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Oriental Carpets (Jumbo)



Synopsis

Book by Gantzhorn, Volkmar

Book Information

Hardcover: 532 pages

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Customer Reviews

Text: English (translation) Original Language: German

No self-respecting bibliomane should pass on this. Whether judged by the value per pound or per square inch of color plates, this well-produced volume is a steal. I'm not enough of a specialist to know if the author's thesis about Christian origins for oriental carpets really holds water, but he's assembled a lot of beautiful evidence!

This is the best book there is for historical Oriental rugs in terms of illustrations, which however range in quality from Good to Better only. No book has so much important historical background to the development of The Oriental Carpet. As far as the text goes, the original theory is that design origins stem from Christianity not Islam. But this controversial concept has been removed from the title in this edition.

Very odd: I ordered this book, but received a different book---The Christian Oriental Carpet---with the dust jacket of yet ANOTHER title by Gantzdorf, The oriental carpet (sic punctuation). The same ISBN number appears on both. It sounds as if the 'real' Oriental Carpets shown here shares some of

the former book's flaws: no index, strange layout, and of course the polemical 'mine is better' attitude, which probably has some merit. Or is it possible that all three titles are in fact the same book? The first named above is copyright 1991. The lack of critical reviews on it, and the fact that it was a dissertation from the author's university program, lend some credence to that possibility. Nice enough photos.

Useless religious dribble. Somehow the author seems to have gotten the religions of the carpet producing areas of the world mixed up. The areas are not mainly Christian.

Please see the Images above I have uploaded so you can see how luscious the massive number are of photos in the book. In this huge, glorious (and quite heavy) tome, Volkmar Gantzhorn, a world-renowned expert makes the case that the vast majority of Oriental carpets throughout history depict Christian symbols. In this huge 532 page book, the author moves chronologically from ancient times to the 18th century going overboard to designate virtually all carpet designs less than 2,000 years old as having Armenian and, thus, Christian, symbolism. While he acknowledges that carpets predate Christ, the traditional designs were fundamentally changed by the Armenians and Syrians to incorporate Christianity. He states that he has proved that the knotted pile carpet did not originate in the Turkmen region which has always been accepted, rather they were imported from the Armenians who largely influenced the entire world of the oriental carpet--including that in China during the Sung Dynasty--because Armenians "made up what was often a very significant part of the population" of all of Asia and Europe. He claims that illuminated manuscripts such as in the Book of Kells, and his own research showing centuries of migration, help establish this. (While he admits that Armenia has often been in war, the Christian symbolism was allowed to thrive underground under the guise of the protection of Islamic rulers...??) The theme of almost every single carpet is the Cross. Although anything with an "S-shape" represents God and all single columns and trees are the Tree of Life or of Jesse. In the final Summary and Outlook: "The author now regards this volume as part of a complete revision of the history of the carpet. The fact that it will, at the same time, have an effect on the entire field of textile history...is but another outcome." A little later he admits: "The dividing lines between Christian oriental art and the art of Islam remain to be explored." Although he has included over 100 books in the bibliography, including Armenian and Islamic books, and includes almost 400 photos (only a handful b&w), he staunchly ignores Islamic-based carpet design. This is one of my go-to books of many on oriental carpets. But obviously more for the pictures than the commentary.-----Oops: in June 2013, removed

customer-uploaded images from product pages. Sorry....

Dr. Gantzhorn's book is both a fabulous bargain, with over 600 beautiful color plates, and a ground-breaking work of art history scholarship. If you are open to an iconoclastic view of carpet weaving history, i.e., history which differs from the official one, you owe it to yourself to consider Dr. Gantzhorn's carefully researched and documented thesis.

This is a beautiful book with careful drawings and magnificent color photographs. It is a serious scholarly work. An ideal text for a course on Oriental Carpets.

Great book, arrived safely packaged well.A+++

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