

Love and Valour in India's Great Epic

THE Ramayana

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THE Ramayana

Author: JP Losty

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The Indian epic Ramayana is one of the world's greatest and most enduring stories. Prince Rama was exiled with his beloved wife Sita for 14 years through the plotting of his stepmother. Sita was carried off by the demon Ravana, King of Lanka, and Rama gathered an army of monkeys to search for her. The allies attacked Lanka, killed Ravana and rescued Sita. In order to prove her chastity, Sita entered fire, but was vindicated by the gods and restored to her husband.

The illustrated Ramayana commissioned by Rana Jagat Singh of Mewar in Rajasthan between 1649 and 1653 and now mostly in the British Library is among the greatest of seventeenth-century Indian manuscripts. The huge scale of the project, with over 400 paintings, allowed the artists to focus on telling the epic story on the grandest scale. Nearly 130 of the paintings are here presented in book form for the first time, allowing the reader to follow the story through the paintings, while the detailed introduction puts this epic manuscript into its historical and cultural context.



About the Author:

JP Losty retired in 2005 after 34 years as a curator of Indian visual materials in the Asian department of the British Library. He has published extensively on illustrated Indian manuscripts and painting in India. His most important books include the ground-breaking *The Art of the Book in India* (1982) and *Calcutta: City of Palaces* (1990), while his *A Picturesque Voyage: William Daniell's Journal* and the *Daniells' Vision of India* is due to be published in 2009.







