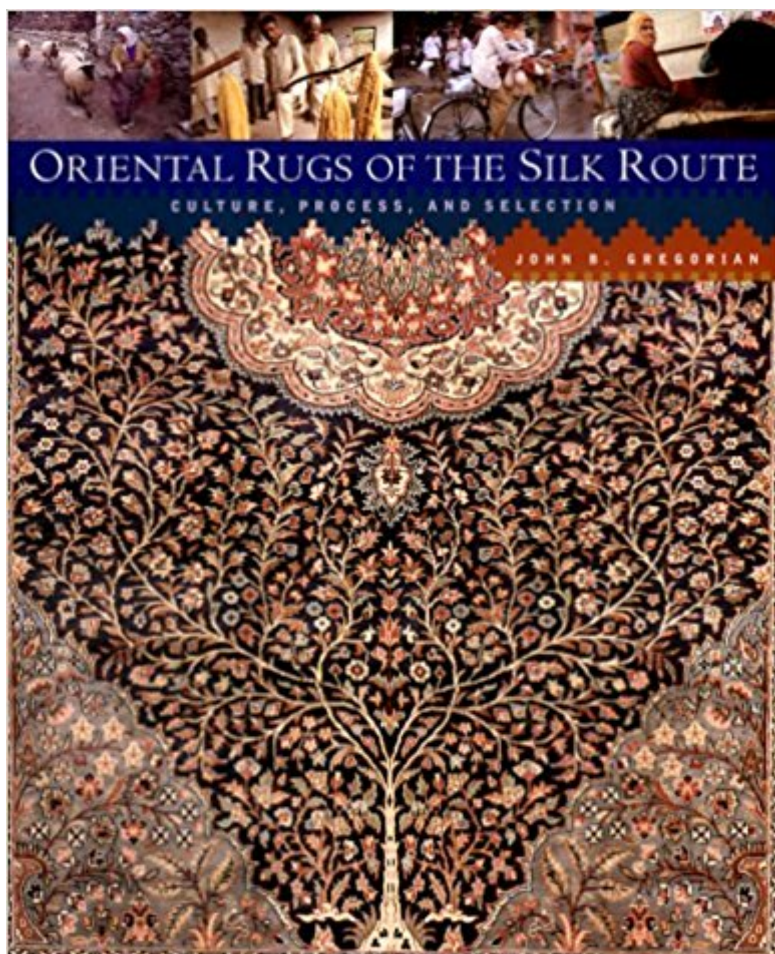


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# Oriental Rugs Of The Silk Route: Culture, Process, And Selection



## Synopsis

The Silk Route was an ancient caravan route that began at the Golden Horn in present-day Istanbul and extended through the Caucasus, Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia to China and its seaports. It was through this caravan route, perhaps as long ago as the fourth century a.d. that goods of European manufacturers were introduced to remote villages and settlements. Here they were traded for indigenous exotic items such as silk, spices, and the subject of this luxurious and authoritative volume-oriental rugs. "Oriental Rugs of the Silk Route," by John B. Gregorian, president of one of the oldest and largest oriental rug institutions in North America, provides an illustrated tour of the modern-day oriental rug-making centers of the Silk Route. A compelling text and stunning color photography complemented by vintage black-and-white images transport you to Middle Eastern villages and cities, revealing the rug-making culture and process there. From colorfully dressed peasants tending sheep, carding wool, and boiling natural dyes in Turkey and India's remote rug-weaving villages and trading centers to the sophisticated showrooms and the Grand Bazaar of Istanbul, as well as mosques, temples, restaurants, and homes where beautiful rugs are on display, this visually rich and authoritative volume travels behind the scenes of the mysterious, exotic cultures famous for this centuries-old art form. Chapters cover the history and lore of the Silk Route and the famous weaving centers of India and Turkey, relating stories of the weavers, dyers, and merchants; superstitions; religious symbolism, and Middle Eastern aesthetics. Also included is a wealth of rug examples and information on the rugsthemselfs, such as rug types, dyes, symbology, weaving techniques, and knots. There is also professional advice for rug buyers: an assessment of the rug-making industry today; a complete guide to evaluating and purchasing a rug; a discussion of buying and trading customs; and helpful tips on negotiating abroad as well as on decorating with oriental rugs throughout the home. A glossary provides definitions of oriental rug terminology, while an appendix rounds out the book with a complete discussion of cleaning and repair. At once a unique journey to the world's finest oriental rug-making centers and an authoritative reference, "Oriental Rugs of the Silk Route" is captivating, informative reading for beginning and knowledgeable rug enthusiasts and travelers alike.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

John B. Gregorian grew up amidst oriental rugs imported by his father, a refugee from Persia who, in 1934, founded what is now one of America's oldest and largest rug companies, Arthur T. Gregorian, Inc., in Newton Lower Falls, Massachusetts. By age 17, he was already traveling to Middle Eastern bazaars, learning the rug-buying strategies from his father that he would later pass on to his son. Today, as president and CEO of the company, John continues to import unique, hand-woven rugs and perpetuates the company tradition of serving as a center on the art and culture of oriental rugs. In addition to lecturing widely and teaching on the subject, he sponsors Antique Oriental Rugs of the Silk Route from the Gregorian Family Collection, an exhibit of over 120 rare examples of the rug weaver's art from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries that has been on display at over seventy museums and universities, including the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. He also served as president of the Oriental Rug Dealers Association for many years. He lives in Wayland, Massachusetts, with his wife, Judith.

What a pleasant surprise. Beautifully told story of father and son rug dealers which as an aside provides lots of useful information about these potential works of art. For an American to start buying Oriental rugs is an adventure which most of us are ill equipped to successfully negotiate. By that I mean we frequently pay more than we should for a rug that we fall in love with. There at times is a culture clash in the purchase which this book can help you transverse. Well worth the read and very entertaining and informative.

for people who love the ancient art of making rugs

We are avid rug collectors and found this book to be a valuable resource. Even though we are fairly

knowledgeable about rugs, we still learned from this book. It's the kind of book we wish we had when we were first starting our collection. The author reveals so much in a truly delightful way -- it's kind of like having a close friend or family member with many years of experience guide you through the whole world of oriental rugs. It's hard to say what we like best about this book because it is such a quality piece of work -- from the thoughtful and interesting writing, to the stunning color and black and white photographs, to the fine typesetting, layout and binding. This book is a work of art in and of itself, much like a fine oriental rug. We especially like the colorful stories about the rug weavers, their culture, and way of life. Art is often a great window on another culture, and the author gets this across in a beautiful way.

In *Oriental Rugs Of The Silk Route*, John Gregorian draws upon his years of expertise to provide an illustrated tour of modern day oriental rug-making centers. The informative, often fascinating text is beautifully and profusely illustrated with superb color photography, complemented by vintage black-and-white images of Middle-Eastern villages and cities, the rug-making culture and process. The reader will find a wealth of expert advice for buying an oriental rug, how to evaluate quality and price, buying and trading customs (with tips on negotiating a purchase), and invaluable ideas respecting interior decoration with original rugs. *Oriental Rugs Of The Silk Route* is enhanced further with a glossary of oriental rug terminology and a helpful appendix on oriental rug cleaning and repair. *Oriental Rugs Of The Silk Route* is rewarding reading for the oriental rug enthusiast, and a highly recommended introduction for the novice.

Gregorian's book is compelling stuff and speaks about a part of the world where bargaining is as much an artform as the rugs themselves. Gregorian is an expert on buying, using extremely sophisticated, yet seemingly simple, methods developed over generations. It reminds me of what the owner of the most expensive men's clothing store in America once told me, "I make more money buying the fabrics than I do selling the suits." Being an author myself ("*Why People Don't Buy Things*"...the new science of selling products, services and ideas based on over 50,000 interviews), I'm fascinated by the time-proven methods employed by Gregorian. Obviously, they've been passed down by his family and work as well today as they did years ago. This book is well worth the read even if you're not into rugs. It could help you save money the next time you're buying an oriental rug, an expensive painting or a luxury automobile.

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I recently purchased John Gregorian's book with the anticipation that it would resemble his father's earlier book that is among my favourite "rug books". (I have been a collector for over 30 years.) I was disappointed and must add it to other texts of recent years that do not offer a balanced view of present day rug production. Iran still produces many beautiful and exquisite pieces that until recently were embargoed by the USA. Fortunately for those of us that reside outside the USA we can obtain these pieces but they no longer appear in many recent books. While rugs from Pakistan, India, China, etc may copy Iranian originals, they rarely use the same dye colors and lack the mastery of the originals. To all budding authors out there, "can we please have a truly representative modern rug book free of political prejudice and exclusion?"

Finally, a niche book with character that focuses on the highest quality carpets. Beyond the pictures it chronicles the Gregorian family experience with this genre and brings us back to the days when the original treasures were more readily available - not that long ago! A must for the serious collector or the simple enthusiast.

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