



### The Ramayan through the Theatre of Ramlila

By Pamela Lothspeich

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6 x 9 inches

**Series:** Anthem World Epic and Romance

**Presents the Ramayan as lived and performed in North India, using vivid photographs and narrative to capture how community Ramlila traditions bring the epic to life.**

This book tells the story of the epic Ramayan as contemporary theatre practitioners and audiences in one Hindi-speaking region of North India know and remember it—not through premodern textual sources, but through Ramlila, a Hindu theatre festival in which community groups and professional troupes enact the story of the god Ram across North India every fall. Over 50 photographs of Ramlilas shot between 2010 and 2019 in four cities and towns in the region of Rohilkhand, vividly animate the story of the Ramayan. The accompanying narrative, meanwhile, explains the plot, staging practices, and the influence of an early twentieth-century work, the Radheshyam Ramayan, on the performances featured in the book. Richly illustrated and accessibly written, this book is designed for both those new to the Ramayan and those already well-versed in it. It also explains the Ramlila tradition for students and scholars of Hinduism, as well as all those interested in epic storytelling and theatre.

#### Key selling points

Presents the story of the epic Ramayan through over 50 photographs and accompanying narrative

Offers a text that is not only accessible and visually engaging, but also one that speaks to how contemporary theatre practitioners and audiences understand the Ramayan today

Adds to Ramayan studies by focusing on performance (theatre) and popular culture rather than well-studied premodern texts

Provides evidence of the lasting impact of an important early twentieth-century epic known as the Radheshyam Ramayan

#### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

**Pamela Lothspeich** is Professor of South Asian Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research centers on the Indian epics in modern literature, theatre, and film.

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