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## Kamba Ramayana

By N.S. Jagannathan (ed.); P.S. Sundaram (trs.)

Penguin, New Delhi, India, 2002. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Dust Jacket Condition: New. First Edition. The epic story of Rama, which is part of the Indian collective consciousness, has been retold in many regional languages. Pre-eminent among the many vernacular retellings of the Ramayana is the twelfth-century Tamil version by Kamban. The son of a temple drummer, Kamban is reputed to have had an impressive mastery of Tamil and Sanskrit classics. Fascinated by the lore of Ramayana, he immersed himself totally in it. Though Kamban acknowledges his indebtedness to the Sanskrit version of the Ramayana by Valmiki, his is an independent work, enriched by various religious, philosophical and literary influences. The Kamba Ramayana differs from Valmiki's in significant ways. Though cast in the heroic mould of a Purushotama or the best among men, Valmiki's Rama is still a man. Kamban, on the other hand, never allows the reader to forget the godhood of Rama. His Ravana too, though flawed, is a heroic figure. While Valmiki's diction is sparse and direct, Kamban's exuberant prose sparkles with wit and inventiveness. Translated into English by the late P.S. Sundaram, this edition has been abridged and edited by his long-time friend N.S. Jagannathan. Though...



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