



## CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT

**Bid Number:**  
2025.07.01



(For more condition photographs, please see object file)

**Date:** October 24, 2025

**Contact:**

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**Object:**

Korean shoes--Heukhye, Black Shoes for Men

**Object ID:**

2025.05.28.03

**Description:**

A single Korean men's slipper made of black velvet and white leather, known as "Heukhye" in the Korean language ("heuk" meaning black, "hye" meaning low shoes). The shoe is constructed from 3 pieces: two sides sewn together on the midline of the toe and heel, and a thick sole. The slipper is made from white leather and covered with a layer of black velvet or a similar flocked material. An extra layer of leather was placed over the insole seams of the toe and heel, preventing chafing. The bottom of the shoe is a thick, stiff material (possibly a softwood) covered by leather, with a gentle upward curve at the toe. Thirty-three hobnails are attached to

the bottom (eighteen at the toe and fifteen at the heel), providing space between the ground surface and the leather.

The Heukhye were a common type of shoe popular during the Joseon Dynasty and were worn primarily by noblemen and officials in the upper classes. Wearing leather shoes was restricted to the elite, while commoners were permitted to wear them only for weddings.

**Measurements:** Length- 9 ½”  
Width- 3 ¼”

**Category:** Textile  
Clothing/Footwear/Shoe/Slipper  
Korea/Traditional Clothing/Footwear/Men  
Clothing Sex: Male

**Location:** Box 31  
Display Case 10  
Charles Whipple Greene Historical Collection  
George Hail Free Library

**Condition Analysis:**

Overall, good condition. There is minimal wear on this shoe, suggesting that it was not used often, if at all. Two small areas of abrasion are one on the proper right side, revealing a purple plain-woven substrate where the silk pile has worn away. While the white leather is in excellent condition, the silk pile is highly desiccated and actively flaking off, as evidenced by “silk dust” on the tablecloth. Caution should be taken when handling to reduce further loss of the pile.

**Recommended Treatments:**

Light vacuuming or dusting of the item with a small soft brush is recommended. Additionally, this item should be secured within its storage housing to prevent further loss of pile when moving the box.