



Thobe Malakeh Abū Warda

Date

Late 19th century

Primary Maker

Artist not recorded

Medium

Linen, silk, metallic thread

Description

Thōb Malakeh Abū Warda (late nineteenth century): This dress has the flowered stripes which give it the name

(thob malakeh) abū warda. The fabric is a combination of handwoven, indigo linen weft, rusty red, orange, and green silk, and solid linen. There is multicolored embroidery in tightly twisted silk and gold metallic couching on the sawā'id, benāyeq, and qabbah. In addition to the usual repertory of Bethlehem motifs, as found on nos. 3363 and FA. 72.25-14, there are several signs of the cross. Length: 141 cm. Width: 107.5. The thob malakeh abū warda or "flowered royal fabric." It is similar to the malakeh but has a design of small red flowers in the stripe. Women in Bethlehem proper did not, at first, use this type of cloth. It was originally made for peasants in villages throughout Central and Southwestern Palestine who wanted to imitate the Bethlehem fashion for their bridal costume. These fabrics were woven into standard lengths of five or six yards, which was adequate for one dress. At the end of each piece silver weft threads were woven into the fabric. This part of the cloth is called muqaṣṣab ("brocaded with metallic thread," qaṣab). The metallic thread (used in lamé fabrics) was first imported from Germany, later from France. The brocaded end piece was used for the diyāl, the back hem panel of the Bethlehem dress. Bethlehem dresses were made up of many individual pieces. (Palestinian Costume and Jewelry, Yedida Kalfon Stillman, 1979 ISBN: 0-82630490-7)

Dimensions

Length: 141 cm. Width: 107.5