



„GOLDEN LILIES“ FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE NÁPRSTEK MUSEUM, PRAGUE, THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Shoes are an important status symbol that shows the position of the wearer in society, and his or her connection with a particular social background and class². Women from the Han³ ethnic group in China have been wearing tiny, highly decorated and embroidered shoes (due to its size called the “three-inches golden lilies” 三寸金莲 *san cun jin lian*⁴) as a status symbol of wealth for centuries until the first decades of the twentieth century.

This paper describes the collection of golden lilies in the Náprstek Museum in Prague. It focuses on the history of the collection and on the construction and decoration of the shoes. Socio-cultural aspects of golden lilies are described here only briefly, because many studies have already been devoted to this topic⁵.

History of golden lilies

Unlike other status symbol shoes, wearing golden lilies required the mutilation of woman's feet. As the result, the mutilated feet became a status symbol that represented the woman's aspiration to strengthen her social position as the middle or upper class wife and mother.

When and why foot binding, i.e. the process of acquiring the desired size and shape of female feet, started, is not exactly known. According to Dorothy Ko, it was a centuries-long process that was conceived as early as in the third century AD⁶ when small feet were

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² Rosencranz 1972, 134.

³ Han, the ethnic group forming the majority of Chinese peoples, originating from the Chinese territory.

⁴ Other names used for these tiny shoes include: arched shoes *gongxie*, embroidered slippers *xiuxie*. See KO 2001, 17.

⁵ JACKSON, Beverly. *Splendid Slippers: A Thousand Years of an Erotic Tradition*, Ten Speed Press, 1998; LEVY, S. Howard. *The Lotus Lovers: The Complete History of the Curious Erotic Custom of Footbinding in China*. Prometheus Books, 1994; WANG, Ping. *Aching for Beauty: Footbinding in China*. University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

⁶ KO 2001, 44.

a sign of female beauty among the upper class and at the imperial court⁷. The end of the Tang dynasty (618–907 AD) in the late ninth century is seen by scholars as the era when foot binding begun to be practised⁸. Archaeological findings from the thirteenth century show evidence about the practise⁹. During the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties, foot binding became so widespread among upper class ethnic Han women that the Manchu¹⁰ rulers of the Qing dynasty tried in vain to repeatedly ban the custom (Manchu women did not practise foot binding). In the late nineteenth century, when foot binding spread to the middle class and even to peasant women, mainly in the northern parts of China¹¹, Chinese social and political reformers attacked foot binding as a harmful custom that made half of the Chinese nation weak and crippled¹², however, the custom survived until the early decades of the twentieth century.

Foot binding process

Foot binding was a painful long-term process with uncertain results – women could even die from the process. At the very least they lived all their lives in pain suffering from the various physical problems associated with the practise. Individual authors describe the process in different ways¹³, but the main stages presented below were necessary. The foot binding process began between the ages of three and five and finished approximately ten years later. During the first – preparatory – stage, the girl's feet were wrapped into a long binding cloth to stop natural growth. Every three or four days the binding was removed and the feet washed. The girl learnt how to soak, clean, and trim her toenails. Still she was forced to walk in order to keep the muscles from becoming atrophied. New binding was always more tight than the previous ones. During the second stage, the tight bandage was used to make the feet thin and narrow. The desirable shape of the foot should look like an arch and should be as small as possible. The toes were placed by force under the sole so that the cleft between the toes and heel formed. Some of the bones could be broken during this process. The next stage was to bend the heel toward the sole. It was especially these final stages that were the most painful. The dead skin and flesh could become infected. Regular cleaning and soaking in water with various ingredients such as frankincense, urine, boiled monkey bones, or warm animal blood helped to prevent inflammation. Alum was used as an astringent against bleeding and sweating that could cause infection. However, gangrene, paralysis of the feet, or various spine problems often occurred.¹⁴

According to the values of traditional Chinese society, bound feet signalled sexuality, but also a woman's modesty and morality¹⁵. Bound feet were a sign that the woman was ready for marriage, children, and adulthood. Same as in many cultures, a deliberately mutilated body secured a position within the community and indicated the individual's

⁷ LIU 2004, 207.

⁸ LIU 2001, 206–207. GULIK 2003, 216; ZHOU and GAO 1988, 286.

⁹ KO 2001, 21–23.

¹⁰ Manchu, a Tungusic people originated in Manchuria in the Northeast China, conquered Chinese territory in the 17th century, founded the Qing dynasty and ruled until 1912. Largely assimilated with the Han Chinese.

¹¹ LINZEY, passim.

¹² LIU 2004, 216. CHANG cites BROADWIN, Julie. „Walking Contradictions: Chinese Women Unbound at the Turn of the Century.“ *Journal of Historical Sociology* 10, no. 4 (December 1997) and BERG, Eugene, E. „Chinese Foot Binding.“ *Orthopaedic Nursing* 14, no. 5 (September/October 1995), 67.

¹³ LIU 2004, 208. WISE, passim; LIU, Kimberly, passim; SZE Ka Ho, passim.

¹⁴ FOLLETH, passim.

¹⁵ KO 2001, 52.

passage into maturity¹⁶. The mutually shared pain and emotions during binding the girl's feet strengthened the relationship between mothers and daughters, and formed a psychological and spiritual bond between generations of women¹⁷. Women with bound feet represented an ideal of domesticity and motherhood. However, bound feet played an important role in sexual behaviour. Touching the feet was a direct preliminary to sexual intercourse¹⁸. Watching his wife when washing and binding her feet was alluring, and sexual manuals recommended manipulation of the feet as one of sexual practices¹⁹. Erotic paintings often show naked women, but with their feet always hidden in tiny shoes²⁰.

Collection of the Náprstek Museum

The collection of golden lilies in Náprstek Museum comprises 36 pairs as well as single shoes. The earliest donation by a certain Miss Eleanora z Doubkú is dated 1877 (No. 23). Josefa Náprstková (1838–1907), the wife of the museum founder Vojta Náprstek (1826–1894) presented a pair of shoes acquired in a world exhibition in Zurich (Switzerland) in 1883, but only one remained today (No. 27). František Ladislav Rieger (1818–1903), a nationalist politician²¹, presented his donation in 1885 (No. 24). A pair of shoes (No. 3) belonged to a collection of Heinrich von Wawr (1831–1887)²², a surgeon, palaeontologist and botanist. A pair of golden lilies (No. 12) was donated in 1905 by Mr. Ching Ling-Foo (1854–1922), a famous Chinese conjuror on tour in Europe and the USA who visited the Náprstek Museum with his wife and family²³. Eleven pairs belonged to Joe Hloucha (1881–1957), a collector, a traveller to Japan and a prolific writer, whose rich collection donated in 1955 consists of several thousands of items from Japan and China (Nos. 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 20, 21, 22, 28, 34, 36). Among the donors (No. 31) was also Rudolf Dvořák (1860–1920), the founder of Chinese studies in Bohemia²⁴. A pair of shoes (No. 32) came from the property of a missionary museum in a Jesuit monastery and school in the city

¹⁶ HEWITT, *passim*.

¹⁷ LIU 2004, 206, CHANG cites BROADWIN, 428.

¹⁸ GULIK 2003, 218.

¹⁹ LIU, Kimberly, *passim*.

²⁰ GULIK 2003, 218.

²¹ Nationalist and conservative political leader demanding the autonomy of Bohemia within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

²² Heinrich von Wawr, born as Jindřich Blažej Vávra, studied botanic, philosophy and medicine. In 1855 he started his splendid career in Austro-Hungarian naval forces. As a physician, scientist and a member of several learned societies he was decorated with important imperial orders and on the 6. March 1873 received the title „von Fernsee“ (of Far Seas). During his travels in 1868–1871 and 1872–1873 he visited Shanghai and Beijing. See SUCHOMEL 2006, 27, 31.

²³ Chinese-born conjuror was the first true Oriental magician to achieve world fame. He was known under names Chee Ling Qua, or Chee Ling Que, in Chinese his name appeared in various versions such as 金林福, 金陵福 (in contemporary pinyin transcription Jin Linfu, Jin Lingfu). His speciality was breathing fire and producing huge bowls with water from his clothes. See www.chinaculture.org/gb/cn_zgwh/2004-06/28/content_50579.htm, <http://hk.geocities.com/chinesemagichistory/chinglingfoo>. His several photographs are kept in the library of the Náprstek Museum. One picture (Inv. No. 176.25) shows him sitting with his family among an entourage of celebrities including Joe Hloucha and Rudolf Dvořák's wife and son in a former balcony of the Náprstek Museum (the balcony no longer exists). Another picture (Inv. No. 23/6a) shows him and his troupe sitting on chairs with their gifts (the „golden lilies“ shoes and several other items) on the ground in front of them.

²⁴ Rudolf Dvořák introduced the work of ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius to the region as early as the 1880s (*Čiňana Konfucia život a nauka*, The Life and Teaching of a Chinese Named Confucius, 1887–91), and in 1898 he presented his partial translation of the classic book *Shijing* (*Ši King*, The Book of Odes,

of Bohosudov in the northern Bohemia. Between the 1950s and the 1990s, the museum acquired items via local museums in Czechoslovakia or purchases from antiquity shops.

Golden lilies construction terminology

The terminology used here to describe Chinese golden lilies are based on Cameron Kippen's web-page "The History of Shoes". Although she deals with contemporary western shoes, her explanation is useful for my description of Chinese footwear.

The golden lilies from the Náprstek Museum can be divided into several sections: a toe²⁵, a wamp, left and right sides, and a back which are usually made of stiffened paper²⁶ coated in plain or monochrome patterned silk satin (smooth, lustrous and fine weave based on a unit of five or more ends and a number of picks equal to, or multiples of, the number of ends²⁷) decorated with embroidery and stitched or glued machine-woven ribbons. The opening for putting the shoes on usually has a decorated topline. At the shoe back there is sometimes a tab (sometimes with two loops on both sides) for easing on. The tab and loops are made of silk satin or cotton tabby, and often do not match in colour and style with sophisticatedly embroidered and decorated shoes.

This upper section is stitched by hand to the welt that joints it to the outsole. The welt is usually silk satin or cotton tabby of various colours, often highly decorated with ribbons.

The shoes inside lining is simple, often undyed white or red cotton tabby is used. Even highly decorated shoes are untidy and unkempt inside.

The outsole, the outer sole of the shoe exposed to the ground, is made of a wooden panel of various thicknesses and shapes coated in silk or whitened and decoratively quilted cotton tabby, sometimes soled with leather plates. The wooden heels coated in fabric have different shapes and height. The rim of the heels exposed to the walking ground can be decorated with silk satin or tabby in contrasting colours. Most interesting is the bridge or waist of the shoe – the middle part of the outsole between the heel and toe, right under the foot arch. The bridges are decorated with multicoloured ribbons and appliqué. The decoration can reveal intriguing and sophisticated details suggesting the shoes erotic function. It shows that the feet hidden under the layers of satin, quilting, ribbons and embroidery is an object of male sexual fantasy.

Dorothy Ko describes the process of making the shoes in eight steps: 1) cutting the paper pattern, 2) selecting fabric, 3) tracing embroidery pattern onto fabric, 4) embroidering (in the nineteenth century, embroidery manuals were available), 5) affixing lining and finishing the topline, 6) making the outsole, 7) stitching the wamp to the outsole, 8) finishing²⁸. The shoes were made at home by women, although wooden heels or soles could be bought from outside craftsmen²⁹. Shoes were worn with cloth binder and legging or socks³⁰.

1898–1912), followed by his translation of a taoist pilosophy classic *Daodejing* (*Lao-Tsiova kanonická kniha o Tau a ctnosti Tao Tek-King*, Laozi's Canonic Book of the Tao and Virtue *Daodejing*, 1920). His archive is kept in the library of the Náprstek Museum.

²⁵ The shoes construction terms used in the Catalogue are underlined here.

²⁶ See HRADILOVÁ and ORLITA 2004, 18, 19.

²⁷ See TANAKA, passim.

²⁸ KO 2001, 81.

²⁹ KO 2001, 83.

³⁰ KO 2001, 94.

Decoration technique, colours and motives

Embroidery and ribbons are the main means of decorating the shoes, however, appliqué, golden thread couching and multicolour painting are also used.

As for the embroidery, the satin stitch arranged in regular flat rows, satin stitch with shading, chain stitch, so-called "Pekin knot" and "Pekinese stitch" (back stitch with a loop) are among the most common³¹. Back stitch is used for appliqué. There is also embroidery that imitates a narrow woven ribbon on the topline of the shoes made in the Pearl river/Cantonese style (Nos. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29)³². It consists of golden paper (weft) and a thread (warp) arranged in a tabby or twill pattern. Golden couching is used for leaves, lines and coins patterns. A few examples of painting show realistic flowers.

The machine-woven commercial ribbons used for embellishment are of various widths ranging from approximately 2 or 3 millimetres to a centimetre or more. The thin ribbons have stylised woven flowers or dots patterns, whereas the large ribbons are decorated with complicated stylised woven flowers, butterflies or phoenixes. The ribbons are multicoloured.

It is not easy to define a specified colour scheme used for the golden lilies in our collection. There are many colours involved, however, it seems that various shades of blue were often used for embroidery, and many woven ribbons are in blue-green-violet colour combination. Red and green combination often appears on shoes. Sometimes the colours of satin, embroidery and ribbons match together, sometimes a small detail in contrasting colour is added, or the colours are used at random without matching together.

The motives show lucky auspicious symbols providing long life, happiness and wealth. Fish symbolise abundance and regeneration, butterflies symbolise joy and conjugal felicity, the lion is a protector, the phoenix stands for femininity, bats bring happiness and square-holed coins prosperity and wealth. The plum flower (genus *Prunus*) is a symbol of long life, because it blossoms in winter. Orchids (*Orchidaceae* family) represent fragility, modesty but strength. A gourd (*Cucurbitaceae* family) is a ward of pernicious influences³³, a lotus (*Nelumbonaceae* family) is esteemed for its purity, a peony (genus *Paeonia*) symbolises love and feminine beauty, and a peach (species *Prunus persica*) immortality. The abstract decorations include an ancient thunder *leiwen* 雷纹 pattern, endless knot (happiness), *ruyi* 如意 (symbol of unknown origin with long life meaning), and swastika (happiness) designs.

A beautiful example of auspicious decoration represents shoes with Liu Hai 刘海 and a three-legged toad from Joe Hloucha's collection (No. 36). According to legends, Liu Hai was a taoist scholar living in the tenth century who possessed a magic toad. In order to make the toad coming to him, he used a string with golden coins. On the side of a shoe there is an image of Liu Hai as a child holding a chain of coins, and a toad among leaves and flowers. The magic three-legged toad that lives on the moon according to Chinese mythology, is one of the most auspicious symbols of moneymaking and prosperity. Simultaneously, both frog and toad (*Ranidae* and *Bufo* families) are associated with fertility that can be considered as an aspect of prosperity as well.

³¹ Terminology according to BERTIN-GUEST 2003, 86.

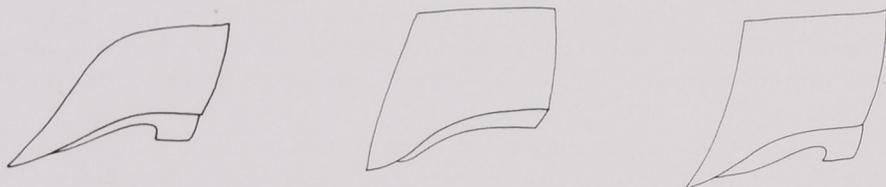
³² KO 2001, 110. About different styles see later.

³³ WILLIAMS 1941, 217.

Types

Dorothy Ko distinguishes six regional styles (Sichuan and Interior Northwest/Southwest region, Hebei and Shanxi provinces, Shandong province, Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, Fujian province and Taiwan, Pearl river delta area and Canton).³⁴ The collection of the Náprstek Museum comprises northern (Shandong) and southern (Jiangsu/Zhejiang and Pearl river/Canton area) styles.

Northern style shoes are higher than the southern style, with flat or low heel, downward curved outsole. The collection of the Náprstek Museum contains Shandong style shoes³⁵.



Southern style include low slippers, very open, flat or with a low heel.



Slim shoes with pointed toes are in the Pearl river/Canton area style³⁶.



Typical shoes for the Pearl river/Canton area are decorated with embroidery imitating a woven ribbon³⁷.



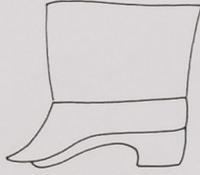
³⁴ KO 2001, 110.

³⁵ KO 2001, 112.

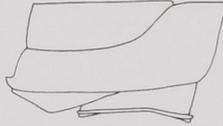
³⁶ KO 2001, 91.

³⁷ KO 2001, 91, 124–5.

High booties were worn in the Pearl river/Canton area³⁸.



Jiangsu/Zhejiang style is a style with a tongue. The front sole and the heel are made of two separate wooden pieces³⁹.



³⁸ KO 2001, 129.

³⁹ KO 2001, 122. The tongue is sometimes attached to the shoe in the southern styles.



No. 1.



No. 2.



No. 3.



No. 4.



No. 5.



No. 6.



No. 7.



No. 8.



No. 9.



No. 10.



No. 11.



No. 12.



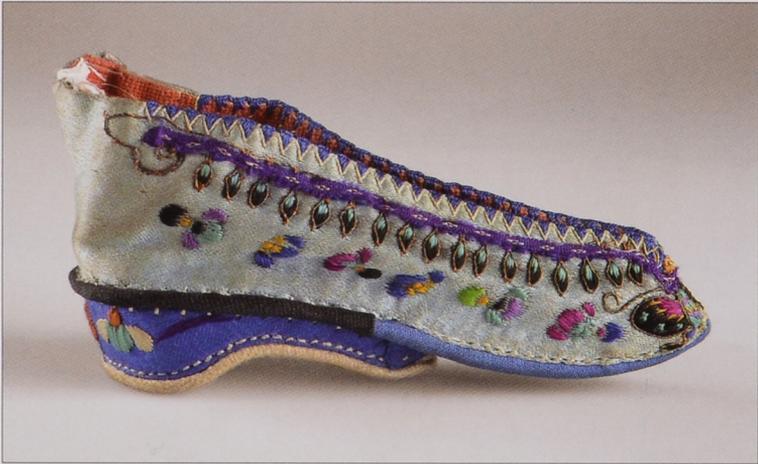
No. 13.



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.



No. 36.

Catalogue

No. 1. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined.

China, late 19th century.

Joe Hloucha's collection.

High 13 cm, length 14 cm.

Inv. No. 32548

The shoes are made of yellowish tabby with a large green tabby tab with loops at the back for easing on, lined with white paper. The opening front part of the vamp is outlined with a black ribbon with tiny woven flowers and secured with white threads. The vamp is impregnated and painted with stylised black and blue butterfly/flowers⁴⁰. The heel and outsole is white cotton tabby. The outsole is quilted. At the bridge there is a blue ribbon and the toe outsole is black tabby.

No. 2. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined.

China, late 19th century.

Joe Hloucha's collection.

High 7,5 cm, length 11,5 cm.

Inv. No. 32551

The shoes made of black satin with red lining and a red tabby tab at the back for easing on. The shoes are decorated with golden thread couching with thunder and swastika patterns, small medallions with stylised coins and lotus/peony flowers, butterflies and mushrooms of immortality. The welt above the heel is blue tabby. The heel is made of white tabby with embroidered blue flowers. The outsole is white quilted cotton tabby.

No. 3. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined.

China, late 19th century.

Transferred from Moravské museum, Brno. Originally Wawr's collection.

High 8 cm, length 11 cm.

Inv. No. A 26553

Shoes made of light blue and white satin, with red cotton lining. The topline is outlined with a narrow white ribbon with blue, green and violet hints. The blue satin upper is cut in the form of "ruyi" at the back and on both sides of toes. White satin is embroidered with butterflies and flowers in black, white and various shades of blue. The design is different on each side of the shoes. The heel is coated in white cotton, the heel outsole is quilted. The bridge is coated with yellow green and deep blue satin and a white and blue ribbon. The middle part of the bridge is decorated with orange patterned satin.

⁴⁰ Shoes with painting are sometimes impregnated with tung oil as protection against rain (KO 2001, 14–15).

No. 4. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 6,5 cm, length 13 cm.

Inv. No. 20171

The shoes are made of red satin with pink, blue, green, and white printed twill tabs with loops for easing on, with white cotton tabby lining. The upper section is embroidered on each side with realistic yellow flowers and leaves. On the front part of a toe there is a triangular-shaped white tabby insert with simple flower embroidery on a blue satin band and a narrow woven blue, green, red ribbon. The welt above the heel is green, the bridge is coated with a large black and multicolour ribbon. The heel is made of whitened tabby. The heel outsole consists of several narrow strips of satin in black, green, violet and blue.

No. 5. A golden lily. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Joe Hloucha's collection.

High 8 cm, length 13 cm.

Inv. No. 32554

The shoe is made of deep blue satin. The toe is decorated with a piece of triangular-shaped whitened tabby and a narrow multicoloured woven blue, green, white and red ribbon. On both sides of the toe is a subtle embroidery: a guard, a flower and a swastika on one side, and a butterfly, a leaf and a flower on the other side. Both embroideries are in green, pink, white, red, and blue. The welt above the heel is violet tabby, the bridge is a green ribbon. The heel is made of undyed tabby. Most interesting is the design of the outsole. Both the heel and toe are decorated with a stylised peach made of quilted undyed tabby, red tabby and a multicoloured ribbon as the peach's tip⁴¹.

No. 6. A golden lily. Northern style.

Silk satin ribbons, lined.

China, late 19th century.

Purchased from a private collector, 1980.

High 8 cm, length 12 cm.

Inv. No 46603

A golden lily made of pale green silk satin. The upper section is embellished with a narrow golden zigzag ribbon and metal rings. White, blue, red and pink beads form a stylised flower on the toes. Near the welt there are tassels made of white and blue thread. The heel is coated in white tabby.

⁴¹ Ornate soles in similar design see in KO 2001, 112.

No. 7. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin ribbons, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

The acquisition history is not known.

High 11 cm, length 12 cm.

Inv. No. 18676

The upper part is made of four machine-woven commercial ribbon – 1) a black ribbon, 2) a narrow white ribbon with blue and green flowers, 3) a large deep blue ribbon with white butterflies with black and white zigzag pattern on its hems and, 4) a turquoise ribbon with blue and green stylised phoenixes with hint of red. The toe is made of impregnated and whitened tabby with a painted blue, white and yellow flower/butterfly. On the toe is a blue thread tassel. The welt is green, the heel and the outsole is white cotton tabby. The heel outsole is soled with five metal nails.

No. 8. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin ribbons, lined in cotton tabby

China, late 19th century.

Joe's Hloucha collection.

High 12,8 cm, length 12,5 cm.

Inv. No. 32546

The topline of this slightly damaged golden lilies is outlined with black satin. The upper section is made of deep blue patterned satin with large flowers and three machine-woven commercial ribbons – two ribbon with blue and green flowers, and one with a zigzag pattern on white foundation, and two very narrow green bands. The toes and vamp backs are impregnated black-painted tabby with painted realistic green, violet, white and yellow flowers. The flowers are different on every side of each shoe. The welt above the heel is green, the bridge is a narrow green, violet and blue ribbon. The outsole is white tabby, the heel outsole is quilted.

No. 9. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin ribbons, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Joe's Hloucha collection.

High 11 cm, length 10 cm.

Inv. No. 32549

Golden lilies made of white tabby, lined in red tabby. The topline is black, followed by six narrow white ribbons with woven patterns of red dots, blue flowers, red and white flowers, a violet zigzag pattern, violet and green flowers and tiny white flowers on black foundation. The toe is impregnated yellowish tabby with a painted yellow and black butterfly. The welt above the heel is violet. The bridge is outlined with a green ribbon. The heel and the outsole is white tabby.

No. 10. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

The acquisition history is not known.

High 11,5 cm, length 11 cm.

Inv. No. 20172

A pair of golden lilies made of silk satin, lined in red cotton tabby. The upper section is pale green satin. The topline is decorated with black tabby and three ribbons: a very narrow beige ribbon with black and red lozenges, a white ribbon with woven stylised flowers and figures in green, blue, and a black ribbon with woven stylised flowers in green, white and blue. The back of the shoe is decorated with four golden thread couching and a narrow black ribbon forming a "ruyi" design. The toes are embroidered in violet, rose, black and white. One side shows a pair of fish, the other a black swastika. The heel is covered in undyed cotton tabby. The undyed cotton outsole is quilted.

No. 11. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Transferred from a regional museum, 1992.

High 13 cm, length 13,5 cm.

Inv. No. A 16014

These shoes are very damaged. The toes have remains of blue/green and white satin with rich embroidery. In the upper section there are strips of white and blue ribbons. The topline is outlined in red (?) satin. There are also remains of golden couching. The heel is coated in white cotton, the outsole is quilted.

No. 12. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Donated by Ching Ling-foo, 1905.

High 13 cm, length 12 cm.

Inv. No 1903

A pair of golden lilies made of silk satin, lined in undyed cotton tabby. The upper section is made of a large band of black satin with red embroidered decoration at the back. The middle upper section made of green satin is slightly damaged, but the woven motifs including phoenixes in roundels, butterflies and flowers are still visible. The dark violet impregnated toes have painted blue and yellow flowers. The welt above the heel is light green. The heel is coated in white cotton tabby. Its outsole is coated in blue cotton tabby with a narrow violet, green and black ribbon that lines a tiny piece of triangular-shaped red tabby in the middle.

No. 13. A golden lily. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Transferred from a regional museum, 1984.

High 15 cm, length 13 cm.

Inv. No. A 16244

A golden lily made of silk satin, lined in red cotton tabby. The topline is black tabby. The upper section is red satin with embroidered pale blue, pink, green, white and black peacocks among flowers. Above this part there are nine narrow ribbons of various sizes mostly in black and white colour with hints of blue, green, violet and red, and a large blue band with embroidered flowers, coins, bats in "Pekinese" stitch (violet, pink, green, brown, white) and golden thread couching. The outsole is undyed quilted tabby. The heel is coated in undyed tabby with embroidered blue flowers.

No. 14. Golden lilies. Northern style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 15,5 cm, length 14 cm.

Inv. No. A 26554

Highly decorated shoes with red cotton lining. The topline is outlined with blue satin. The upper section consists of five ribbons (white with blue flowers, black with white and blue flowers with hints of green and violet, a very narrow violet ribbon and a ribbon in various shades of blue) and rich embroidery on light blue "leiwen" patterned satin. The "Pekinese knot" embroidery shows flowers – orchids, peonies or lotuses, coins and immortality mushrooms in white, violet and green with golden couching. The toes are embroidered with coins, stylised bats, butterflies and realistic flowers (lotuses, "meihua" plums) among leaves in white and shades of green, violet and blue on black satin. The heel is coated in white cotton tabby, the outsole is quilted. The back of the heel is embroidered with blue flowers with hints of black and marron.

No. 15. Golden lilies. Jiangsu/Zhejiang style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 8,6 cm, length 8,2 cm.

Inv. No. 3450

The upper section is red satin with a large underlined green satin tab with multicoloured ribbons at the back for easing on. The topline is outlined in blue satin. The opening is partially joined together with white thread⁴². The upper section is simply embroidered with white, pale green and black butterflies. The heel is low. The outsole is quilted, its heel section is blue tabby. The toe section is black.

⁴² This stitch – a gusset of crisscrossing thread – is called "damasc darning" and is typical for the southern style in Guangdong province area (KO 2001, 91).

No. 16. A golden lily. Jiangsu/Zhejiang style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 5 cm, length 10 cm.

Inv. No. 46425

A golden lily made of pale blue silk satin, underlined in red tabby. The topline is decorated with embroidered blue and white triangles, a violet and yellow narrow ribbon and a line of green and black embroidered leaves with golden thread couching. The upper section is embroidered with a spray of tiny multicoloured flowers. On the toe there is a multicoloured butterfly. The welt is black cotton tabby above the heel. The heel is coated in blue satin and embroidered with multicoloured flowers. The outsole is quilted white cotton tabby. The toe outsole is blue tabby.

No. 17. Golden lilies. Jiangsu/Zhejiang style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century

Acquisition history is not known.

High 5 cm, length 10 cm.

Inv. No. A 4593

A pair of golden lilies made of yellow satin with red lining, with embroidered black, green and blue coins and flowers. The opening is outlined with embroidered triangles, a violet ribbon and a line of green and black leaves with golden couching. On toes there are blue and green embroidered butterflies with a hint of red. The welt is pink. The low heel is coated in blue satin. On its back side there is an embroidered red flower with green leaves. The outsole is made of white quilted tabby.

No. 18. Golden lilies. Jiangsu/Zhejiang style.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 6 cm, length 12 cm.

Inv. No. A 26902

Golden lilies made of red silk satin, underlined in red tabby. The topline is decorated with embroidered blue and white triangles, a narrow green and yellow narrow ribbon and a line of green and black embroidered leaves with golden thread couching. The upper section is embroidered with a spray of tiny multicoloured flowers. On the toe there is a multicoloured embroidered butterfly. The welt is black tabby above the heel. The heel is coated in blue satin and embroidered with multicoloured flowers. The outsole is quilted white cotton tabby. The toe outsole is blue tabby.

No. 19. A golden lily. Jiangsu/Zhejiang style

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 7 cm, length 16 cm.

Inv. No. A 26903

A golden lily made of silk satin, underlined in undyed cotton tabby. The upper section is black satin with a red back tab in patterned tabby embroidered with blue flowers and outlined with a black tabby band and two ribbons. The topline is red patterned tabby with two narrow green and white ribbons with tiny blue flowers. The upper section is embroidered with pink, yellow, green, white guards and two red swastikas on the toe. The welt is green in the heel section and pale green – same as the heel – under the toe. The waist is outlined with a green and black ribbon. The heel is coated in pale green satin, its rim is outlined with a black band. The outsole is undyed quilted tabby

No. 20. Golden lilies.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Collection of Joe Hloucha.

High 6 cm, length 18 cm.

Inv. No. 32550

Shoes made of black satin with white lining and a flat outsole covered in white cotton tabby and leather. The toe seam is covered by a leather band and black thread embroidery. A blue satin tab with loops on both sides is at the back.

No. 21. Golden lilies.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Collection of Joe Hloucha.

High 7,5 cm, length 18,3 cm.

Inv. No. 32552

Shoes made of deep blue patterned satin with a monochrome flower patten with white lining and a flat outsole covered in white cotton tabby and leather. The toe seam is covered by a leather band. A grey satin tab with loops made of greenish patterned satin is at the back.

No. 22. Golden lilies.

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Collection of Joe Hloucha.

High 8 cm, length 18 cm.

Inv. No. 32553

Shoes made of black satin patterned with a monochrome flower design, with white lining and a flat outsole covered in quilted white cotton tabby. A grey/violet satin tab with loops made of greenish patterned satin with flower design is at the back.

No. 23. A golden lily. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, unlined.

China, second half of 19th century.

Donated by Eleanora z Doubkú, 1877.

High 9,2 cm, length 7,5 cm.

Inv. No. 3445

The shoe is made of red satin with a large green cotton tabby tab with yellow lining and two loops at the back. The opening is partially outlined with embroidery that imitates a woven tabby ribbon. It consists of golden paper (weft) and a green thread (warp). The upper section is embroidered, but only remains of it and a narrow black ribbon with golden couching are visible today. Under the green welt, the heel is covered in whitened tabby, the outsole is white cotton tabby.

No. 24. A golden lily. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, second half of 19th century.

Donated by František Rieger, 1885.

High 6,5 cm, length 8 cm.

Inv. No. 3446

A shoe made of yellow silk satin, lined in cotton tabby. The upper section is made of yellow satin with a large deep blue tab with woven flowers at the back for easing on. The opening is partially outlined with embroidery that imitates a woven tabby ribbon. The ribbon consists of golden paper (weft) and violet thread (warp). The upper part is embroidered with violet and pink flowers among leaves. The welt is green. The heel is covered in blue cotton tabby. The heel outsole is soled with two leather triangular-shaped plates.

No. 25. A golden lily. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, unlined.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 9,5 cm, length 7,5 cm.

Inv. No. 3447

The shoe is made of red satin with a large green cotton tabby tab with yellow lining and two loops at the back. The opening is partially outlined with embroidery that imitates a woven tabby ribbon. It consists of golden paper (weft) and a green thread (warp). The upper section is embroidered with simple blue and white flowers. A narrow black ribbon and golden couching are added. The heel is covered in whitened tabby, the outsole is made of white cotton tabby.

No. 26. A golden lily. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, unlined.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 12,3 cm, length 11 cm.

Inv. No. 3448

An unlined golden lily is made of violet/blue silk tabby with a twill pattern, with a large yellowish cotton tabby tab at the back for easing on. The topline is outlined with embroidery that imitates a woven tabby ribbon. It consists of golden paper (weft) and violet thread (warp). The embroidered pattern resembles lozenge-shaped twill weave. The upper part is embroidered with pink, green and white flowers among leaves. On the toe there is an embroidered blue, white and green butterfly. The heel is covered in whitened cotton tabby. The heel outsole is covered in green cotton tabby with two narrow violet ribbons and two leather plates on both ends of the heel outsole.

No. 27. A golden lily. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, second half of 19th century.

Donated by Josefa Náprstková, 1883.

High 8,6 cm, length 8,2 cm.

Inv. No. 3449

A golden lily made of yellowish silk satin, lined in cotton tabby, with a large light brown tab with woven design of regular tiny stylised flowers at the back for easing on. The opening is partially lined with embroidery that imitates a woven zigzag pattern twill ribbon. It consists of golden paper (weft) and violet thread (warp). The upper section is embroidered with green flowers with hints of yellow and violet among leaves and stems. The heel is covered in blue satin with an unfinished embroidered flower, probably a lotus. The heel outsole is soled with a leather plate.

No. 28. Golden lilies. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Collection of Joe Hloucha.

High 11,5 cm, length 6,5 cm.

Inv. No. 33098

The shoes are made of pink patterned satin with a large green and blue cotton tabby tab with two loops at the back. The opening is partially outlined with embroidery that imitates a woven ribbon. It consists of golden paper (weft) and red thread (warp). The pattern resembles lozenge-shaped twill weave. The upper section is embroidered with golden couching with tiny flowers among leaves. The heel is covered in green patterned satin, the outsole is decorated with narrow pink, green and violet ribbons and soled with three triangular-shaped leather plates.

No. 29. Golden lilies. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, unlined.

China, late 19th century.

Collection of Joe Hloucha.

High 9,5 cm, length 8,5 cm.

Inv. No. A 26901

A pair of golden lilies, made of yellow brocade, unlined, with pink/yellow patterned tabby tab with two loops. The opening is partially outlined with embroidery that imitates a woven lozenge-shaped twill weave ribbon. It consists of golden paper (weft) and a red thread (warp). The upper section is embroidered with pink, violet, green flowers and leaves. Tiny metal rings are used for embellishment. The heel is coated in blue satin, the outsole is made of whitened cotton tabby and soled with small leather plates at toe and heel sections.

No. 30. A golden lily. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 7,5 cm, length 11 cm.

Inv. No. 30916

A wedding shoe made of red silk satin, underlined in white tabby. The topline is decorated with a violet satin band. "Damasc darning" embroidery secures the opening section. The upper section is embroidered with blue, white and black tiny flowers and two coins with golden couching. The heel is coated in white tabby and embroidered with violet and black flowers and leaves. The heel outsole is quilted light blue cotton tabby. The welt and toe outsole is made of black tabby.

No. 31. Golden lilies. Jiangsu/Zhejiang style

Silk satin, lined in cotton tabby.

China, late 19th century.

Collection of Rudolf Dvořák.

High 7,5 cm, length 12 cm.

Inv. No. A 1972

The shoes are made of pink satin, and white tabby lining. The front part of the vamp is made of a triangular-shaped piece of white patterned tabby. This piece is outlined in blue satin and two very narrow ribbons – a white and green ribbon and a black and yellow ribbon. The pink satin is embroidered with spray of tiny multicoloured flowers. The welt above the heel is blue, the bridge is a multicolour ribbon. The heel and the toe outsole are coated with turquoise patterned satin. The heel outsole is quilted in turquoise tabby. The rim of the heel is outlined with deep violet and green satin bands and golden thread.

No. 32. Golden lilies. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin and ribbons, lined in satin.

China, late 19th century.

Transferred from the Jesuit museum in Bohosudov.

High 16 cm, length 14 cm.

Inv. No. 18678

Golden lilies made of silk satin and ribbons, with white satin lining. The topline is outlined with violet patterned tabby. The upper section consists of a large piece of golden patterned tabby with woven bats, flowers and Buddhist symbols of good luck, and three large ribbons – a black ribbon with multicoloured flowers, a green ribbon with white and violet flowers and butterflies, and a violet ribbon with white and green flowers and butterflies. A blue satin band follows the ribbons. Under the band, the vamp is made of black satin. The toes are embroidered with multicoloured flowers with a butterfly at the tip. Above the embroidered butterfly, there is a triangular-shaped piece of white satin, a multicoloured ribbon and an embroidered line of leaves with golden couching. The welt is green, the heel and the outsole is white quilted cotton tabby.

No. 33. Golden lilies. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin and ribbons, lined in cotton.

China, late 19th century.

Purchased from a private person, 1952.

High 14 cm, length 7,5 cm.

Inv. No. 30917

A pair of golden lilies made of silk satin, lined in undyed cotton tabby. The upper part is made of red/pink silk patterned tabby with twill design of large flowers. The middle section is a large commercial satin ribbon with woven butterflies, roses and peonies with leaves in yellowish green, blue, rose and black color. The ribbon's hem is a black zigzag pattern. Then there is a narrow leather golden band. The vamp is deep red satin with golden couching and green embroidered flowers and leaves. The toe is decorated with green/blue satin and simple green, violet and pink embroidered zigzag pattern. The heel is covered in green/blue satin. The outsole is made of leather. The outsole bridge is decorated with light violet and white tabby and two narrow white and pink ribbons with tiny green and violet flowers.

No. 34. Golden lilies. Pearl river/Cantonese style

Silk satin and ribbons, lined in cotton.

China, late 19th century.

Joe Hloucha's collection.

High 17 cm, length 6,5 cm.

Inv. No. 33097

A pair of booties made of silk satin and ribbons, lined in undyed cotton tabby. The upper section is made of pink patterned satin, now damaged, and two narrow pink, white, violet and green ribbons. Then there is a large white ribbon, its hems with a black endless knot design, and with white, pink, blue and yellow peonies, roses, butterflies, phoenixes and endless knots. Then comes a narrow leather band. The vamp is red satin with golden couching – orchids and leaves. Above the embroidered flowers there is a light blue triangular-shaped piece of patterned satin with endless knot golden couching. The welt above the heel is violet tabby. A narrow golden band is at the bridge. The heel is coated in green satin, with golden couching – a flower with a red dot. The bridge is decorated with a narrow golden band, red satin and two pink ribbons. The heel and toe outsole is soled with leather plates.

No. 35. Golden lilies. Jiangsu/Zhejiang style

Silk satin ribbons, lined in cotton.

China, late 19th century.

Acquisition history is not known.

High 8 cm, length 14 cm.

Inv. No. A 26552

A pair of golden lilies made of silk satin, lined in undyed cotton tabby. The upper section is made of orange satin, embroidered with tiny pink, red and green flowers. The front part is outlined with four narrow white, green, red and violet ribbons, and with a narrow band of blue satin. Above the ribbons there is a light violet satin tongue with woven stylised pink, blue, green and white flowers and birds. The welt is blue/green under toes and violet above the heel. A multicoloured ribbon outlines the bridge. The outsole is blue/green and violet quilted tabby. The heel is coated in blue/green tabby with the same flowers and birds design as the tongue, with a blue and yellow rim.

No. 36. A golden lily.

Silk satin ribbons, lined in cotton.

China, late 19th century.

Joe Hloucha's collection.

High 15,5 cm, length 10 cm.

Inv. No. 32545

A shoe made of silk satin, lined in undyed cotton tabby. The upper section is made of deep violet satin with a green tab with and two loops in blue tabby at the back for easing on. The topline is decorated with embroidered rim and a narrow blue ribbon with tiny white and red flowers. The opening has "damasc darning" stitches in green colour. The wamp is decorated with white, green, yellow and pink colour embroidery. On one side there is a child wearing a children's apron and playing with a three-legged toad among leaves and flowers. The child represents Liu Hai sporting a magic toad. The other side shows a farmer in a yellow coat and green trousers among large leaves. The welt is green tabby, the bridge is a multicoloured ribbon. The outsole is quilted undyed tabby. A tiny "heel" decorated with blue and violet butterflies secures the tip outsole. The heel is high and massive, decorated with an embroidered stylised lion head in various shades of green and a violet and yellow coin.⁴³

⁴³ The author thanks Dorothy Ko for information about this unusual high arched shoe in northwestern style.

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Picture 1



Ching Ling-Foo (centre) and his troupe. In the second row there is Joe Hloucha and Eitarô Nambu from Japan. The golden lilies and other gifts to the museum are in the front (Inv. No. 23/6a).



The erotic painting from an album *Feng yue wu qing que you qing* 风月无情却有情 (Wind and Moon Feel No Emotion But Feel Passion) (Inv. No. 46890). Watercolour on paper, 19th century. The lady is naked except a red colour apron over her belly and breasts and a pair of golden lilies. The red colour of her shoes and apron creates a visual centre of the picture, representing the erotic message of the painting.



Decorated outsoles. Nos. 3, 4, 5, 28, 33, 34, 35.