PESAH, Hand made vs machine made matsa

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In general, when making a religious article or one of its accessories to be used for a Mitsva, this item must be done with the specific intention of being used for the fulfillment of that Mitsva. Example: we can not use left-overs of commercial leather (made originally for shoes, etc) to make a Tefilin or its straps. The leather has to be processed explicitly for the purpose of fulfilling the Mitsva of Tefilin. Before processing the leather, the artisan says: *leshem mitsvat Tefilin*, ["I'm processing this leather to be used…] for the purpose of the mitsva of Tefilin". The same principle applies, for example, with the threads used for the Tsitsit, they must be manufactured for that specific purpose, and if they have been made for another purpose, or even for not specific purpose, these threads are unfit for fulfilling the Mitsva of Tsitsit.

Similarly, the Matsot that will be consumed during the first two nights of Pesah (*matsot mitsva*), must be elaborated with the explicit purpose of the fulfilling the Biblical mitsva of eating Matsa.
Now, unlike the case of leather left-overs or commercial made strings, Kosher for Pesah Matsot, are always made for Pesah.
In the case of the Matsot, therefore, the question is a little different and it applies specifically to Matsot made by machine. Do we consider that the "human intentionality" extends from the man who activates the machinery, who actually says: *leshem matsot Mitsva,* to the machinery itself, in which case the Matsot will be unquestionably fit. Or, is this "purposefulness" discontinued as soon as a non-human factor intervenes? The rabbis debate on this matter. Some rabbis assert that machine made Matsot are preferable to hand made Matsot, because although the question of purposefulness still remains, machine Matsot are less exposed to human errors, and that factor supersedes the matter of purposefulness. However, many rabbis (among them rabbi Obadia Yosef, z'l) recommend to use for the two nights of Pesah, when eating Matsa is mandatory, a Matsa elaborated by hand, with a reliable Rabbinic supervision. According to some rabbis (Rabbi E. Melamed) this purposefulness is also part of what gives a Matsa its status of *shemura* (see yesterday's HOTD).
Following this last opinion it is recommended to use hand made Matsot for the first two nights of Pesah, if one can find them and especially

afford hand-made matsot shemurot. If not, one can use Matsa shemura made by machine. For the rest of Pesah, it is unnecessary to use hand-made matsot.

SHABBAT SHALOM!

Lighting candles in NYC	6:49 pm
Shabbat ends in NYC	7:50 pm