

Abstract

Lithographed Rā mcaritmā nas published in A.D. 1869

Teiji Sakata
Takushoku University, Tokyo, Japan

Rā mcaritmā nas, the Rama Story sung and recorded in Hindi by the saint-poet Tulsī dās in the late 16th century, is received today as a holy book showing their way for many North Indian Hindus and the work has many published editions.

I have three versions of Rā mcaritmā nas: Manuscript completed in Saṃvat 1926 or A.D. 1869; Lithograph version published in Kāśī / Benares in Saṃvat 1926 or A.D. 1869 and Rā māyāna Tulsī dā skṛt Saṭīk printed in movable type published in Lakhnaū in A.D.1888.

A.D. 1869 edition of Lithographed Rā mcaritmā nas

Title-page and closing page make it clear that the edition was approved for publishing by Raghunāthās and was published in Saṃvat 1926 or A.D. 1869.

This publication is handwritten. It contains about 50 citr/ illustrations of important scenes of the story.

The first *doh* / rhyming couplet of the first section is printed in this way.

jathī suānjanañjīdṛgs dhaksiddhsuj n kautukedeṣabisailbanbūtalbhūrīnidh n

It has no break between Hindi words. This way of writing is adopted in traditional manuscripts including the one I have.

Contribution of Lithographed Rā mcaritmā nas version to later Publications

Raghunāthās is also mentioned in Rā māyāna Tulsī dā skṛt Saṭīk published by movable type in A.D. 1887 as one of the scholars who approved this *ṭīkā* version.

The three versions of Rā mcaritmā nas I have exemplify the history of writing/ printing Hindi works: lithograph publication succeeds the way of manuscript and in a few decades it leads to moveable type publication.