

Contents

Note on Transliteration **x**

Introduction 1

PART I

HISTORY AND CULTURE, FUNCTION AND DESIGN

- 1. The Emergence of the Torah Ark from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century 5
- 2. Historical and Cultural Background 21 The Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth 21 The Rise of Hasidism and the Influence of Kabbalah 26

3. Construction and Design $_{31}$

Crafts, Artisans, and Workshops 31 The Lithuanian Workshop of Jacob ben Solomon of Raseinai 39 The Workshop of the Vase in a Niche 41 The Rococo-Style Workshop 41 The Belarusian Workshop 43 The Ukrainian Workshop 43

Constructing the Ark 46 Building 46 Materials and Techniques 49 Style and Design 51

PART II Form and content

INTRODUCTION: The Architectural Structure of the Torah Ark 73

4. The Kingdom of God in the Little Sanctuary 77

The Throne of Glory 77

The Eagle as a Metaphor for God 97

The Three Crowns 104

Praise of God 112 Perek shirah 112

- Music in the Temple 129
- 5. The Temple 140

The Gateway to Heaven 140 The Passageway 143 The Inscription *Avinu Malkenu* 147 Yakhin and Boaz 151

The Ark of the Covenant and the Temple Appurtenances **158**

The *Kaporet* and the Cherubim **164** The Tree of Life: Symbol of the Torah **172**

The Seven-Branched Menorah 178 Introduction 178 The Menorah and the Showbread Table 182 The Menorah as a Solitary Motif 186 The Menorah in Zechariah's Vision 188 The Menorah as a Mystical Symbol 191

- The Temple Rituals: *Avodat Hakodesh* 195 The Sacrificial Offerings 195 The Priestly Blessing 199 Offering of the First Fruits 202
- 6. Messianic Expectations 205 Personal Redemption: The Leviathan and the Ox 205

National Redemption 214 Aaron's Rod, the Manna Jar, and the Jug of Anointing Oil 214 The Four Species and the Shofar 221

PART III Appendices

- I. Fourteen Torah Arks: Comprehensive Description, Technical Data, and Supporting Documentation 231
 - Introduction 231
 - 1. Kamyanka-Buzka, Western Ukraine, *c*.1775 **232**
 - 2. Vyžuonos, Central Lithuania, 1784 234
 - 3. Zabłudów, North-East Poland, 1765 236
 - 4. Druya, Northern Belarus, 1774/5 238
 - 5. Zelva, Western Belarus, 1849/50 241
 - 6. Lukiv, Western Ukraine, c.1781 245
 - 7. Hrodna, Western Belarus, Late Eighteenth Century 248
 - 8. Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą, East-Central Poland, after 1800 251
 - 9. Šaukėnai, Central Lithuania, 1885/6 253
 - 10. Przedbórz, Central Poland, c.1775 256
 - 11. Valkininkai, South-East Lithuania, 1804 258
 - 12. Kępno, West-Central Poland, 1816/17 262
 - 13. Vowpa, Western Belarus, 1781 265
 - Unidentified Ark, Ukraine, Nineteenth Century 268
- **II.** Biblical Quotations and Liturgical Phrases Adorning the Arks 271
- III. Carpenters and Woodcarvers of Arks 274
- IV. Alphabetical List of the Arks Comprising the Visual Database for This Study 278

List of Illustrations 289 List of Institutions 294 Bibliography 295 Index 313