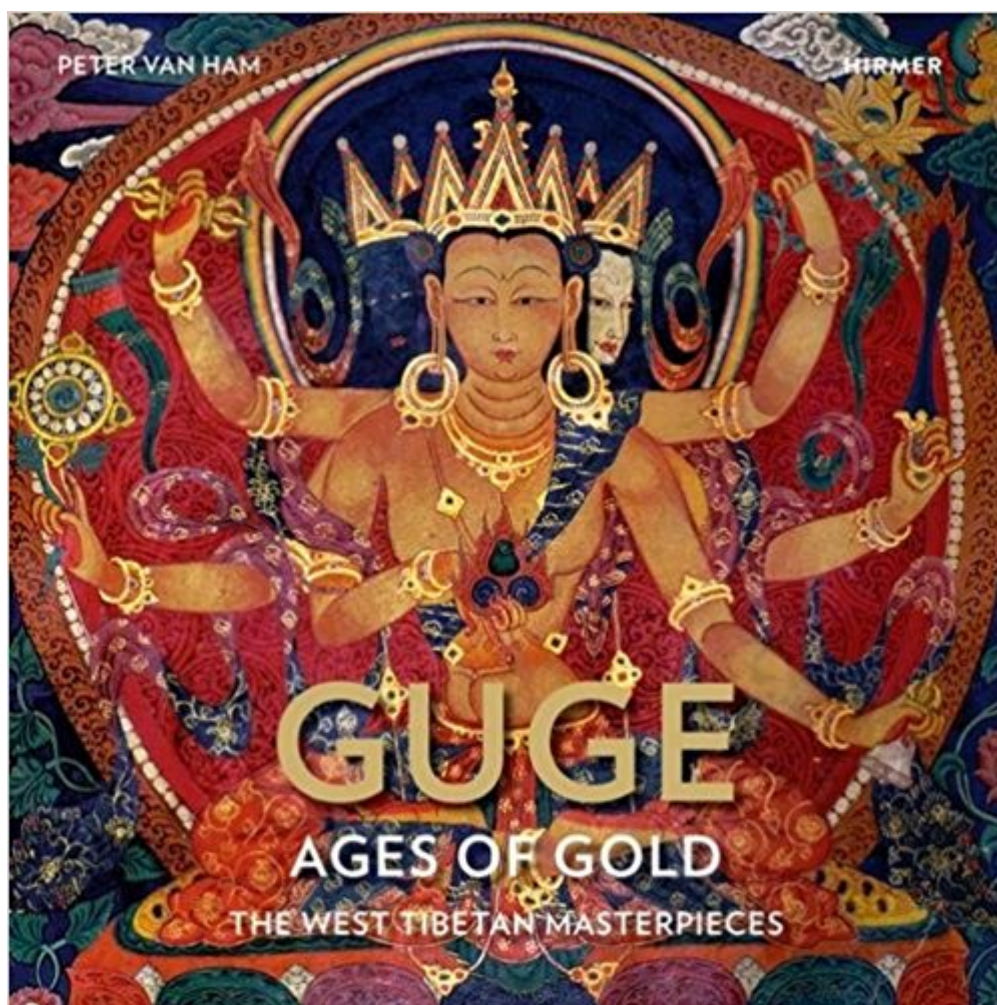


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Guge--Ages Of Gold: The West Tibetan Masterpieces



Synopsis

Guge was a great Buddhist kingdom in Western Tibet. Today, only ruins remain of the once-splendid civilization, but, over seven hundred years, its rulers were passionate patrons of the arts who commissioned vast temple complexes, richly ornamented and filled with art and furniture by Kashmiri master craftsmen. The grand, spacious temples of Guge are all the more captivating because of the kingdom's sudden, mysterious disappearance. To create Guge's "Ages of Gold, photographer Peter van Ham and collaborators gained access to Guge's temple complexes and monasteries—many of which are no longer accessible to photographers—and shows for the first time the art and artifacts that have survived to the present day, from both the Indian and the Tibetan sides of Guge and spanning the entire time period. Among the sites documented are the monasteries Tholing, Tsaparang, and Dungkar, in addition to Serkhang, the "Golden Temple," which contains many beautiful murals completed in the sixteenth century during the second of Guge's two golden ages, when the formal and stylistic direction of Guge's art became characterized by a blend of Kashmiri traditions and Nepalese and Chinese influences. A concise text accompanies the images, bringing in the latest research on Guge and the art and culture of western Tibet. Guge is a wonder of the world, yet few photographers have had the opportunity to capture it—and even fewer with such vision and technical skill. Guge's "Ages of Gold seeks to preserve this rich artistic and cultural heritage.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Peter van Ham is a Frankfurt-based author and photographer who has been researching Himalayan culture for nearly thirty years, documenting it in more than a dozen books to date, including *Tabo* "Gods of Light, also published by Hirmer Publishers. Â

What a wonderful book; it makes the splendid art treasures of Western Tibet, hidden away in the virtually inaccessible ruined cities of Tsaparang and Tholing, in the stony desert of S. W. Tibet, available in beautifully produced and detailed reproductions with a highly informative artistic and historical commentary. Van Ham includes historical photographs which document some of the many beautiful objects that were lost forever during the brutal vandalism of the so-called Great Cultural Revolution. It's a must-have for anyone with an interest in Tibetan religion and culture. The only significant problem is the lack of an index. Can't understand why this feature, which would make the book so much easier to use, was omitted. Hope that it will be included if there is a second addition.

amazingly great quality beautiful colors

Beautiful book.

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