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Kate Fitz Gibbon, Andrew Hale

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Kate Fitz Gibbon, Andrew Hale : Ikat: Silks of Central Asia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ikat: Silks of Central Asia:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. There will never be a better treatment of this subjectBy rastamanThere will never be a better treatment of this subject. Extensively illustrated and researched by a couple well educated in the field and in the trade.Massive.

The ikat silks of 19th-century Central Asia are unrivalled in their inventive designs, resplendent colours and technical mastery. Ikat is an ancient technique, in which colours are applied to silk warp yarns in a multi-stage, tie-dye resist method before being woven. Highlighting the Guido Goldman collection, this study incorporates original research in Russia and Uzbekistan, and examines the complex history of Central Asia. A chapter on technique describes the different staqges of production, and an analysis of the evolution and chronology of ikat design shows the rich cross-fertilization of influences between ikat design, embroidery, carpets, jewellery and ceramics.

From Library Journal Ikats are patterned textiles produced by tying and resist-dyeing the warp and/or weft threads before weaving, a technique known in many parts of the world. Moved by their bright colors and complex designs, Guido Goldman, a former professor of European studies at Harvard, began collecting 19th-century central Asian ikats.

The Goldman collection is considered the largest and most comprehensive collection of wall hangings and robes produced during Asia's finest period of silk production. Fitz Gibbon and Hale, specialists in the silk-weaving tradition of central Asia and nomadic textiles, have produced a book on the collection that served as catalog to a recent traveling exhibition. The authors detail the silk trade in central Asia, weavers' workshops and guilds, the making of ikats, and design sources and influences. Their discussion of the role of textiles as wall hangings in domestic life and as men's robes and women's dresses give life to the complex weaving tradition. The items are beautifully photographed, with many close-up opportunities for textile study, and reproductions of historical photographs enhance the text. A nice addition to cultural and textile collections. Beyond the Silk Road was published in conjunction with an August 1999-June 2000 exhibition at the Powderhouse Museum's Asian Gallery (Sydney, Australia), which houses

Australia's largest collection of textiles and clothing as well as Asian decorative arts and design. Following an overview of central Asian history, the text describes the material culture of the inhabitants, who are either nomads or oasis dwellers, with a focus on textiles. Included are brief details of textile production, various cultural influences on artisans, and costume. Examples of woven and embroidered textiles, including rugs, clothing, horse covers, camel headaddresses, and designs for silk ikats, are all showcased. The book is nicely done, but the focus is narrow.

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