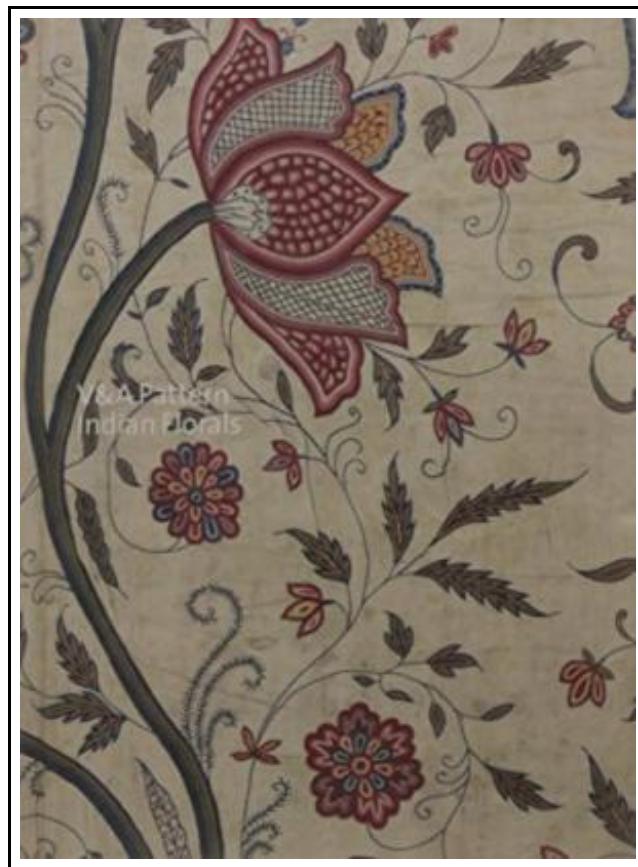


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Lustre/Roli Books, 2009. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. Patterns derived from plants and flowers have been used in India for centuries. Lotus flowers and floral meanders are seen in Buddhist sites dating from the third century BC, and the famous fifth-century wall-paintings at Ajanta use floral designs extensively as filler patterns around scenes of royal life and nature. In spite of this, flower and plant forms were rarely used for textile patterning, the subject of this book, until the beginning of the Sultanate period in the twelfth century, when Islamic culture started to influence Indian art and design. This is partly due to the personal taste of Emperor Jahangir (ruled 1605-27), who had a great love for nature and was deeply interested in capturing spring, and he commanded his court artist Mansur to paint all the beautiful flowers he saw during the season. This enthusiasm for flowers was given an additional dimension by European prints and books, including herbals, which made their way to the Mughal court by the early seventeenth century. These naturalistic depictions of flowers were influential, and flowers that draw on European herbal illustrations appear in Mughal album borders from about 1620 onwards. The same naturalistic floral style was used decoratively in other contexts, especially by Jahangir's son, Emperor Shah Jahan (ruled 1627-55). Flowers appeared in architecture (as in the famous inlaid stone decoration of the Taj Mahal), metalwork and jade, as well as on the sumptuous carpets and textiles that adorned the Mughal court. This floral adornment contributed to Shah Jahan's view of his court as a Paradise Garden on Earth. Printed Pages: 66.

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