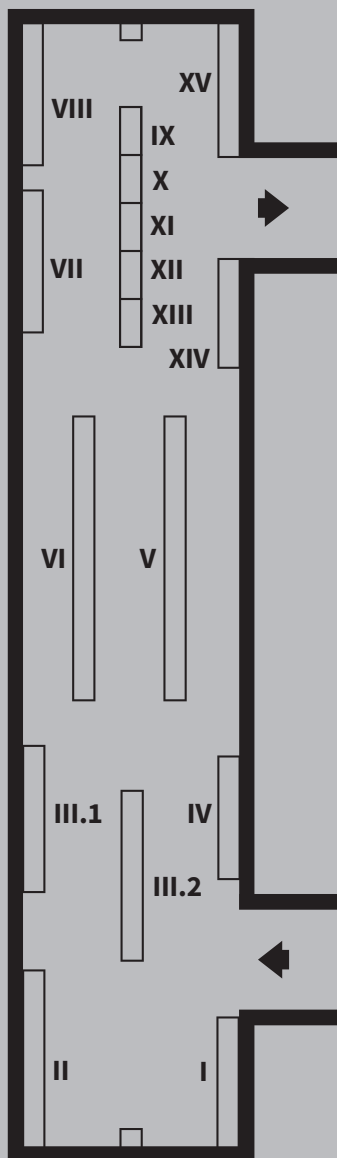



EN

STAN RZE CZY

**A STATE
OF THINGS**





 audio guides

 video guide

Available on
mnw.art.pl/multimedia

STAN RZE CZY

A STATE
OF THINGS

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The things presented at the exhibition represent different eras, cultures and parts of the world. They come from the homes of the high and mighty, seeing as only such objects used to be collected by art museums. These were everyday items, and their arrangement corresponds to the rhythm of day and night. Our basic needs have not changed much since the birth of civilization. We wake up, get out of bed, satisfy our physiological needs, get washed and dressed, work, play and communicate. Therefore, we need sanitary items, clothes, work equipment, games, tableware, lighting and communication tools. And while we no longer use typewriters, pushed out by the keyboards of portable computers and smartphones, this does not mean people have lost the need to gather and exchange information. We have scoured museum storerooms for objects with mysterious names whose purpose is no longer clear today. Zogra-scopes, liseuses, chambersticks, trembleuses and spittoons have all disappeared from our lives, their names falling into oblivion. And yet their place has been taken by new things, named differently but serving the same purpose (e.g. the zograscope turned into a 3D screen, and the trembleuse into a mug with a comfortable handle).

The exhibition also offers a narrative about the National Museum itself. The title signals several subjects of interest. First of all, the holdings – the contents of museum storerooms and galleries, accumulated over the 160 years of the National Museum's existence. Secondly, the condition of individual items. Thirdly, our memory and knowledge of objects from the past, the story of their former and current status.

I Morning routine

1. Washstand (athénienne)

furniture: unknown (Berlin?) manufacturer, ca. 1800–25;
porcelain: Berlin, Royal Porcelain Manufactory (KPM),
ca. 1803–13

tripod: iron, brass, gilt bronze, wood veneered with
mahogany; porcelain, overglaze enamels, gold decorations
(shiny and convex)

Museum in Nieborów and Arkadia, division of the NMW,
inv. no. NB 320/a–c MNW

2. Hand mirror



Egypt, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty (ca. 1550–1295 BC)
copper

on loan from the Louvre Museum, Department of Egyptian
Antiquities, inv. nos. N 2149 B; 143294 MNW

3. Cosmetic container for ointments and paints

Egypt, Edfu, Middle Kingdom
12th–13th Dynasty (ca. 1985–1650 BC)
serpentinite

on loan from the University of Warsaw Museum,
inv. no. 139360/a–b MNW

4. Kohl pot (eye-paint container)

Egypt, Edfu, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty (ca. 1550–1295 BC)
Egyptian alabaster

on loan from the University of Warsaw Museum,
inv. no. 139336 MNW

5. Cosmetic spoon

Egypt, New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1069 BC)
ivory

on loan from the Louvre Museum, Department of Egyptian
Antiquities, inv. nos. E 310; N 1787 C; 143293 MNW

6. Palette for grinding pigments

Egypt, Edfu, Middle Kingdom (ca. 2055–1650 BC)
serpentinite

on loan from the University of Warsaw Museum,
inv. no. 139273 MNW

Grinder

Egypt, Tell Atrib, Middle Kingdom (ca. 2055–1650 BC)
granite

NMW, inv. no. 235293 MNW

7. Alabastron

Egyptian workshop, 4th–3rd c. BC
glass
NMW, inv. no. 142595 MNW

8. Double cosmetic tube

Eastern Mediterranean workshop, 3rd c.
glass
NMW, inv. no. 236018 MNW

9. Flask

Eastern Mediterranean workshop, 1st–2nd c.
glass
NMW, inv. no. 142499 MNW

10. Men's travel case

Paris, Pierre-Noël Blaquièrre, T. M. Demachy,
Badin (knife maker), Crenet fils et al., 1809–1819
mahogany, brass, leather, silver, steel, glass, mother-of-pearl,
bone, tortoiseshell
NMW, inv. no. SZM 1683/1–49 MNW

This lavishly equipped travel case contains several elaborately crafted objects. These include toiletries that any elegant man would need on the road: a rectangular bowl, a mirror, a toothbrush box, as well as flasks and containers for cosmetics. There is also a razor, manicure utensils, buckles to facilitate putting on calf-length boots, a universal watch key and a corkscrew. After lowering the double bottom of the top lid, the travel case could serve as a portable writing desk.

11. Toilet

Nubia, 11th–14th c.
clay
NMW, inv. no. 238113 MNW

12. Bidet

England, 18th/19th c.
mahogany, silver-plated metal, bronze mounts
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 842 MNW

13. Boot jack

Germany (?), mid- or late 19th c.
cast iron
NMW, inv. no. SZM 5607 MNW

II House clothes

1. Combinations (women's full-body underwear; reform underwear)



England, ca. 1900
cotton, cotton lace and silk ribbon,
hand and machine sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 3167 MNW

2. Men's garment (frock coat?)

Poland, the 1840s
silk *cannelé* (cross ribs) fabric, hand painted with gouache
and ink; tailcoat lining: blue and cream taffeta; faux waistcoat
lining: cotton (?), hand sewn
The National Museum in Krakow, inv. no. MNK XIX-2761

3. Men's house cap

Poland, 1st half of the 19th c.
velvet, silk, metal thread, parchment, embroidered
and hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 1168 MNW

4. Women's nightcap

Poland, 1st half of the 20th c.
silk, cotton, linen, needle and bobbin lace, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 3235 MNW

5. Liseuse (women's bed jacket)

England, early 20th c.
silk satin embroidered with silk, hand and machine sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 3193 MNW

6. Chest

Venice, 16th c.
walnut inlaid with bone, boxwood, rosewood,
black oak and mahogany, steel mounts
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 1271 MNW

Until the 16th century (and even until the 20th century in rural areas), chests were used in European interiors to store clothes and other objects, as well as to sit and sleep on. Of the various types of elaborately decorated chests, the most important were marriage chests, called *cassoni* in Italy, which held the bride's dowry (usually clothes and fabrics). This Venetian chest is decorated with patterns created from

densely arranged cubes of light and dark wood and bone. In the centre of the lid is a chessboard which could be used by two players sitting on the chest opposite each other.

III.1 Working from home

1. Work table

Vienna, ca. 1820
pinewood and sycamore, mahogany veneer, marquetry of coloured pear wood and boxwood, finished with French polish, painted with ink; carved and painted birch wood (?), bone, steel and brass mounts, linen
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2352 MNW

2. *Dwór wiejski. Dzieło poświęcone gospodyniom polskim przydatne i osobom w mieście mieszkającym, przez Karolinę z Potockich Nakwaską. Wydanie drugie poprawne i wielu dodatkami powiększone, vol. 1–3*



Michelsen, Leipzig, published under the imprint and supervision of the author, 1857–60 (Geneva, Imp. Pfeffer & Puky)
University of Warsaw Library, Department of 19th-century Publications, ref. nos. 5.8.7.18. [1], 5.8.7.18. [2], 5.8.7.18. [3]

3. Needle-case

Germany (?), 2nd half of the 19th c.
silver, wrought and stamped
NMW, inv. no. SZM 4426 MNW

4. Case

Russia, Tula, 1st half of the 19th c.
encrusted steel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 6146 MNW

5. Embroidery kit

Poland, Germany (?), 19th c.
polished steel, ivory, leather, velvet
NMW, inv. no. 184146/1–9 MNW

6. Women's case

France (?), ca. 1800–25
gold, steel, ivory, glass
NMW, inv. no. SZM 3938/1–14 MNW

7. Yarn box

Vienna, Peter Schima, probably 1847
silver, wrought, stamped and engraved
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2906 MNW

8. Embroidery sampler

Silesia, 17th c.
linen embroidered with silk, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 1764 MNW

9. Boots for the poor

Julianna Wanda Caboga, née Potocka, ca. 1850–75
wool and cotton mix fabric, linen, leather, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 3368 MNW

10. Helena Radziwiłł's *Memory Book*

1799–1831
manuscript, saffian, laid paper, ink
Museum in Nieborów and Arkadia, division of the NMW,
inv. no. NB Bibl.5547 MNW

11. Spinning wheel

Europe, 18th c.
turned walnut, steel, leather, linen
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2117 MNW

III.2 Working from home

1. Banyan (men's leisure garment)

Poland, late 18th c.
silk satin, fustian and linen, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 2776 MNW

Informal garments have enjoyed great popularity since the late 17th century. Also called dressing gowns or *robes de chambre* (literally 'room gown' in French), banyans were long, open at the front, and had a simple cut. Typically worn over a shirt, waistcoat and breeches, banyans were made in printed Indian fabrics or patterned European silks and lined with fur in countries with a cooler climate. This double-breasted banyan with a discreet, elegant striped pattern was inspired by English fashion, which dominated in the late 18th century.

2. *Spis abonentów sieci telefonicznej m.st. Warszawy P.A.S.T. i warszawskiej sieci okręgu P.P.T.T. 1939/40*

Published by the Polish Telephone Joint-Stock Company,
[Warsaw, 1939]
collection of Ireneusz and Piotr M. Zalewski

3. Hammond no. 12 typewriter

New York, Hammond Typewriter Company, ca. 1905
metal, wood
The National Museum of Technology in Warsaw, inv. no. MT-III-372

4. Writing tablet

Egypt, 5th c.
wood
on loan from the University of Warsaw Museum,
inv. no. 141421 MNW



5. Inkwell

Nubia, 15th–16th c.
clay
NMW, inv. no. 234768 MNW

6. Pen case

Egypt, 6th–7th c.
wood
on loan from the University of Warsaw Museum,
inv. no. 141422 MNW

7. Two sticks of sealing wax

Poland, 20th c.
NMW

8. Seal matrix

Brussels, Wolfers Frères, after 1892
silver, wrought and stamped
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2255 MNW

9. Signet ring with the Pilawa coat of arms

Poland, 18th c.
gilt steel
NMW, inv. no. 157574 MNW

10. Monocle in a leather case

Poland (?), 1800–30
optical glass, brass
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11434/1–2 MNW

**11. ‘Fits-U’ pince-nez
with a suspension chain**

Poland (?), early 20th c.
optical glass, gilt metal
private collection

12. Horizontal pocket sundial

Augsburg, mid-18th c.
gilt brass, steel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 266 MNW

13. Architect’s table

Germany, early 19th c.
cherry and oak veneered with mahogany;
brass and steel, leather
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2150 MNW

14. Paper knife

model: Edward Wittig (1879–1941);
cast (1903): Stanisław Różański
gilt bronze
NMW, inv. no. 1049 MNW

15. Dry seal stamp

Germany, 19th c.
cast bronze, steel, blackened wood
NMW, inv. no. SZM 540 MNW

16. Knife

Nubia, 15th–17th c.
wood
NMW, inv. no. 235132 MNW

17. Pen (calamus)

Nubia, 13th–17th c.
reed
NMW, inv. no. 235131 MNW

18. CB telephone

Tele- and Radiotechnical Works in Warsaw
1936
metal, Bakelite
collection of Ireneusz and Piotr M. Zalewski



19. Cabinet

South Germany (?), mid-17th c.
walnut and spruce, carved and ebonized pear wood,
scagliola, metal and brass mounts, mirror pane
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2312 MNW

Cabinets were invented in the Middle East. The rise of collecting in Europe led to the development of various types of cabinets in the 17th century. Their numerous drawers held documents and valuable objects, and the cabinets themselves were often outstanding works of art.

This small table cabinet with double doors is veneered with ebonized pear wood. It is decorated in *scagliola*, a technique in which pigmented plaster is made to imitate coloured marble inlay work.

IV Learning and play

1. Children's dress

Silesia, 18th/19th c.
silk satin, linen, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 2526 MNW

2. Doll porcelain set

(tray, pot, sugar bowl, milk jug, cup and saucer)
Meissen, Royal Porcelain Manufactory, Berlin, Royal Porcelain Manufactory (KPM), Dresden, Helena Wolfsohn's porcelain decorating studio and company, 2nd half of the 19th c.
porcelain, overglaze enamels, gilt
NMW, inv. no. SZC 423/1-6 MNW

3. Miniature dollhouse furniture

Sofa

Hanau (?), late 19th c.
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2543 MNW

Linen press

The Netherlands (?), 17th c.
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2540 MNW

Candelabrum

The Netherlands or Germany (?), 18th or 19th c.
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2561 MNW

In the old days, a dollhouse was not a children's toy. The earliest examples, dating back to the 16th century, were replicas of existing palaces and offered a taste of life at court. In the 1600s, when dollhouses began to be ordered by the bourgeoisie, they were modelled on opulent urban residences. A hobby for wealthy women, they were most popular in Protestant countries.

Dollhouse furnishings were made in the workshops of eminent craftsmen, who faithfully copied household items and materials in miniature. Toy dollhouses for girls did not appear until the late 18th century.


4. Stefano della Bella (1610–64)
Prints from the *Jeu de la Géographie* series, 1644

etching on paper

NMW, inv. nos. Gr.Ob.W.174281–282 MNW,

Gr.Ob.W.174288–289 MNW, Gr.Ob.W.174296–297 MNW,

Gr.Ob.W.174306–308 MNW

5. Jakub Labinger (active 1726–60) 
***Szachownica dla łatwiejszego pojęcia nauki heraldycznej w grę zabawną obroconą, z dzieła Józefa Aleksandra Jabłonowskiego Heraldica, to iest osada klejnotow rycerskich y wiadomosc znakow herbownych dotąd w Polsce nie objaśniona...*, Lviv, 1742–52**

engraving on laid paper

NMW, inv. no. Gr.Pol.20703 MNW

This game board was devised for Aleksander and Michał, the sons of Artillery General of Lithuania Kazimierz Leon Sapieha. The boys were made starosts at an early age and the game was meant to help them prepare for their public function – teaching them about heraldry and old offices. Its creator took inspiration from a French heraldic board game from 1662, *Le jeu du Blason*, but adapted it to Polish circumstances. It was a variation on the Game of the Goose, an ancient game popularized in the late 1500s and still played today. The winner must reach the centre of the board before the others, moving his pieces according to a roll of the dice.

6. Abacus

Saint Petersburg, manufactured by the Grachev Brothers (active 1866–1918), 1893–94
silver, cast and engraved; bone
NMW, inv. no. SZM 4635 MNW

7. Measuring instruments

Antoni Magier (1762–1837), Warsaw, 1792
brass, cast and engraved; steel, wood
NMW, inv. nos. SZM 10737/1–2 MNW, SZM 1755 MNW,
SZM 1756 MNW

8. Child's armchair

North Germany (?), Gdańsk (?), ca. 1775–1800,
upholstery: Berlin, ca. 1870
oak and birch wood, woollen cross-stitch embroidery
on cotton canvas
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 720 MNW

V Going out in style

1. Crinoline

England or the United States, the 1860s
steel, brass, cotton, linen, hand sewn
Adam Leja's collection

2. Bustle

Europe, the 1870s–1880s
silk satin, linen, hand and machine sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 2614 MNW

The crinoline appeared along with the fashion for wide dress skirts, whose growing circumference required adequate support. Initially, crinoline referred to the horsehair petticoats worn in the 1840s, its name deriving from the French word *crin* ('horsehair'). In the mid-19th century, the term crinoline evolved to mean a light frame of steel hoops, which expanded skirts to previously unknown dimensions. With time, the crinoline became narrower and flattened in the front, around 1868 giving way to the bustle – a semi-circular cage or horsehair-filled cushion that accentuated the back of the dress.

3. Jewellery stand

Russia, Tula, early 19th c.
steel, cut, filed, welded, polished and coppered
NMW, inv. no. SZM 1739 MNW

4. Hat pin

France (?), the 1880s–1890s
gilt metal, beads
NMW, inv. no. SZM 6024 MNW

5. Hat pin stand

Warsaw, Karol Filip Malcz, the 1850s
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2436 MNW

6. Parure (jewellery set)

(comb, pair of bracelets, brooch-pendant, pair of earrings)
Royal Prussian Iron Foundry, Berlin or Gliwice, ca. 1820
cast iron, polished steel
NMW, inv. nos. SZM 5941 MNW, SZM 5942/1–2 MNW,
SZM 5943 MNW, SZM 5944/1–2 MNW

7. Chatelaine with a watch

chatelaine: late 18th c.; watch: A. Moilliet, Geneva, ca. 1800
copper, repoussé and gilt; brass, steel, silver, porcelain,
carnelian, enamel paint
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11097 MNW

Essential small accessories have been carried attached to the belt since antiquity. Evolving in the 18th century for just such a purpose was a jewellery item in the form of a decorative clasp or hook. This object, in the 1800s called a chatelaine, was composed of a decorative plate worn at the belt with a series of chains on which handy items were secured.

This luxury chatelaine from the NMW belonged to a woman. Attached to the medallion showing a pair of lovers is a pocket watch. The enamelled and gilded egg-shaped central element can be opened, its two halves containing a sewing kit, a container for smelling salts and two seal matrices.

8. Merovingian fibula

late 6th – early 7th c.
gold over a cast bronze base, inlaid with garnet
and coloured glass; filigree
NMW, inv. no. 148470 MNW

9. Merovingian belt bucklelate 5th – early 6th c.gold over a cast iron base, inlaid with garnet and coloured glass;
silver claspNMW, inv. no. 148449 MNW

10. Merovingian fibula7th–8th c.gold over a cast bronze base, inlaid with garnet, coloured glass
and mother-of-pearl; filigreeNMW, inv. no. 148479 MNW

11. Ermine collar

Poland, ca. 1900–25

ermine, hand sewn

NMW, inv. no. SZT 3431 MNW

**12. Aigrette (feather headdress)**Poland, 18th/19th c.

heron and peacock feathers, silk, glued

NMW, inv. no. SZT 1197 MNW

**13. Engageante (men's sleeve ruffle)**Saxony or Silesia, mid-18th c.

linen, white Dresden lace embroidery

NMW, inv. no. SZT 1582 MNW

14. Back scratcherunknown European manufacturer, 19th c.

lacquered wood, ox bone (?), porcelain, overglaze enamels

NMW, inv. no. SZC 1066 MNW

15. Sweetmeat purse

France, 1688

metal thread, silk, tapestry technique, hand sewn

NMW, inv. no. SZT 2805 MNW

16. Scent bottle

Bohemia, ca. 1825–50

violet glass, cut

NMW, inv. no. 188825/a-b MNW

17. Scent bottle

Bohemia, ca. 1825–50

colourless glass, cut

NMW, inv. no. 188823/a-b MNW

18. Scent bottle

Bohemia, ca. 1825–50
 colourless glass, cut
 NMW, inv. no. 188826/a-b MNW

19. Patch box

Meissen, Royal Porcelain Manufactory, ca. 1750
 porcelain, overglaze enamels, gilt bronze
 NMW, inv. no. 124286 MNW

This box was used to keep beauty patches – artificial moles that were particularly fashionable in the 17th and 18th centuries. They were cut out of black silk and pasted on the face, neck or breasts to highlight the alabaster complexion or conceal imperfections, such as pimples or pockmarks. Beauty patches were also a crucial element of parlour games, communicating the state and feelings of those who wore them. ‘Amorous’ patches were worn in the corner of the eye, ‘courteous’ ones in the middle of the cheek, ‘coquettish’ ones above the lips and ‘bold’ ones on the nose. In the 20th century, beauty patches were revived as a fashion statement in artistic and film circles, and the custom of pasting, painting or tattooing black dots entered popular culture.

20. Men’s garters

Poland, ca. 1800–30
 silk satin embroidered with silk, leather, metal, hand sewn
 NMW, inv. no. SZT 1165 MNW

21. Men’s shirt collar

Europe, 19th/20th c., linen, hand sewn
 NMW, inv. no. SZT 3421/1 MNW

22. Collar box

England, 19th/20th c.
 leather, cardboard, glued
 NMW, inv. no. SZT 3226/12 MNW

23. Pair of women’s cuffs

England, 19th/20th c., linen, hand sewn
 NMW, inv. no. SZT 3226/10 MNW

24. Bowler hat

London, Scott & Co, the 1920s–1930s
 felt, wool, silk, thermally modelled
 NMW, inv. no. SZT 3363 MNW

25. Women's gaiters

France (?), early 20th c. – the 1920s
felt, wool, wood, machine sewn
Adam Leja's collection

26. Parasol

France, ca. 1850–1875
silk, bobbin lace, bone, metal, hand sewn and carved
NMW, inv. no. SZT 1302 MNW

**27. Horse measuring walking stick**

Germany, Hauptner [company], ca. 1948
wood, brass, blackened horn, iron
Museum of King Jan III's Palace in Wilanów, inv. no. Wil.5598

28. Glove box

France, ca. 1890
cardboard, silk velvet, satin, brass mounts
Theatre Museum at the Grand Theatre – Polish National Opera
in Warsaw, inv. no. MT/IV/163

Women's gloves

England, early 20th c.
leather, mother-of-pearl buttons, hand and machine sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 3186 MNW

29. Glove stretchers

Paris, Gustave Keller, 1880–1915
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 5292 MNW

30. Hook

Poland, 19th/20th c.
nickel-plated metal, bone
Museum of Warsaw, inv. no. MHW 25631

31. Page (tongs to raise the dress train)

The Netherlands or Germany (?), the 1870s or 1880s
brass, fabric
NMW, inv. no. SZM 6519 MNW

32. Pocket spittoon

Germany, Lüdenscheid, Gebrüder Noelle company, after 1904
cobalt blue glass, metal
The Antonina Leśniewska Museum of Pharmacy,
division of the Museum of Warsaw, inv. no. MF 3731

33. Watch and chain

Geneva, J.F. Boutte company (active 1893–1906), late 19th c.;
chain: Moscow, the 1890s
silver, wrought and cast; steel; enamel paint
NMW, inv. no. SZM 3504/1–2 MNW

34. Bottle for smelling salts

Bohemia (?), Silesia (?), 2nd half of the 19th c.
colourless glass with opalescent undercoat, silver, coral,
peacock feather (?)
NMW, inv. no. 210382/a–b

35. Bottle for smelling salts

Bohemia (?), Silesia (?), 2nd half of the 19th c.
opalescent blue glass, enamel paint, metal
NMW, inv. no. 76365/a–b MNW

36. Bottle for smelling salts

France (?), 1st half of the 19th c.
cut glass, silver (no hallmark)
NMW, inv. no. 157670 MNW

37. Miser's purse

Poland (?), ca. 1840–65
silk, metal beads and rings, crocheting
NMW, inv. no. SZT 1046 MNW

38. Bouquet holder

France (?), 1850–60
gilt metal, enamel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 6025 MNW

The bouquet holder, sometimes also referred to as the posy holder, was an accessory that originated in France. The oldest pieces come from the second half of the 16th century, but they were still in fashion in the early 1900s. Such jewellery items were a popular gift for rulers' wives and other eminent high-society women. Refined ladies held them in their hands when going for a walk, during visits and balls.

Cheap bouquet holders were made of wicker or turned wood, luxury ones – from gold- and silver-plated metals with elaborate decorations. This posy holder once belonging to Polish writer Eliza Orzeszkowa has an enamelled handle and gold-plated flower basket.

39. Dance card holder

Germany (?), ca. 1820
metal, tortoiseshell, paper
NMW, inv. no. VR 299 MNW

VI Around the table

1. Linen press

The Netherlands or Gdańsk, 1680–1700
oak and walnut, turned and carved
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2689 MNW

In wealthy, bourgeois homes in northern Europe, the high standards of cleanliness also applied to tablecloths and napkins. These textiles were smoothed using box irons, mangles and presses, like this one from our museum. The rotating screw in the centre of the upper beam made it possible to squeeze textiles between the bottom boards. Damp fabrics were folded before being pressed, which created a regular grid of creases, like those seen on tablecloths in Dutch still lifes. In the Netherlands, linen presses were kept in utility rooms. In Gdańsk, however, these decorative pieces of furniture could be found in large halls and rooms, where they underscored the wealth and cleanliness of the home and symbolically affirmed the moral virtues of its inhabitants.

2. Butter churn

Bohemia, ca. 1825–50
colourless glass, cut; turned wood, gilt metal, ox bone
NMW, inv. no. SZS 109 MNW

3. Spirit kettle

Warsaw, Stefan Klimowicz's company, 1899–1904
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2297 MNW

4. Ice-cream vase

from the porcelain set with the coats of arms of counts von Magnis und Strassnitz
Vienna, Imperial Porcelain Manufactory, ca. 1819–21
porcelain, overglaze enamels, gold and silver decoration (coats of arms)
NMW, inv. no. SZC 329/1–2 MNW

5. Egg poacher pan

Germany (?), Poland (?), late 19th – early 20th c.
silver-plated metal
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11406/a–d MNW

6. Lidded jam jar (confiturier)

Berlin, Carl Gottlieb Heinrich Schröder (active ca. 1893–1906),
the 1830s
silver, wrought, stamped, knurled and engraved; glass
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11013/1–14 MNW

7. Coffee percolator

Vienna, illegible goldsmith's mark, 1855
silver, ivory
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2833 MNW

8. Hot chocolate jug

Paris, Edme-Pierre Balzac, 1764–65
silver, wrought, repoussé and cast; wood
NMW, inv. no. SZM 762 MNW

9. Punch serving set

Bohemia, Poland (?), ca. 1825–50
colourless glass, cut
NMW, inv. no. 77946/1–10 MNW

10. Moustache guard mug of the basket weavers guild

Silesia, Świdnica (?), 1719
tin, cast and engraved
NMW, inv. no. SZM 143 MNW

**11. Verrière (glass cooler)**

Warsaw, Johann Georg Bandau, after 1781 – before 1788, silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 5456 MNW

Beginning in the 18th century, verrières were used to cool wine glasses. The glasses were placed on the notched rim of an ice-filled verrière, typically made of silver, gold- or silver-plated copper, tin, faïence or porcelain. These vessels were in use until the 1820s, when the serving temperatures of various types of wine were ultimately codified – and glasses started being placed on the table next to the plates and cutlery.

Very few verrières have survived in Poland. Silver ones were melted and recrafted into more functional objects. With time, even the function of these luxury items fell into oblivion.

12. Footless beaker (toasting goblet)

The Netherlands, 2nd half of the 16th c. – 1st half of the 17th c.
colourless and white glass, filigree

NMW, inv. no. 187644 MNW

A footless beaker, known as a *kulawka*, *kusztyk* or *kuśtyk*, is a drinking vessel without a stable base in the form of a stem or foot. Such beakers were placed on the table upside down. Once filled with liquid, the guest had to drink the contents in one go. Footless beakers became fashionable among Polish magnates and nobles in the 18th century. In the 1800s, historicizing toasting goblets had large bowls that could hold up to several litres of alcohol. The presented beaker is a luxury item designed for wealthy households. It is decorated with filigree, an ornament typical of Venetian glass and Venice-influenced glassware.

13. Vodka bottle

Volhynia, 1st half of the 19th c.
colourless glass formed in glassworks

NMW, inv. no. 19594 MNW

14. Tankard (*Vexierglas*)

Germany, 18th c.
colourless glass with glassworks decoration

NMW, inv. no. 188867 MNW

15. Table bell

Bohemia, ca. 1825–50
colourless glass, cut and engraved; handle: gilt bronze;
clapper: coral

NMW, inv. no. 188709 MNW

16. Aquamanile

Lower Saxony (?), late 13th c.
bronze

NMW, inv. no. SZM 197 MNW

The name ‘aquamanile’ derives from the Latin words for ‘water’ (*aqua*) and ‘hand’ (*manus*). Aquamaniles (or aquamanilia) were medieval vessels used for washing the hands during religious and secular rites. Most surviving ones are bronze, but ceramic versions were also in existence. These vessels took the form of people or animals, often ones of symbolic meaning, such as elaborately crafted horses, gryphons, unicorns or

lions. In the Middle Ages, the lion symbolized Christ, but it also represented chivalry.

Handwashing was an important part of liturgical and secular ceremonies. It was an element of etiquette observed at courts, in noble homes and monasteries, and aquamaniles turned into lavish table decorations.

17. Red-figure kylix depicting a symposium

The Painter of London E122, Greece, Attica, ca. 440–430 BC
clay
NMW, inv. no. 142311 MNW

18. Rhyton in the form of a cow's head

Italy, Apulia, 330–320 BC
clay
NMW, inv. no. 200455 MNW

19. Volute krater

Italy, Apulia, 350–340 BC
clay
NMW, inv. no. 198145 MNW

20. Icing sugar containers

The Netherlands (?), 1730–40
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2598/1–2 MNW

21. Skewer stand

Warsaw, the 1830s
gilt bronze
NMW, inv. no. SZM 6652 MNW

22. Marrow spoon

Warsaw, Karol Filip Malcz, the 1840s
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 836/1 MNW

23. Table knife sharpener

France, Christofle company, 1880–90
silver-plated metal, steel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11412 MNW

24. Egg topper

Warsaw, Norblin i S-ka [Norblin & Co.], the 1870s–1890s
white metal, tin alloy, silver
Museum of Warsaw, inv. no. MHW 24886/1

25. Cheese knife

France, Christofle company, ca. 1880
silver-plated metal, nickel-plated steel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11410 MNW

26. Chester cheese knife

Dresden, HP (goldsmith), 1844
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 10141 MNW

27. Ice-cream knife

France, early 20th c.
silver, gilt steel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11404 MNW

28. Powder-tea spoon

Moscow, IP (goldsmith), 1867
silver, gilt and inlaid with niello
NMW, inv. no. SZM 5052 MNW

29. Wild strawberry spoon

Paris, Pierre-François Queille company (or Lapparra's successor),
late 19th – early 20th c.
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11067/1 MNW

30. Icing sugar spoon

Paris, 1787
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 4187 MNW

31. Sugar tongs

Poland (?), JSJ (goldsmith), the 1840s
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 8662 MNW

32. Chocolate tongs

Warsaw (?), late 19th c.
silver-plated metal
NMW, inv. no. IP 1215 MNW

33. Dumb waiter

Vienna or Italy, ca. 1810–20
pine wood with mahogany veneer; birch, carved,
painted and gilt
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 565 MNW



VII Parlour games

1. Table for visiting cards

furniture: France (?), table top: Silesia (?)
after 1860

birch (?), oak and walnut with walnut and blackened
wood veneer; porcelain, overglaze enamels, gilt;
bronze mounts, cast and gilt; steel mounts
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 487 MNW

The social life of the upper classes followed strict rules, and social visits were no exception. Guests had to observe the prescribed occasions, hours and days for paying visits. Visiting cards were also part of this tradition. Guests would leave them on a tray in the hallway or on a small table with a bowl or an adequately recessed top. Such tables were particularly widespread in France in the late 19th century. As stately pieces of furniture, they were usually very decorative.

2. Games board for chess, draughts, nine men's morris and backgammon



France, the 1680s
oak with ebony veneer, marquetry of engraved ivory
and bone; brass, engraved and gilt
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2986 MNW

3. Astragali (knucklebones – dice)

Myrmekion (Crimea), Hellenistic period

Goat astragalus

bone
NMW, inv. no. 225727 MNW

Cow astragalus

bone
NMW, inv. no. 225728 MNW

Cow astragalus

bone
NMW, inv. no. 226485 MNW

Cow astragalus

bone
NMW, inv. no. 226486 MNW

4. Ombre playing set

Meissen, Royal Porcelain Manufactory, ca. 1807–14
 baskets: biscuit porcelain in the Wedgwood style (Jasperware);
 counters: porcelain, overglaze enamels, gilt; leather-bound
 wooden case lined with suede; basket dividers: silk
 NMW, inv. no. 158599/1–8 MNW

Ombre, also known as l’Hombre, is a popular card game that gave rise to Whist, Tarot, Skat and Bridge. Its name is derived from *hombre*, the Spanish word for man. The game was invented in Spain at the turn of the 15th century, from where it reached the French court and became popular among the upper classes of modern Europe. This unique set was commissioned by Frederick Augustus I, King of Saxony and Duke of Warsaw. It was a gift for the Warsaw philanthropist Marianna Lanckorońska, née Świdzińska. The larger basket contains relief busts of the donors: King Frederick Augustus I, his wife Maria Amalie Auguste and their daughter Maria Augusta Nepomucena.

5. Backgammon table

Silesia or Saxony, 1720–40
 spruce, oak and hardwood with walnut veneer, marquetry of
 walnut, plum, fruit tree wood, sycamore, mahogany, boxwood,
 ebony (?) and tulipwood (?); carved and turned walnut;
 brass mounts
 NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2354 MNW

VIII Sound and image

1. Music box on table

Switzerland (?), ca. 1870–90
 case: pine and beech with burr walnut veneer, marquetry
 of brass and mother-of-pearl; carved birchwood; mounts:
 white metal; mechanism: steel, brass, leather, birch
 NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2064 MNW



2. *Perspective view of a thermal fountain and square in Aachen*

Paris, published by Nicolas Dauphin Beauvais (1687? – 1763),
 ca. 1752
 coloured etching and engraving on laid paper with watermark
 NMW, inv. no. Gr.Ob.F.5341 MNW

3. Zograscope

unknown manufacturer, 2nd half of the 18th c.
 wood, glass, mirror pane, lead; turned, encrusted and finished
 with French polish
 Museum of King Jan III's Palace in Wilanów, inv. no. Wil.6136

The zograscope was a popular parlour entertainment device, one of a number of so-called 'optical' or 'philosophical' toys whose construction relied on a knowledge of geometry and optics. Such toys were fashionable between the second half of the 18th century and the early 1800s. Thanks to a lens and mirror placed at an angle of 45 degrees, images viewed through the zograscope appeared larger and had a three-dimensional feel. This effect was possible thanks to the structure of the device itself and specialist prints called *vue d'optique*, which depicted landscapes or cityscapes in a linear perspective.

4. Koncert reel-to-reel tape recorder

Warsaw, Marcin Kasprzak Radio Works,
 from 1978 until the mid-1980s
 NMW, inv. no. XXIV – a – E.1

Pair of reels for the Koncert reel-to-reel tape recorder with tape and adapters

Unitra, the 1970s and 1980s
 private collection

5. B-2 Bajka slide projector

Łódź Cinematographic Works, 1956
 private collection

Tape with *Mr Miniscule and the Whale*

Poland, the 1970s/1980s
 private collection

6. Wista B television set

Warsaw Television Works, 1956–57
 collection of Ireneusz and Piotr M. Zalewski

7. Spittoon

Warsaw (?), ca. 1820–35
 spruce and birch wood with walnut veneer
 NMW, inv. no. SZMb 147/1 MNW

Spittoons, also called cuspidors, were hygienic receptacles for spitting. They were filled with sand and sometimes also an aseptic agent. From the 18th until the early 20th century,

they were a frequent sight in homes and public spaces: railway stations, waiting and smoking rooms, hospitals and schools. Their popularity was also due to the spread of lung and respiratory diseases and the fashion for chewing tobacco. Some spittoons, like ours, were enclosed in wooden cases with lids.

IX Evening lights

1. Hanging candle holder (↑)

Poland (?), ca. 1800–25
bronze, cast, chiselled and gilt
NMW, inv. no. SZM 480 MNW

2. Oil lamp with reflector

Rome, Pietro Biazzì, 1858–67
silver, wrought, cast, stamped and knurled
NMW, inv. no. 74571 MNW

3. Chamberstick (portable candle holder)

Saint Petersburg, Johann Wilhelm Ludwig, 1834
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 875/1 MNW

Wick trimmer

Saint Petersburg, Johann Wilhelm Ludwig, 1834
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 1089 MNW

Chambersticks are portable candle holders created to light the way to the bedchamber. They mostly held candle-ends, which were collected rather than thrown out because lighting represented a significant expense in the household budget.

The chamberstick from the NMW has a large wax pan with a handle, a dowel pin for the candle snuffer and a holder for scissors used to trim the wick.

Still manufactured after World War II until electricity became ubiquitous, later chambersticks were no longer silver but made of enamelled sheet metal or pressed glass.

4. Spiral taper candle base

Poznań, Jan Radecki, 1817–37
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 3115 MNW

5. **Double candle holder with *Hagar and Ishmael in the Wilderness* lithophane after Federico Barocci (1526/28–1612)** 

Meissen, Royal Porcelain Manufactory , ca. 1846–51;
metal case: France (?), the 1830s
biscuit porcelain, gilt bronze
NMW, inv. no. 2107 MNW

6. **Candle holder with *Psyche Carried by Zephyr* lithophane after Pierre Paul Prud'hon (1758–1823)**

Meissen, Royal Porcelain Manufactory , ca. 1851;
metal case: Warsaw (?), Daniel Knusmann (?), 1829–30
biscuit porcelain, bronze, painted and gilt
NMW, inv. no. 131742 MNW

Lithophanes are intaglio images made on biscuit plaques that become visible in proper contrast lighting. They served as candle shields, lampshades and fireplace screens, or were placed in windows and even in the bottoms of mugs and cups. First manufactured in Paris in 1827, according to a patented method devised by Paul-Charles-Amable de Bourgoing, lithophanes were in vogue in the Biedermeier period. They reproduced famous paintings, devotional images, sentimental and instructional scenes, landscapes and portraits. They sometimes came in sets – comprising educational materials for youths or collections of erotic images for men.

7. **Flint and steel**

Berlin (?), ca. 1800–25
cast iron, steel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 7311 MNW

8. **Oil lamp with suspension chain** 

Egypt, Coptic period, 5th–6th c.
clay, bronze
NMW, inv. no. 198935 MNW

9. **Oil lamp**

Carthage, 5th c.
clay
NMW, inv. no. 237450 MNW

X In the world of the senses

FOR ADULT VISITORS ONLY

1. **Heinrich Aldegrever (ca. 1502 – 1555 or 1561)**
***Night*, 1553**

engraving on paper
NMW, inv. no. Gr.Ob.N.610 MNW

2. **Portable Imperial stereoscope
with a set of stereophotographs**



Germany, manufacturer: Neue Photographische
Gesellschaft, 1897–1921
metal, photographic paper
NMW, inv. no. VR 840/1–8 MNW

3. **Travel massager**

Piotrków Trybunalski, TELSIN Cooperative of
Disabled Persons, 1978
private collection

4. ***Lovers*, miniature *shunnetsuke* sculpture**

Japan, 2nd half of the 19th c.
ivory, *katabori* (full-figure sculpture), engraved
and ink-coloured details
NMW, inv. no. SKAZsz 3569 MNW; SKAZsz 3570 MNW

The kimono – a traditional Japanese garment – is sewn without pockets, so pouches, snuff boxes, smoking utensils and other handy items were attached to the *obi* sash. These decorative hanging containers often featured miniature figurines called *netsuke*. Their subject matter was very diverse, from plants, fruit and animals to legendary characters, deities, demigods and genre scenes. The popular *shunnetsuke* ('spring netsuke'), miniature erotic sculptures, were greatly coveted by European and American collectors.

XI Home remedies

1. Travel case with first-aid kit and writing utensils

South Germany (?), early 18th c.
glass: ruby glass, gilt silver; case: wood, silk, velvet
on loan from The Polish Army Museum in Warsaw,
inv. nos. MWP 34051; 34051/1–16 MNW

2. Veilleuse (night lamp with warmer)

France, 1st half of the 19th c.
gilt porcelain
NMW, inv. no. SZC 2625/a–d MNW

3. Leech jar

Germany, 2nd half of the 19th c.
colourless glass formed in glassworks
NMW, inv. no. 188873 MNW

Leech therapy, also called hirudotherapy (from the Latin word for leech), is one of the oldest treatments known to both mainstream and folk medicine. ‘Letting bad blood’ was believed to treat various illnesses, particularly fevers and inflammations. In the 19th century, breeding and exporting leeches was a lucrative business. Over one billion medicinal leeches per year were used for treatment in France alone. They could be collected from river beds or purchased from pharmacies, where they were kept in closed vessels, often glass jars. The jar from our museum has an unusual shape – the inward-pointing tubes provide a structure to which the leeches would attach.

4. Eye wash cup

Berlin, Royal Porcelain Manufactory (KPM), ca. 1775–1800
porcelain, overglaze enamels, gilt
NMW, inv. no. 192412 MNW

5. Trembleuse cup and saucer

Vienna, ca. mid-18th c.
porcelain, overglaze enamels
NMW, inv. nos. SZC 171 MNW, SZC 172 MNW

Drinking chocolate became fashionable in the 18th century, leading to the development of accessories for its preparation and serving. One of them is this trembleuse set: a cup and saucer with an openwork basket. Its name comes from the French word *trembler*, meaning to tremble. The trembleuse

was meant to protect the drink from spilling. The cup filled with drinking chocolate was placed in the tall basket, which became permanently attached to the saucer in the mid-18th century. This configuration made it easier to drink chocolate when one was confined to bed.

6. Pot-pourri vases

Meissen, Royal Porcelain Manufactory,
model: Johann Gottlieb Ehder, after 1747
porcelain, overglaze enamels
NMW, inv. no. 131853/1–2 MNW

XII Substance (ab)use

1. Bridge set

(tray, four ashtrays, cigarette case)
designed by Zofia Przybyszewska, produced by the
Department of Ceramics, Institute of Industrial Design,
Warsaw, 1957
porcelain, glaze
NMW, inv. no. Wzr.c.565/1–6 MNW



2. Snuffbox

case: Warsaw, ca. 1790; mosaic: Saint Petersburg
mosaic, gold, mirror
NMW, inv. no. SZM 2209 MNW

3. Snuff-grater case

The Netherlands, 2nd half of the 18th c.
ivory
NMW, inv. no. 158968 MNW

4. Snuff bottle with spoon

China, 19th c.
cloisonné, copper, semi-precious stone
NMW, inv. no. SKAZsz 2375/a–b MNW

5. Waterpipe for smoking opium

China, 19th c.
cast tinned brass, shagreen (?), silk string
NMW, inv. no. SKAZsz 1345/a–f MNW



Water pipes for smoking tobacco, later also used for opium, became widespread in China in the 17th century, towards the end of the Ming Dynasty. Although smoking tobacco, like opium, was forbidden, it still found many enthusiasts. The

pipes used for this purpose were either bamboo ones made in rural homes or elegant metal ones used by the urban population and people of high social status. They were composed of a pipe with a mouthpiece and two containers (for water and tobacco or opium). After assembly, they were kept in a larger container, alongside tweezers, cleaning tools, etc.

6. Tobacco pouch

Poland, 1848

Velvet embroidered with silk and metal thread, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 28 MNW

7. Pipe case

Poland, 18th/19th c.

velvet embroidered with metal thread, purl and spangles,
silk rep, cardboard, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 1206 MNW

8. Tobacco presser

Europe, unknown manufacturer, 1st half of the 19th c.
porcelain, overglaze enamels
NMW, inv. no. 124420 MNW

9. Pipe stand

Central Europe, 1830–40
turned ash, spruce and ash with ash veneer
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2494 MNW

10. Pipe stem case

Poland, ca. 1850
glass beads, silk, canvas, embroidered and hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 1210 MNW

11. Cigar box

France, ca. 1850–75
poplar (?) veneered with mahogany and ebonized hardwood,
mahogany, porcelain, overglaze enamels, miniatures created in
the pouncing technique, underpainted by hand and gilt; brass
mounts, cast and engraved; steel mounts
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 1882 MNW

12. Cigar case

Riga, goldsmith: FK, before 1877
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 4368 MNW

13. Cigar cutter

Germany (?), late 19th c.
silver-plated metal, steel
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11521 MNW

14. Cigarette case

Saint Petersburg, Henrik Wigström for Fabergé, 1908–17
gold, enamel, diamonds
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11045 MNW

XIII Memories and mementoes

1. Dance card holder with miniatures

Portrait of a woman (recto)
Two female figures next to a statue
of Cupid (verso)

France, ca. 1780
miniatures: parchment, gouache, ivory, gold, gilt bronze
dance card: gold, paint, gilt bronze, with a pencil and bone
plates inside
NMW, inv. no. Min.217/a–b MNW

**2. Miniature with hair and portrait
of Jan Potocki**

unknown French painter, ca. 1770
ivory, gouache
NMW, inv. no. Min.701 MNW

3. Locket with man's eye (lover's eye)

unknown painter
ivory, gouache
dark cherry red leather case inscribed with: K.[Karl] Fabergé,
before 1850
NMW, inv. no. Min.207 MNW

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the most personal and intimate form of portraiture were miniatures with a fragment of a loved one's face. Most often, it was the eye with the superciliary arch, sometimes also with the bridge of the nose. The message of these images could be summed up as 'I am with you, and I see you'. They were the lovers' secret, and the identity of the person portrayed was to remain unknown to others. Such medallions with miniatures were not worn around the neck but rather hidden underneath clothes, close to the body.

4. Visiting card holder

China, Canton, 1st half of the 19th c.
carved ivory
NMW, inv. no. SKAZsz 200/a-b MNW

5. Wallet

Istanbul, 1784 (?)
leather embroidered with metal thread, silk, hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 992 MNW

6. Friendship book

Germany, 1831
embossed leather, paper
NMW, inv. no. VR 687 MNW

The friendship book is a type of diary where the owner would collect autographs from those close to them. Other popular names were *album amicorum* ('book of friendship'), the German Stammbuch ('family register') or the Polish *imiennik / imiennik* ('name book'). The first friendship books date back to the 16th century. Their popularity grew in the late 1700s and during the Romantic period owing to the rise of social life and salons. Friendship books contained dedications, poems, sayings and quotations from famous works or songs. The texts were often accompanied by drawings, paper cut-outs, dried flowers, locks of hair and press clippings.

XIV Private devotion

1. Prayer desk

Brandenburg (?), ca. 1730–50
pine wood and oak, marquetry of walnut and boxwood,
steel, brass
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 98 MNW

2. Aspersorium (holy water font)

Warsaw, Kazimierz Klimaszewski, ca. 1840
silver, wrought, stamped and gilt; leather case
NMW, inv. no. SZM 11303/1–2 MNW

3. Prayer book

Lyon, manufactured by Henry for the Roux publishing
house, 1887
silk and leather, jacquard technique, sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 3230 MNW

This silk-woven prayer book for maidens contains a mass for newlyweds and other prayers. Its form is typical for French religious publications from the late 19th century modelled on illuminated medieval manuscripts. This exclusive object exemplifies the high artistry and technical prowess of Lyonnaise silk manufacturers. To precisely convey the text, illustrations and decorative borders, the fabric's weaving density is an astounding 160 threads per cm. One of the sixty copies of this prayer book was presented during the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris, winning the main prize for its maker.

4. Triptych of the Resurrection

ca. 1520
tempera and gold leaf on spruce panels
NMW, inv. no. Śr.315/1–3 MNW

5. Penance belt

Poland, 17th–18th c.
iron wire
NMW, inv. no. 22629 MNW



xv Getting ready for bed

1. Bedside commode cabinet

England, ca. 1775–1800
mahogany, linen, gilt brass
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 1950 MNW

2. Men's nightcap

Germany, mid-18th c.
linen and silk, quilted and hand sewn
NMW, inv. no. SZT 2525 MNW

3. Women's chamber pot (*bourdalou*)

Vienna, Imperial Porcelain Manufactory, ca. 1745–49
porcelain, overglaze enamels, gilt
NMW, inv. no. 124416 MNW

4. Chamber pot (*pôt de chambre*)

Vienna, Claudius Innocentius du Paquier's manufactory,
ca. 1725–30
porcelain, overglaze enamels, gilt
NMW, inv. no. SZC 1643 MNW

As suggested by their name, chamber pots were mostly used at night to relieve oneself without leaving the bedroom (or 'chamber'), but they were also popular when travelling or caring for bedridden patients. Made of metal, glass and, most frequently, ceramics, they were shaped in the form of a circular (*pôt de chambre*) or oval pot (*pôt de chambre oval*) with a handle and sometimes also a lid to contain unpleasant odours and prevent spillage. Oval chamber pots were intended for ladies as the shape was better suited to their anatomy. They were often called *bourdalou* after the priest Louis Bourdaloue (1632–1704), whose sermons were purportedly so long that ladies – not wanting to miss out on any part of the preacher's disquisitions – used the discreet little pots when the need arose.

5. Headrest

Egypt, New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1069 BC)
wood
on loan from the Louvre Museum, Department of Egyptian
Antiquities, inv. nos. E 5365; AF 1694 BIS; 143288 MNW

6. Finger-shaping set

Germany, 19th/20th c. – the 1920s
metal, chamois, cardboard, paper, fabric (?)
The Masovian Museum in Płock, inv. no. MMP/S/23404/1–3

A slim waist, small feet and slender hands – such was the canon of female beauty at the turn of the 20th century. To highlight their lissom hands, ladies always wore gloves outside the home and during official functions or parties. Sewn from thin leather and tightly fitted, the gloves had to be stretched with special pliers before being put on. The fingers, too, had to be shaped appropriately – a bothersome and rather futile endeavour. This finger-shaping set originally included five identical clasps – one for each finger. They were placed on the fingertips before going to bed to give them a slender shape.



7. Moustache bandage

Germany, early 20th c.
silk, leather, metal, sewn
private collection

8. Moustache brush

Germany, 19th/20th c.
silver, bone, bristle
private collection

9. Bedside clock with oil lamp

France (?), Germany (?), 1800–20
colourless glass, cut and engraved; gilt brass; wood
NMW, inv. no. 192078/a-b MNW

10. Pocket watch stand

Southern Germany (?), ca. 1770–85
limewood, carved, painted and gilt
NMW, inv. no. SZMb 2869 MNW

Pocket watch

Brzeg, Johannes Külpe, 17th c.
silver
NMW, inv. no. SZM 753 MNW

11. Bed warmer

Paris, Marie-Gabriel-Joseph Genu, ca. 1800
silver wrought and cut; wood
NMW, inv. no. SZM 1275 MNW

Bed warmers looked like deep frying pans with lids. Filled with hot coals, they were used to warm bed sheets. First mentioned in the 15th century, they often proved indispensable in cold and damp interiors. Most warming-pans were made of brass or copper and fitted with a long handle for easy manoeuvring. However, the bed warmer from the NMW is equipped with a non-original short handle. It is a memento of Napoleon Bonaparte, probably left behind at the Radziwiłł estate in Nieśwież by accident. Since then, its history is somewhat convoluted. During the Warsaw Uprising, the Napoleonic bed warmer went missing. NMW acquired it in 1953 from a scrapyard.

STAN RZECZY A STATE OF THINGS

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