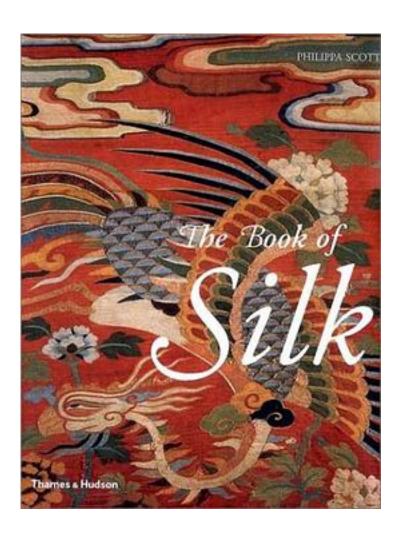
## The Book of Silk



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Luxury, beauty, refinement, sensuality, elegance - silk is synonymous with all of these. No fibre - natural or manmade rivals its versatility. Silk is light but strong, smooth and soft, supremely adaptable. It can be made wonderfully warm or deliciously cool. It can

be dyed with infinite subtlety or boldness. When worn or draped, its fluidity is spellbinding. This book follows the story of this remarkable material through the ages, reproducing hundreds of fabrics, furnishings and garments from all parts of the world. From ancient China, where the secret of reeling silkworm cocoons was first discovered, the narrative leads by the legendary Silk Routes to Byzantium and the Islamic world, to Ottoman Turkey and India - and on to the Renaissance, baroque and rococo silks of western Christendom. In modern times the fashion industry yields a wonderful array of silk designs, from Fortuny and Balenciaga, Poiret and Schiaparelli. At every stage, silk's status as the most prized fabric of all ensured that it commanded the most creative talents of each period, from anonymous Chinese masters to the celebrated dressmakers of France and Italy. A selection of illustrations, many drawn from private collections, reveals silk's omnipresence in couture and decoration, carpets, embroidery and even painting

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