

Oriental kaftan

An oriental robe, retrieved from a seventeenth-century shipwreck on the seabed of the wadden sea. Hundreds of unique objects have been found in this wreck, known as the palmwood wreck, including an extremely unusual collection of textiles. Most of the garments found are of western origin but there are also a few which are oriental in appearance. One such example is this velvet robe, which was possibly a kaftan.

Possibly ottoman

The robe consists of two parts: a jacket and short skirt. As the torn edges correspond, it is assumed that the pieces were connected. The oriental-style robe was possibly a kaftan from the ottoman empire, although it does differ in a number of ways from the well-known seventeenth century ottoman kaftans. The garment also shares similarities with a number of preserved robes from eastern-europe. The style of the large silver buttons appears to be persian and two buttons seem to be missing.

Valuable

Although the origin is not completely certain, it is clear that the kaftan-styled garment was once extremely valuable. The bright red colour originates from american cochineal, one of the world's most exclusive dyes in the seventeenth century. The fibres in the garment are very fragile.

