



Inv. no. 19/2013

7. BLOCK-PRINTED LENGTH OF CLOTH (AJRAKH)

HALA, SINDH, PAKISTAN, 1980S

Fine cotton tabby. The fabric was printed on both sides. Central pattern: Badam. The resists and iron black were block printed; indigo blue and alizarin red were applied in dye baths. Alizarin red was used twice (light red and dark red) and indigo blue twice (light indigo and dark indigo).

The large central panel is decorated with block-print sequences consisting of an eight-pointed star with four almond-shaped ornaments arranged on the diagonal axes in each corner of the star, giving the pattern its name, Badam, which means almond. The central block print terminates at each end of the length of cloth with the Palan pattern, consisting of a very wide border with beaded-border roundels. Horizontal black-and-white stripes separate this border from the last floral border, which is decorated with monumental petals.

The fabric was printed on both sides and has a width of 87 cm – very characteristic features of this kind of block print, the ajrakh. This piece consists of two lengths of ajrakh printed end to end and intended to be

divided into two pieces that are crocheted together along the selvage, as shown by two other ajrakh textiles, 23/2013 and 24/2013, no. 8 and no. 9. The resulting wide format can then be used as a garment, an ajrakh shawl.