for the other symbolic dishes on top. They may have doors or a movable textile on rings to close away the Matzot when the ceremony requires doing so. They may be made of pewter, silver or of

Figure 75: Pesach cup
Galicia, 1880
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

olivewood. The last ones stem from the Holy Land. The silver ones may feature figurines at the top, dressed in traditional Ashkenazi costumes. These originate mainly in Germany.

Pesach cups may be any cups, but the festival's relevance caused the production of specific cups for the Seder in some regions. In Europe silver cups may come with illustrations taken from the Haggadah, i.e. the Exodus from Egypt (figure 75) and/or with a festival-related inscription.

The Cup of Elijah is in general bigger in size than other cups (figure 76). The prophet who will announce the coming of the Messiah is expected during the Seder night, and a special cup is poured for him. The custom is an Ashkenazi
one. Elijah cups made from silver or glass may be engraved with a scene from the life of the

Figure 76: Elijah's cup
Bremen, Germany, after 1888;
photo: Martin Adam
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum
Berlin, inv.-no. 2005/178/0

Figure 77: Seder towel
Germany, Nürnberg (?), c. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=7345
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 78: Etrog container

prophet, a family celebrating the Seder or an inscription relating to Elijah. Especially the glass cups were modified to serve as Elijah cups at a much later date than they were produced.

Cushion covers for the Passover ceremony may have a festival-related decoration but in general do not have inscriptions.

Ceremonial Seder towels are known from German-speaking countries (figure 77). They often feature the order of the Seder evening or the abbreviations for it, Pesach-related symbols, and sometimes the family name and a date.

Etrog boxes keep the citron fruit during the Sukkoth festival, the Feast of Tabernacles, because its blossom appendage and its skin have to be intact until it is used in the ceremony.

Figure 79: Hanukkah candelabra
Croatia, first quarter of 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=4548
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

In Eastern and Western Europe, often sugar boxes were used as Etrog boxes and were labeled with a corresponding inscription. The genuine Ashkenazi silver Etrog box, though, is an oval container set on a stem which is formed as a branch and rests on a leaf, or the branch is leafy (figure 78). Near Eastern Etrog boxes are typical inlaid containers distinguished from domestic objects only by an inscription. Palestinian Etrog boxes became popular around 1900. They are mainly made of olive wood and painted with clear references to the festival, but carved stone examples also exist.

The eight-armed Hanukkah (חֲנֻכָּה - Hebrew: dedication, rededication [of the Temple]) lamps are used during the Hanukkah festival. During this eight-day period, one additional candle is lighted every evening from the first day to the last. The ninth light, the so-called shamash (שמש - Hebrew: servant), is used solely to light the other candles. They are divided into two principal types: a freestanding candelabra (figure 79) and a bench type (figure 80). Freestanding candelabras in general come with candle holders, whereas bench types mostly feature oilpans or oil jugs. The freestanding candelabra has the servant light in front of the central stem. The bench type has a slot near the top of the backplate to take in the pan of the servant light. Candelabras as well as bench types may come decorated with figurines of the Maccabean fighters and/or with Judith with the decapitated head of Holofernes. The backplates of the benchtype Hanukkah lamps are often decorated: with a jug from which oil is poured, with a seven-armed Menorah which is sometimes lighted by a man, with the lions of Judah, a burning heart, a flourishing tree, Moses and Aaron, fruit baskets, palm trees, an inscription quoting a Hanukkah song or the Hanukkah blessing. In some cases, these quotations are written on paper and set behind glass in the center of the backplate. Often the backplates are topped with an imperial crown.

Figure 80 Bench type Hanukkah lamp
Poland, c. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=9934
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 81: Pewter Hanukka lamp
Germany, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=18071
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Hanukkah lamps may come in a variety of materials: Early Italian and French pieces are of bronze, later ones of silver, Austrian ones are usually made of silver, German ones of pewter (figure 81), or silver, Dutch ones are commonly of hammered sheet brass, whereas Eastern European ones are of cast brass or silver filigree. A specific filigree lamp was designed in Galicia, known as the Baal Shem Tov type which is exceedingly decorated with flowers, lions, griffins,

Figure 82: Baal Shem Tov Hanukkah lamp
Eastern Europe, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=731
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

columns and a small door (often to be opened) representing the Torah ark (figure 82). In the Near East, glass containers for oil are set into brass rings –often in a semicircle – and the backplate features a hamsa and/or crescents, though in Morocco Hanukkah lamps of brass often feature Mihrab openings in their backplates. Some North-, West- and Central European bench type Hanukkah lamps borrowed their form from tableclocks.

Figure 83: Esther scroll case
Europe, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=109192
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Esther scroll cases are of cylindrical shape. The Book of Esther is read on the annual festival of Purim. It is traditionally in the form of a megillah (מגלה), i. e. as a scroll, mounted on a roller and often encased in a silver or ivory shell. A handle at the bottom of the case allows the scroll to be rolled back into the case after reading (figure 83). Austro-Hungarian Esther scroll cases are commonly decorated with clovers, palmettes or marguerites and topped by a crown and a final flower bouquet - influenced by Turkish and Greek Esther scroll endings (figure 84). Eastern European Esther scroll cases feature rich floral and animal decoration and are often topped by a bird. British pieces are commonly of elegantly plain silver, whereas Italian cases are often made in cut-out work or in filigree, as are Turkish cases. Ornately fashioned and crafted filigree cases for Esther scrolls may stem from Greek Ioannina.

Figure 84: Austrian Esther scroll case
Vienna, 1856
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=18039
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 85: Purim plate
Germany, pewter, ca. 1800
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=892
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 86: Purim grager

Purim plates to serve special cookies are mainly known from German-speaking countries. They are mostly made of pewter and may feature the wicked Haman leading Mordechai on a horse (figure 85) and/or fish, because Purim is celebrated in the month of Adar, the zodiac sign of which is pisces.

The Gragger is a rattle used for making noise each time the wicked Haman's name is mentioned during reading the Esther story. They are in general of very simple material like tin or wood and are not decorated (figure 86). Today they are mainly made from plastic.

The Chevra Kaddisha (חֶבְרָה קַדִישָׁא - Hebr.: Holy Brotherhood), the burial society, existed and exists in every Jewish community. For its yearly held festive banquet, special beakers or goblets are known from the Ashkenazi and the Sephardi world. They may remind one of goblets from guilds, though less pompous, although made of silver. In general, they give the name of the community, often also the names of its members (see above).

From the Czech lands Chevra-Kaddisha jugs made from ceramic are also known.

Figure 87: Hevrah Kaddishah comb
Austria-Hungary
Courtesy of the Jewish Museum in Prague

A few silver combs, also a few sets of combs and cleaning tools for the cleansing of the deceased exist from some Central European Jewish communities in the 19th century, giving the community's name (figure 87).

The deathday of a beloved person is commemorated during the Yahrzeit. The Yahrzeit candle burns for 24 hours. Specific Yahrzeit candle holders may be found. Typical are in any case Yahrzeit-plaques giving the Hebrew date of the death (figure 88). Since modern times, panels are created calculating the civil date in accordance with the Hebrew one.[384]

Figure 88: Yahrzeit plaque
Croatia, ca. 1930
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=148139
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Talismans for adults and amulets to safeguard newborns against demons, especially against Lilith, Kimpetzetl in Yiddish, Kamea in Hebrew, Shaddai in Italy, Shadaia in Greece (figure 89)

Figure 89 Greek amulet against Lilith
Ioannina, Greece, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=5823
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 90: Childbed amulet
Nitra, Slovakia, 1832
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=2393
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 91: Italian amulet container
Italy, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=5210
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

[384] http://www.ojm.at/artikel/jahrzeit/

exist in a variety of forms through ages and regions. They may be from precious or less precious metal or from paper which is put in cases/capsules that may be decorated or in simple textile sachets worn around the neck. Amulets to safeguard mother and child may have been framed and hung in the rooms of women in childbirth (figure 90). They may feature simple, short or longer inscriptions, but also signs, symbols, or graphic drawings. Elaborate silver and gold cases in cartouche forms to keep amulets were popular in Italy. They often have typical symbols like the Menorah or other Temple motifs attached (figure 91). Near Eastern amulets are often silver pendants giving repetitive names of guarding angels, whereas German talismans are often made of a simple base metal and feature only the Hebrew letter „Heh“ (ה).

Figure 92: Tefillin
Poland, first quarter of 20th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=alone&id=169624
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Tefillin (תפלין), phylacteries, are small black leather cases containing a Hebrew text and are tied to the arm and head of the person praying (figure 92). There are some representative silver containers for the cases stemming from Eastern Europe from around 1800 onwards (figure 93). The phylacteries are kept in Tefillin bags often bearing the owner's initials (figure 94), sometimes flowry embroidering and/or a Magen David. But the majority are very simple and impossible to trace back.

Figure 93: Pair of Tefillin cases
Poland, first half of 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=248
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Figure 94: Tefillin bag
Serbia, ca. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=4639
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Tallit (טלית), a prayer shawl, is a rectangular, mostly white cloth (figure 95). In Askenazi communities it is mainly made from wool and features black stripes, wheras in Sephardi and Mediterranean communities it comes regularly in silk and features blue stripes; colored threads are woven into the woolen prayer shawls from Yemen. A Tallit's corners hold the Tsitsit, knotted fringes. Sephardi prayer shawls may feature reinforcements at the four corners often decorated with the family's coat of arms (see above), Italian ones with emproideries. The collar, called Atarah, may come in

Figure 95: Tallit
Poland, ca. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=17971
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University

Figure 96: Tallit bag
Europe 1904
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=4660
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

shpanyer work (see above) in Ashkenazi examples, especially in Eastern Europe, or it may come as a brocade trimming.

Figure 97: Shpanyer work Kippah
Galicia, ca. 1900
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=17973
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Tallit bags to keep the prayer shawl are mainly made from velvet or silk, sometimes beautifully embroidered and giving the owner's initials (figure 96). It is not very likely that their provenance can be traced.

The traditional male headcovering, the Kippah (כִּיפָּה - Hebrew: skullcap) (Russian/Polish: Yarmulke), is usually a very simple and small one. For holidays more decorated ones may be used. Festive skull-caps from Eastern Europe (figure 97) are often made from shpanyer work (see above).[385]

Some silver or gilt Sivlonot belts or Gürtels are known from Germany from the 17th and 18th century (figure 98). They were worn by both the bride and the groom, who were interlinked by them during the wedding ceremony. If they do not bear a Hebrew inscription, it is impossible to identify them as objects of Jewish ritual usage.

Figure 98: Wedding belt
Germany, first half oft he 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=18123
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Brustekh, Brusttukh or Brustikhl is a distinctive piece of Eastern European women's clothing related to a kind of bodice (figure 99). The bandshaped Brustikhl covered the fastening of the festive bodice and became popular in 17th century Poland where it was called *załóżka*. It may come richly embroidered using the shpanyer arbet (see above) technique, but simpler ones are also known.[386]

Figure 99: Brusttukh
Galicia, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=18365
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Shterntikhl is another specifically Eastern European part of Jewish women's dresses. In Lithuania known as Binda, the Shterntikhl is a fancy headgear worn on special occasions only. It is composed of an upper and a lower part, the latter encircling the face and decorated with embroideries or even pearls (figure 100). As they also covered the ears, they may come with attached earrings.[387]

Figure 100: Shterntikhl
Poland, 19th century
http://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?mode=set&id=18572
Courtesy of the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

[385] Alfred Rubens, *A History of Jewish Costume*, London 1981.
[386] Giza Frankel, "Notes on the Costume of the Jewish Woman in Eastern Europe," *Journal of Jewish Art* 7 (1980), pp. 50–58; Tamar Somogyi, *Die Schejnen und die Prosten: Untersuchungen zum Schönheitsideal der Ostjuden in Bezug auf Körper und Kleidung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Chassidismus*, Berlin, 1982.
[387] See above.