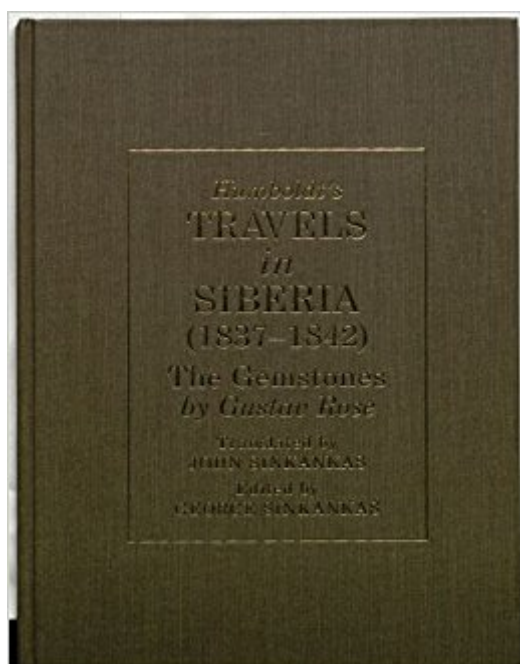


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Humboldt's Travels In Siberia 1837-1842: The Gemstones By Gustav Rose



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Customer Reviews

At the invitation of the Russian Czar, Nicholas I (1796-1855), three German scientists undertook a scientific expedition into the remote Siberian reaches of the Russian Empire in 1837. Alexander von Humboldt, accompanied by Gustav Rose and Christian Ehrenberg, covered nearly 16,000 kilometers in their travels, reaching as far east as the Altai Mountains, just north of the Mongolian border. Rose, the mineralogical expert of the group, recorded the account of their investigations, published in 1837 as *Reise nach dem Ural, dem Altai und dem Kaspischen Meere*. John Sinkankas has made this enjoyable work accessible now to the English-speaking community by providing a translation of the good parts, i.e. those dealing with the gem deposits.... Sinkankas has provided the reader with ample footnotes, helpful definitions, conversion factors for Rose's weights and measures, corrections and criticisms which allow a full comprehension of the extracts. At the end we find also a short biography of Rose himself. This is a fine, scholarly contribution which happens also to make very interesting reading. I recommend it to anyone with an interest in the history of mineralogy or gemology. -- *The Mineralogical Record*, Vol. 26, May/June, 1995 If you enjoy reading about collecting minerals and gemstones in the field, you will be fascinated by this book's account of a collecting trip to famous localities in Russia's Ural Mountains. The title is a bit misleading because the actual trip that Gustav Rose describes covers 9,700 miles and occurred between April and December in 1892. (The original two volumes were published in 1837 and 1842, respectively.) Such a trip that covered so much area and saw so many localities in so little time seems almost impossible. Although the text was taken from the official record of the expedition, the writing is clear

and quite simple compared with much of the other scientific writing of the day. This is pointed out by Sinkankas in the foreword and is what makes the book so readable.... The book is well done and an important contribution for those of us who are interested in--but know little about--the gemstones and minerals of the Urals. Unless you can find the original two-volume work and know German, I would highly recommend this book for reading and as a reference in your library. -- Rocks and Minerals, Vol. 71, Nov./Dec. 1996

John Sinkankas has made another great contribution to gemological literature with his translation of the extraordinary adventures of the German naturalist and explorer Baron Wilhelm Alexander von Humboldt. This attractive book has been well-edited by John's son, George, a library scientist. Sinkankas has unerringly chosen the parts of the Rose volumes that are of the most interest to those concerned with geology, mineralogy, and gemology. He has translated the selected passages and put them together with his own comments in a logical and highly readable sequence. In fact, it is the sort of book in which one wants to take a peek ahead to see what's coming up next... This is the only chance most of us will have to enjoy the Siberian discovery days of 150 years ago. We have Sinkankas and Rose to thank for a pleasant trip, and Sinkankas for this significant contribution to gemological literature in English. -- Lapidary Journal, July 1995

Text: English (translation) Original Language: German

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