



FOOTWEAR IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE NEAR EAST¹

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Footwear, as part of a person's dress, represents the social status of its owner. Shoes were not at the centre of attention of Islamic religious leaders, in contrast to other items of clothing that reflected social conventions. The Islamic view was that footwear, like other items of clothing, should not be ostentatious³. Although a certain amount of stagnation is visible in the development of a variety of footwear, differences do exist, depending on the time, area and political situation. The contemporary footwear of the Near East⁴ is now a mixture of traditional and modern types of shoes, sandals etc. with no cultural boundaries.

Footwear fashion in the Near East

The appearance of Near East footwear evolved over the course of time depending on natural and social conditions. Although an Islamic perspective has prevailed since the 7th or 8th centuries, we can hardly talk about Islamic footwear in these early times. What makes shoes Islamic are religious rules and restrictions and those were still being formed at this time. As we mentioned before, shoes should not be ostentatious and made of expensive materials. Another aspect was the climate of the area. It is much more comfortable to wear slippers in the Arabian Peninsula and shoes in the much colder Anatolia. There is also another practical consideration: for a Muslim who prays barefoot on holy ground five times a day, slippers or mules are more suitable than boots. From the ritual point of

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³ Qur'an 17:37.

⁴ In this article the Near Eastern area is defined as extending from Egypt in the south and the Balkan Peninsula in the north to Iran or Afghanistan with the view to range of the collection. The Northern African part of the Ottoman Empire was included in a previous article by Jana Jiroušková (*Shoes from Maghreb*. Prague: Annals of the Náprstek Museum, No. 27, 2006, p. 37–42).

view footwear is impure and must not pollute a sacred place chosen for prayer. This is the reason why Muslims take their shoes off before entering the mosque or stepping upon their prayer rugs. They are required to practice ritual purification, including washing their feet with clean water or sand before prayer⁵.

Despite religious rules there are a number of superstitions related to footwear in the Near East. Jewish women, for example, carved their lovers' name in the sole to make it easier to walk. Generally the right foot or hand has priority over the left one. The left hand or foot is used for unclean acts and the right one for more honorable purposes. In Muslim life, it is common practice to put on or take off the right shoe first and enter a house with the right foot first⁶. Another habit is that shoes should never be left with the sole upside down.

Boots over ankle height or richly decorated can be considered luxurious footwear. Thus the shoe or sandal called *na'l*, *kuff* or *hidā'* was more appropriate than the boot called *jazma'*⁷. In fact there is evidence that richly decorated boots or shoes were worn both among Muslims as well as non-Muslims. An example in Islamic history is the famous 'Abbasid caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd (who ruled from 786 to 809 AD) whose wardrobe included about four thousand pairs of boots made of the finest leather⁸. There are other examples among the military aristocracy in Mamlūk Egypt, who used their typical blazons to decorate their shoes, also attaching spurs⁹.

Though the population in this area was predominantly Muslim, other religious and cultural groups lived together with them. They were able to follow their own rules of clothing, in some cases being forced to wear various symbols of their own religious origin. Footwear was also used to mark the believers of other faiths. During the reign of Fātimid al-Ḥākim in the 11th century in Egypt Christian women were ordered to wear one red shoe and one black one¹⁰.

Production of footwear and its decoration

Footwear in the Near East was made of many different of sorts of hides, including sheep, goat, buffalo, mule, camel, donkey and shagreen leather. Leather either retained its natural color or it was colored. For example, tanned goat skin dyed on the front side is known as morocco. The color was typically red, but other colors were also used such as yellow, blue or black¹¹. Shoes were also made of other materials besides leather. Palm leaves or wood were used, and so were many kinds of textile. These materials and others were also used for decoration. Decorations were also made of jewelry, metal, mother-of-pearl and bone. Footwear was also decorated with golden and silver thread embroidery, textiles and beaten leather.

⁵ "O ye who believe! when ye prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands (and arms) to the elbows; Rub your heads (with water); and (wash) your feet to the ankles," Qur'an 5:6.

⁶ This custom has its history in the ancient myth of the Argonauts (Stillman, p. 27). See also Lane, p. 205.

⁷ Those expressions are in modern Arabic.

⁸ Stillman, p. 46.

⁹ Stillman, p. 66.

¹⁰ Stillman, p. 106.

¹¹ Morocco leather has a special grained surface gained by the tanning process. It was suitable for bookbinding. Imitation morocco is made of sheep skin.

Shoes were produced in local workshops, but were also imported from other countries. From the 19th century, the focus on European footwear grew¹². Footwear was not such a subject of discussion as other items of clothing, which is possibly why the gradual penetration by European clothing started with shoes. Muslim women begin to wear heeled shoes of European type, and this sort of footwear is quite usual in Islamic countries to this day. Exports of goods from Near Eastern countries were also rising. Ottoman Turkey has always had a great tradition of leatherwork¹³. The opportunity to exhibit their products at the great European fairs started a new demand for Turkish quality wares. The production of footwear grew with the advent of new machinery at the end of the 19th century.

Present-day footwear in the Near East is a combination of traditional and western styles. Sandals such as the *na' l* type made of camel or cow hide are still produced in the Arabian Peninsula¹⁴, but footwear is also imported from Asian and European countries. Since local manufacturers are still producing, the range is extensive – from brand-name trainers of western style to hand-made shoes from local workshops. Traditional styles of clothing are more usual outside major cities. Although it is common to find department stores with different types of articles in Near Eastern cities, the traditional *sūq* still exists. They tend to group one article in a particular place – for example, shoes are displayed for sale in one department and clothes in another. This is still typical of big cities such as Cairo and Damascus. The *sūq* tradition can also be recognized in the big stores. Shops selling the same type of goods have a tendency to be concentrated in one part of the department store.

Shoes in the National Museum – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures

The Náprstek Museum collections contain various sorts of footwear from the Near East. The collection contains slippers, sandals and shoes mostly from the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. The largest part of the collection consists of shoes originating in Ottoman Turkey. These are ladies shoes and slippers with or without a heel or made of leather and covered with velvet of different colors. Sandals made of wood with a red leather upper strap and only simple decoration are an example of footwear in common use. Some highly decorated examples of these are the wide-based wooden *qabqāb* sandals¹⁵ made in Syria. They are not only excessive in their height but also in their decoration, similar to that used for wooden furniture in the Near East or India. The stilted type of sandals is typical not only of Islamic countries, but can also be found in the countries of North Africa and Asia, as well as in China or Japan in other variations¹⁶. These sandals were made with the aim of protecting the owner from the ground (water, mud or simply filth). The collection also contains traditional all-leather sandals from the Arabian Peninsula decorated with colored leather strips.

¹² Social changes are related to the political and social reform in Ottoman Turkey known as the *Tanzimat*, which started with the reign of Sultan Abdülmecit I (1839–1861). The predecessor of those reforms was Sultan Mahmud II (1808–1839).

¹³ There were guilds of tanners and shoe makers in Turkish society. Leather workers have their own district in Istanbul with large-scale production of leather.

¹⁴ Ross, p. 63.

¹⁵ Although the plural is *qabāqīb*, I use the term *qabqāb* in the text since this is how the sandals are generally known.

¹⁶ E.g. *amageta* sandals in Japan.

The decoration of the footwear depends on the materials used. Metal embroidery and beading are very common. Turkish shoes made of leather and covered with textile are decorated with luxurious silver or golden thread, bullions or embroidered glass beading and spangles. Shoes with the upper section made not of leather but paper covered with velvet were probably designed for export. It made them finer. Golden and silver thread embroidery is also used for leather, too as can be seen on Iranian slippers. The wooden *qabqāb* sandal is inlaid with silver wire and mother-of-pearl or bone. All-leather sandals from the Arabian Peninsula and all-leather shoes made in Turkey are decorated simply with leather strips of different colors.

Footwear is mostly decorated with floral designs, something typical of slippers and shoes made in Turkey. Toes are frequently embroidered with the shapes of flowers. Embroidery on the sole is often in the shape of a stem that is visually connected with the toe flower. In some cases there is a flower on the sole too. Little mother-of-pearl triangles or other geometrical shapes inlaid in wooden sandals are tagged together in a geometrical ornament, rosette or a flower. Two pairs of Turkish or Syrian *qabqāb* sandals have fine carved decoration on the soles¹⁷. The subject is a landscape with architecture or flowers and the carving is colored.

Typology of the collection

The collection of the Náprstek Museum contains all the types of footwear appearing in the Near East area. It can be broadly divided into four categories:

1) slippers

- 1a. slippers from Turkey or the Balkan Peninsula
2. mules from Turkey or the Balkan Peninsula
3. fish shaped slippers from Iran



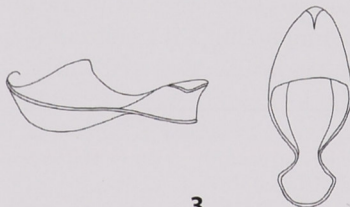
1a



1b



2



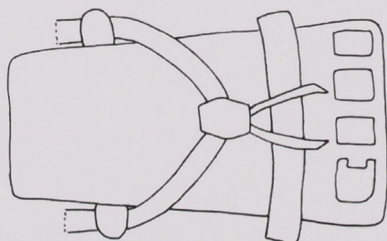
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¹⁷ Cat. no. 26.

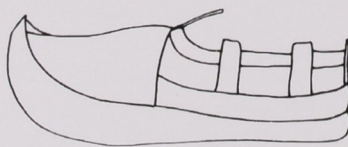
2) sandals

4. leather strap sandals from Arabian Peninsula

5. opanky from Balkan Peninsula



4



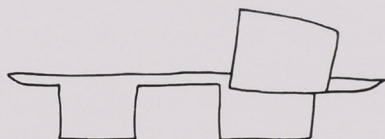
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3) clogs

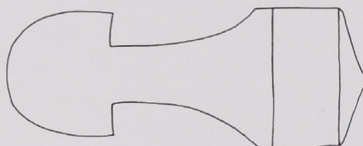
6ab. low stilted *qabqāb*

7ab. *qabqāb* clog without attached leather strap

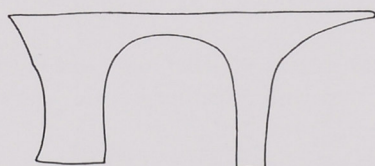
8ab. high stilted *qabqāb* from Syria



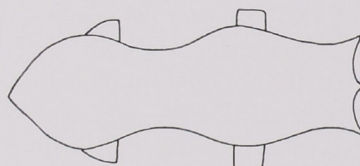
6a



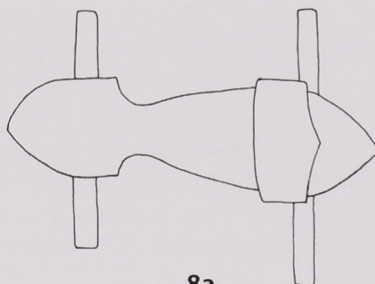
6b



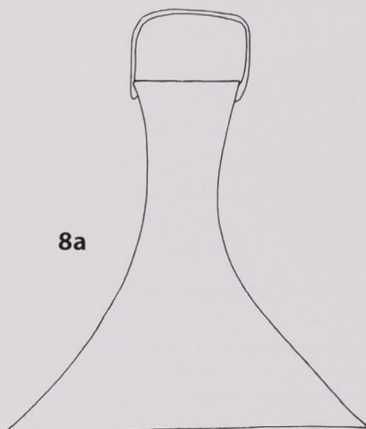
7a



7b



8a



8a

4) shoes

9. ladies' shoes from Turkey or the Balkan Peninsula
10. all-leather shoes



9



10

Slippers (pl. nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) are all made of leather or paper and covered with colored velvet except the narrow middle part of the sole, which is made of natural-colored leather. Slippers are manufactured with worn-down counters and raised toecaps. The velvet upper section is decorated with padded embroidery made of silver and golden thread, bullions, spangles or glass beads. The insole is also decorated with silver and golden thread embroidery. The middle of the opening and the counter is decorated with floss silk tassels. The border of the insole is lined with folded ribbon, usually frayed, which is fastened with golden braid. **Mules**¹⁸ (pl. nos. 6, 7, 8, 9) are a type of ladies' slipper with or without a heel. The sole is made of natural-colored leather and the upper section is made of leather or paper and covered with colored velvet. The heel is made of wood and covered with velvet. The velvet upper section is decorated with padded embroidery made of silver and golden thread, bullions, spangles or glass beads. The insole is also decorated with silver and gold thread embroidery. The lining is made of cotton. The border of the upper section is lined with zigzag strips made of golden thread. Mules without heels differ from slippers in the construction of the sole. The sole is all made of natural colored leather with no textile covering. The border of the insole is decorated with a cotton strip fastened with cross-stitched cotton thread.

Sandals: a) (pl. no. 33) All-leather sandals of angular shape with soles made of a few layers of leather straps. The attached latches are connected with a leather buckle. The sole is decorated with colored leather strips creating a geometrical design.

b) (pl. nos. 10, 11, 12, 13) All-leather sandals called *opanky* are a type of footwear made in Eastern Europe and the Balkan Peninsula in many variations. The soles and the uppers are stitched together with a narrow leather strip. The strips or wider leather parts of the upper section are colored. The vamp is folded or decorated with golden thread embroidery, metal eyelets or ornamental cutwork. The leather belt with a metal buckle is used to fix the shoe on the foot.

Clogs (pl. nos. 14, 15, 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29) have wooden soles with a heel in one piece or two wooden stilts attached to it. Clogs on two stilts are called *qabqāb*. The vamp is made of leather with no decoration or covered with colored velvet which is decorated with padded embroidery made of silver and golden thread, bullions and floss silk tassels. The sole and the stilts are usually decorated with carving or inlaid with geometric and floral designs. The inlaid material is mother-of-pearl, silver wire or brass pieces. The velvet upper is decorated with silver and golden thread, padded embroidery and spangles.

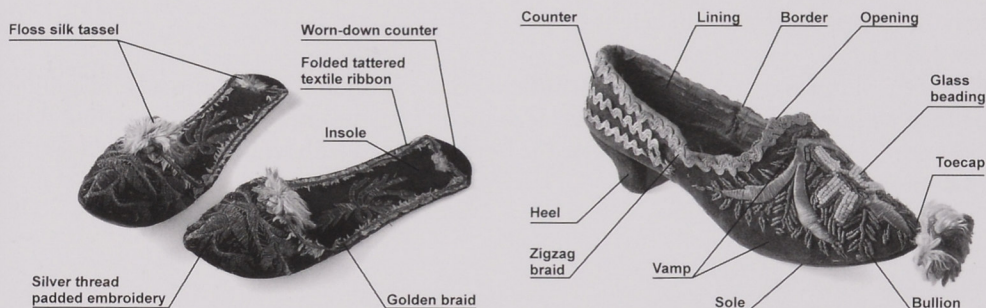
¹⁸ A mule is a sort of slipper. The definition in dictionaries (see <http://www.tfd.com>) is very uncertain. It is possible to say that ordinary slippers are usually worn indoors and mules outdoors. In this article I prefer to make the construction technique of the slipper the main criterion for the distinction.

Turkish *qabqābs* are relatively low in comparison with Syrian sandals, which sometimes have extremely high stilts.

Shoes: a) (pl. nos. 18, 19, 20, 21) have leather soles and a leather or wooden heel. The upper section is made of leather or paper and covered with colored velvet. Some shoes also have velvet covered heels. The decoration of the velvet upper section is of silver and golden thread and bullion padded embroidery with spangles or glass beading. The border of the upper section and the opening is decorated with zigzag golden braids. The insole is lined with cotton and could also be covered with velvet and decorated with silver and golden thread embroidery. The style of design is very similar to the mules on display.

b) (pl. nos. 22, 23, 24, 25) All-leather shoes with raised toecaps manufactured in the same fashion as slippers. They differ in their counters. The shoes have colored leather upper sections or upper sections covered with velvet. There are floss silk tassels in the middle of the opening and on the counter. The border of the upper section is lined with folded frayed ribbon fastened with a golden braid. Some shoes have velvet or cotton lining.

Used terminology



Catalogue

Notes

All examples are from the collection of the Náprstek Museum except cat. no. 16, which is from the collection of the West Bohemian Museum in Pilsen. This piece was chosen as an important example of Turkish *qabqāb* sandals that cannot be found in the Náprstek Museum collection. The measures given are the maximum size. If there is a height, it is the height of the toe, in the case of shoes and slippers, or the height of the sole in the case of *qabqāb* sandals. The catalogue does not include all items, but only represents a part of the collection. We categorize footwear according to area of origin, including in particular Turkey and the Balkan Peninsula, Syria and Iran. Other countries are represented only partly.

Information on most of the donors is scarce because most of them were not well-known individuals. With the exception of their names, little further information about them is available.

Turkey and the Balkan Peninsula

1. Ladies slippers

Turkey, 19th century

Gift, J. Náprstková¹⁹, 1879

Leather, textile, silver thread

Length 25 cm; width 8 cm; height 5.5 cm

Inv. No. 81ab

Ladies' slippers covered with faded purple velvet. Silver thread and bullion padded embroidery with floral motifs, decorated vamp and insole. The insole is decorated with embroidered individual flowers tied with ribbon. Tassels are red and white. The border is lined with red folded frayed ribbon. There is a small embossed flower in the middle of the sole.

2. Children's slippers

Turkey, 19th century

Gift, M. Lamblová²⁰, 1888

Leather, textile, silver and gold thread

Length 17 cm; width 6.5 cm; height 3.7 cm

Inv. No. 82ab

Children's slippers covered with worn out red velvet. Silver and golden thread and bullion padded embroidery with floral motifs, decorated vamp and insole. There are white floss silk tassels on the vamps and counters. The border is lined with white folded frayed textile ribbon.

3. Ladies' slippers

Turkey, 19th century

Estate, J. Dominicus, Praha, 1889

Leather, textile, silver

Length 24.5 cm; width 8 cm; height 6.5 cm

Inv. No. 83ab

Ladies' slippers covered with black velvet. Silver thread and bullion floral padded embroidery decoration on the vamp and stem embroidery in ribbon on the insole. There are pink-white floss silk tassels on the vamps and counter. The border is lined with white folded frayed textile ribbon fastened with golden braid.

4. Ladies' slippers

Turkey, 19th century

Gift, A. Waldhauser²¹, 1880

Leather, textile, golden thread

Length 24 cm; width 8 cm; height 6 cm

Inv. No. 84ab

¹⁹ Josefa Náprstková (1938–1907), wife of Vojtěch Náprstek (1826–1894), founder of the Czech Industrial Museum, today's Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American cultures. She attended to the prosperity of the museum.

²⁰ Marie Lamblová was a member of the prominent Prague Lambl family.

²¹ Antonín Waldhauser (1835–1913) was a Czech landscape painter.

Ladies' slippers covered with faded blue velvet. Golden thread and bullion floral padded embroidery decorate the vamp and the insole. The embroidery on the insole is in the form of a cornflower, a basic element of the vocabulary of Islamic ornamental art. There are white floss silk tassels on the vamp and also on the counter. The opening and the border are lined with white folded frayed textile ribbon fastened with golden braid.

5. Child's slippers

Turkey, 19th century

Gift, Josefa Náprstková, 1884

Leather, textile, golden thread, glass

Length 17.5 cm; width 6.5 cm; height 5 cm

Inv. No. A28630ab

Child's slippers covered with faded purple velvet. Golden thread and bullion padded floral embroidery with spangles decorate the vamp and the insole and there is a glass beaded flower in the center of the vamp decoration. There are purple-white floss silk tassels on the vamp and counter. The border of the insole is lined with golden thread strip.

6. Ladies' mules

Turkey, 19th century

Acquisition unlisted

Leather, textile, silver thread

Length 25 cm; width 7.5 cm

Inv. No. 29986ab

Ladies' mules covered with faded purple velvet. Silver thread and bullion floral padded embroidery decoration on the vamp and insole. The opening and the border are lined with pink silk. The rosette in the middle of the opening is made of the same pink silk with a metal clip on the vamp. There are three embossed points on the sole.

7. Ladies' mules

Turkey, 19th century

Acquired from R. Ritter von Dotzauer²², 1885

Leather, textile, silver thread, glass

Length 25.5 cm; width 6.5 cm

Inv. No. A12952ab

Ladies' mules covered with black-green velvet. Golden thread and bullion padded floral embroidery with spangles decorate the vamp and the insole and there is a glass beaded flower in the center of the vamp decoration. The border is lined with zigzag golden thread strip. The leather sole is embossed with the number "42".

8. Ladies' mules

Turkey, Istanbul, 19th century

Gift, S. Vávrová, Erivan, 1889

Leather, textile, wood, golden thread, glass, paper

Length 25 cm; width 6.5 cm

Inv. No. 80ab

²² Richard Ritter von Dotzauer (1816–1887), businessman and municipal politician.

Ladies' mules with upper section and heel covered with faded red velvet. Golden thread and bullion padded floral embroidery with glass beading decorate the vamp. The border of the opening is decorated with zigzag golden thread strip. There is an embossed medallion with the inscription صیران (Şirān) and the number "42" on the sole.

9. Ladies' mules

Turkey, late 19th century or early 20th century

Transferred from the Regional Museum of Kutná Hora, 1981

Leather, textile, wood, golden thread

Length 23.3 cm; width 6.2

Inv. No. A18476ab

Ladies' mules with upper section and heel covered with cream-colored velvet. Golden thread and bullion padded floral embroidery with glass beading decorate the vamp. Golden thread embroidery with a stem motif on the insole. The border of the opening is decorated with zigzag golden thread strip.

10. Sandals (*opanky*)

Albany or Turkey, early 20th century

Transferred from the Regional Museum of Litoměřice, 1952

Leather

Length 20.4 cm; width 8 cm

Inv. No. 49717ab

All leather shoes. The vamp is made of red colored leather and decorated with cutwork with decoratively laced leather strip of natural color. The rest of the shoe is of natural color leather. There are still remains of hair on the counter.

11. Sandals (*opanky*)

Balkan Peninsula, 20th century

Old acquisition²³

Leather, metal

Length 19 cm; width 6.7 cm

Inv. No. A28953ab

All leather shoes with raised toecap. The upper section of the sole is stitched with a decorative white leather strip. The decorative leather strip on the vamp is colored green and some straps are colored white. The sandals are worn out.

12. Sandals (*opanky*)

Balkan Peninsula, 20th century

Old acquisition

Leather, metal

Length 19.5 cm; width 6.5 cm; height 6.5 cm

Inv. No. A28954ab

All leather shoes with raised toecap. The vamp and straps are made of red colored leather. The vamp is decorated with a metal eyelet decoration.

²³ Old acquisitions are a category that includes items that were transferred to the Náprstek Museum with no documentation from various institutions, including regional museums, mostly in the 1950s and 1960s.

13. Sandals (*opanky*)

Balkan Peninsula, 20th century

Old acquisition

Leather, golden thread

Length 17.5 cm; width 6 cm, height 4.8 cm

Inv. No. A28955ab

All leather shoe with raised toecap. The upper section of the sole is stitched with a decorative white leather strip. The vamp is made of black colored leather decorated with golden thread embroidery with a combination of colored fabrics. A red leather strip stitched with golden thread lines forms the border of the opening.

14. Ladies' sandals (*qabqāb*)

Turkey, late 19th or early 20th century

Purchased from A. Sosnová, 1952

Wood

Length 25 cm; width 12.2 cm; height 8.7 cm

Inv. No. 49711ab

Ladies' wide-based *qabqāb* sandals made of wood. The sole and the stilts are decorated with floral arabesque carvings. The carvings were probably originally colored. Vamps are missing.

15. Ladies' sandals (*qabqāb*)

Turkey, 19th or 20th century

Old acquisition

Leather, wood, mother-of-pearl, textile, golden thread

Length 25 cm; width 8 cm, height 5 cm

Inv. No. A28957ab

The sole of the sandals is inlaid with little pieces of mother-of-pearl. The vamp is made of leather, covered with dark brown velvet and decorated with simple golden thread padded embroidery. The border of the opening is lined with a strip of green leather and the opposite side is lined with the remains of a colored woolen fringe.

16. Ladies' sandals (*qabqāb*)

Turkey or Balkan Peninsula, late 19th or early 20th century

Marassi, Dubrovnik, 1911

Leather, wood, silver

Length 25 cm; width 8 cm, height 5 cm

Inv. No. UMP4646 (The West Bohemian Museum, Pilsen)

Wooden sole and leather vamp covered with embossed silver with floral decoration except for the underside of the insole and the inner sides of the stilts. A leather strap is stitched to the silver vamp with silver metal thread.

17. Child's sandals (*qabqāb*)

Near East (probably Turkey), late 19th century

Transferred from the District Ethnological Museum, Olomouc, 1984

Leather, wood

Length 16 cm; width 5.5 m; height 3.5 cm

Inv. No. A15373ab

Child's rough work *qabqāb* sandals made of one piece of light-colored wood. Red leather vamp lined with a green leather strip. Wooden sole decorated with simple carved floral motifs.

18. Ladies' shoes

Turkey, Istanbul, 19th century.

Gift, A. Fričová²⁴, 1886

Leather, textile, silver and golden thread

Length 24 cm; width 6.2 cm

Inv. No. 78ab

Ladies' shoes with leather soles and heels. The upper section is covered with faded yellow velvet decorated with golden and silver thread, bullion and padded embroidery and a few spangles with a bullion in the middle. Floral motifs entirely decorate the vamp. Along the back part of the upper section there is a textile strip fastened with golden thread. The top is bordered with a zigzag strip of silver thread. The insole is made of cotton.

19. Ladies' shoes

Turkey, 19th century²⁵

Gift, B. Wittich, 1883

Leather, textile, wood, silver and golden thread.

Length 24 cm; width 6.5 cm

Inv. No. 90ab

Ladies' high-heeled shoes with upper section made of textile covered with purple velvet. Silver and golden thread, bullion and padded embroidery decoration with floral motifs entirely covers the vamp and is also on the sides and counter. There is a finely executed motif of a bird on the toecap. The insole is decorated with golden thread embroidery with a flower. The top is bordered with purple silk ribbon which is partly faded.

20. Ladies' shoe

Turkey, 19th century

Transferred from the Silesian Museum in Opava, 1956, gift of E. Grauer

Leather, textile, wood, golden thread

Length 27 cm; width 6.8 cm

Inv. No. 29941

One ladies' shoe with wooden heel and leather upper section and insole covered with purple velvet decorated with golden thread, bullion and padded embroidery and glass

²⁴ Anna Fričová (1825–1893), wife of Josef Václav Frič (1829–1890), Czech author, journalist and politician. He was kept under arrest after the revolutionary year of 1848. After his release from prison he lived in exile (London, Paris, and Zagreb) till his return in 1880.

²⁵ In the inventory book it is said to be from Tatar Pazarjik in Eastern Romania.

beaded decoration with floral motifs on vamp. Top and sides are lined with golden thread and zigzag strip. There is a red and white floss silk tassel on the toecap. The insole also has purple cotton lining. There is an embossed medallion with the inscription صیران (Şirân) and the number "43" on the sole.

21. Ladies' shoes

Turkey, mid-19th century

Old acquisition

Leather, textile, wood, golden thread

Length 26 cm; width 7 cm

Inv. No. A28623ab

Ladies' shoes with gilded wooden heel. The upper section is reinforced with paper and the insole is covered with purple velvet. Golden thread and bullion embroidery decoration with floral motifs on vamp, counter and insole. Top lined with strip of golden thread. There is the number "44" and an embossed medallion with the inscription صیران (Şirân) and cut flower ornament and heart on the sole.

22. Ladies' shoes

Turkey or Balkan Peninsula, 19th century

Gift, J. Falbergová, 1886

Leather, textile, golden thread

Length 26 cm; width 6 cm; length 5.5 cm

Inv. No. 21262ab

All-leather ladies' shoes with red upper section and pink leather lining. The vamp and sides are richly decorated with golden thread embroidery. Floral embroidery on vamp using white cloth. There are white floss silk tassels on the vamps and counters.

23. Ladies' shoes

Turkey, 19th century

Gift, A. J. Vřátko²⁶, 1863

Leather, textile, golden thread

Length 29 cm; width 7.5 cm; height 8 cm

Inv. No. 22254ab

All-leather ladies' shoes with upper section covered with red velvet decorated with golden thread and bullion embroidery with flowers. The pile of the velvet has come out of the fabric. Insole decorated with golden thread embroidery in the shape of a flower stem tied with a ribbon. Sides lined with zigzag golden strips. There are pink and white floss silk tassels on vamps and counters. The upper section is lined with white folded frayed ribbon sewn on with golden metal braid.

²⁶ Antonín Jaroslav Vřátko (1815–1892) was a Czech author and translator.

24. Ladies' shoes

Turkey or Balkan Peninsula, early 20th century

Transferred from the District Ethnological Museum, České Budějovice, 1959

Leather, textile, silver thread

Length 25.4 cm; width 6.5 cm; height 5 cm

Inv. No. 49713ab

All-leather ladies' shoes with red upper section. The floral decoration is made of silver thread embroidery. The embroidery on the vamp uses white cloth. The insole is also made of red leather. There are red and white floss silk tassels on vamp and counter.

25. Ladies' shoes

Turkey, probably early 20th century

Transferred from the Silesian Museum in Opava, 1956, gift, E. Grauer

Leather, textile, golden thread

Length 23 cm; width 7.5 cm; height 7 cm

Inv. No. A28555ab

The upper section of these all-leather ladies' shoes is covered with blue velvet with golden thread embroidery on the vamp. The insole is made of white leather. There are blue floss silk tassels on vamps and counters. The top was bordered with blue folded frayed ribbon, stitched on with golden thread. Only the remains are preserved.

Syria

26. *Qabqāb* sandals

Turkey or Syria, 19th century

Gift, J. Zeyer²⁷, 1881

Wood, leather, textile, golden thread, mother of pearl

Length 23.5 cm; width 10 cm; height 9 cm

Inv. Nos. 101ab and 56500ab²⁸

Ladies' *qabqāb* sandals made of dark wood and decorated with floral carving on stilts and sides. The border of the sole and the rear stilt are inlaid with pieces of mother-of-pearl fastened with brass nails. The central part of the sole is made of another, light wood decorated with a fine drawing of a landscape with trees and buildings. The vamp is made of leather covered with faded purple velvet decorated with golden thread and bullion padded embroidery. The border of the vamp is lined with a strip of golden thread and adorned with a purple and green floss silk tassel. Inv. No. 56500 is almost identical except for the fine drawing decorating the sole that depicts floral motifs. The vamp is adorned with a purple floss silk tassel and the back stilt is inlaid with pieces of mother-of-pearl fastened with brass nails.

²⁷ Julius Zeyer (1841–1901), a Czech new romantic writer, poet and playwright. He was also a great traveler. He visited many countries, e.g. Russia, Israel, Tunisia, Turkey and others.

²⁸ Transferred from the Silesian Museum of Opava, 1956 and probably the gift of E. Grauer. Measurements: Length 24.5 cm; width 10.2 cm; height 9 cm.

27. *Qabqāb* sandals

Syria, 19th century

Acquisition unlisted

Wood, leather, textile, silver, golden thread, mother of pearl

Length 23.1 cm; width 23 cm and 20.7 cm; height 27.6 cm

Inv. No. 4673ab

Ladies' wide-based stilted *qabqāb* sandals all made of wood. The whole surface of the sole and the stilts is decorated with a geometric and floral design in mother-of-pearl and silver wire. The motif of a cornflower blossom is used. The vamp is made of leather covered with worn out velvet and decorated with golden thread padded embroidery and spangles. The vamp is lined with cotton thread.

28. *Qabqāb* sandal

Near East (probably Syria), 19th century

Gift, V. Němec

Material: wood, silver, mother of pearl

Length 23 cm

Inv. No. 5716

Ladies' wide-based stilted *qabqāb* sandal all made of wood. The sole and the stilts are inlaid with mother-of-pearl and silver wire and are decorated with a cornflower blossom in the middle of a geometric pattern that covers the whole surface. The vamp is missing.

29. *Qabqāb* sandals

Probably Syria, 19th century

Acquisition unlisted

Wood, leather, mother of pearl

Size: 21.5 cm; width 18.5; height 17.8 cm

Inv. No. A2848ab

Ladies' wide-based stilted *qabqāb* sandals made of dark wood. The whole surface of the sole and stilts is decorated with a geometric and floral design inlaid with mother-of-pearl and silver wire. The motif of a cornflower blossom is used. The plain vamp consists of a leather strap. One vamp is missing.

Iran

30. Slippers

Iran, 20th century

Transferred from the Town Museum of Mšeno

Leather, metal

Length 24 cm; width 7.8 cm

Inv. No. 46062ab

Ladies' fish-shaped slippers with raised toecap. This type of slipper differs in shape and design from the Turkish slippers on display. The sole is made of a natural thick piece of leather and has a platform sole. The upper section and part of the insole are made of red leather. The insole is made of a combination of red and green leather with eyelet decoration and metal thread embroidery in the shape of a cross. The heel part of the insole is decorated with floral lacquer painting with floral motifs. The painting has partly disappeared.

31. Slippers

Iran, 19th century

Gift, S. Vávrová z Erivanu, 1889

Leather, textile, metal, lacquer

Length 20 cm; width 8 cm; height 5.5 cm

Inv. No. A28631ab

Fish-shaped ladies slippers with raised toecap and heel, made of brown leather. Part of the insole and lining is made of green leather. The heel part of the insole is decorated with floral lacquer painting. Rest of insole has metal thread embroidery.

Other areas

32. Men's shoes

Palestine, late 19th century

Transferred from Státní ústav památkové péče a ochrany přírody, 1981²⁹

Leather

Length 27 cm; width 9.5 cm, height 5.5 cm

Inv. No. A18444ab

All-leather men's shoes with sole made of dark brown leather. The upper section is covered with colored yellow leather. The toecap is slightly raised and the counter is pointed.

33. Men's sandals

Arabian Peninsula, second half of the 20th century

Transferred from the Jewish Museum in Prague

Leather

Length 24.7 cm; width 9.7 cm

Inv. No. A19519ab

Men's all-leather sandals with attached latchets connected with a leather buckle. The sole is decorated with green leather strip geometric embroidery. Both sandals, although of the same type, visually do not match.

34. Ladies' shoes

Yemen, Ṣan'ā', Sūq al-Kabīr, 20th century

Gift, Kašpárek³⁰, 1961

Leather, rubber

Length 26 cm; width 10.5 cm

Inv. No. A278ab

Ladies' all-leather shoes with a modern type of leather sole and rubber heels. There is a latchet over the vamp. The vamp is decorated with two pointed lines and embossed circlets.

²⁹ The title of the present institution is Národní památkový ústav (National Monument Institute). This example was a part of group of items transferred from the historical objects under the custody of the NPÚ to the Náprstek Museum. According to original records these items were collected during the 18th and 19th centuries and this part of the collection was collected in Palestine in the 1890s.

³⁰ First name unlisted.

35. Ladies' shoes

Afghanistan or Iran, early 20th century

Transferred from the Museum of České Budějovice

Leather, textile, silver and golden thread, metal

Length 23.6 cm; width 7.6 cm

Inv. No. 49715

Ladies' (wedding?) shoes with leather soles with embossed floral decoration. The textile upper section is entirely covered with silver, golden and cotton floral padded embroidery. The top is bordered with cotton thread in many colors (purple, yellow, blue, brown and white). The green velvet insole is decorated with a brass nail in the middle. The leather heel has five metal nails.

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No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4



No. 5



No. 6



No. 7



No. 8



No. 9



No. 10



No. 11



No. 12



No. 13



No. 14



No. 15



No. 16



No. 17



No. 18



No. 19



No. 20



No. 21



No. 22



No. 23



No. 24



No. 25



No. 26



No. 27



No. 28



No. 29



No. 30



No. 31



No. 32



No. 33



No. 34



No. 35
