

Emergence of the Local Print Culture in Banaras, 1800-1900

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Abstract:

When the Europeans established most printing presses in different parts of India, an indigenous print culture emerged in Banaras during the nineteenth century. Despite the direct influence of missionaries and the British government, Banaras lacked the mission or government printing presses. It was indigenous people who played a pioneering role in the establishment of printing presses in Banaras. The local patronage, traditionally dominant literate groups and the introduction of the lithography printing press accelerated the growth of the print culture in Banaras. This development marked the transition from private printing press ownership to print entrepreneurs. The development of print culture could be seen in two phases, i.e., the pre-mutiny period and the post-mutiny period, which eventually produced a multilingual literary sphere in nineteenth century Banaras. While discussing all these nuances, this article explores how the Indians established private printing presses and helped in the rise and growth of the local print culture in Banaras in the nineteenth century.

Keywords: Banaras, Printing Press, Local Print Culture, Indigenous people, lithographic

In the nineteenth century, the arrival of the printing press in north India marked a watershed episode in the print history of India. Several printing presses were established in different parts of north India with and without the help of the colonial government and the missionaries. Along with other parts of northern India, Banaras emerged as a prominent print centre during the nineteenth century. However, instead of growing missionary activities and the British influence, the number of printing presses in Banaras had not increased significantly under the influence of Christian missionaries. The growth of print activities indicates that local individuals came forward and set up several printing presses in Banaras. It provides a classic example of the intimate relationship between Indian press ownership and the emergence of a local print culture. The present paper intends to explore how the involvement of indigenous people in print activities helped develop a local print culture in Banaras throughout the nineteenth century.

The introduction of the printing press in India (first in Goa) was traced back to 1556 by the Portuguese Jesuit missionaries. Most of these printing presses were concentrated on the publication of Bibles and other religious materials, and they had minimal impact on the rest of the subcontinent. Print became significant only from the closing decades of the eighteenth century in the regions conquered by the East India Company. It took a long time to reach the indigenous hands. The moveable type was introduced to the printing and publishing in India in the first

half of the nineteenth century. The scenario changed when the lithographic¹ press came to India in the 1820s. It paved the way for the establishment of Indian-owned printing presses. The first lithographic press came to India in 1823 when the East India Company set up lithographic presses in cities such as Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. The first private Indian owned lithographic press *Matb-i-Fardunji Dohrabji Dastur* was established in Bombay in 1826. In the case of North India, Indians started to conduct printing activities on a larger scale in the 1830. However, Francesca Orsini stated that the beginning of printing in north India was ‘tentative’ (Orsini, 2004, p. 110) due to the patronisation of print under the local ruler courts or the British. Meanwhile, the lithographic presses were spread all over northern India. Several printing houses were flourished during this time. It became a hub of lithographic printing presses in the nineteenth century. The lithographic press could provide more copies at a lesser price than the other types of printing. The lithography was cheaper, portable and easy to operate. As a result, printers could produce many books and newspapers in different scripts at low prices. Therefore, lithography became one of the main technological factors that prepared the ground for the emergence of the indigenous print industry during the nineteenth century.

In the North-Western Provinces², the number of printing presses increased in the following decades. Aloys Sprenger argues that twelve private lithographic presses were functioning in Lucknow by 1830.³ In 1848, seventeen printing presses were operating in the provinces. These presses were mainly publishing newspapers and periodicals in native languages. Among these printing presses, two printing presses were functioning in Banaras in 1848.⁴ However, the government report probably did not include many small hand-operating presses which were set up as print shops in the private homes or its vicinity. The printers were engaged in printing and selling the works in several languages and scripts. These print shops became one of the major sources of their livelihood. As a result, the mushrooming of native printing presses could be seen in Banaras along with Lucknow and Patna.⁵ Besides, the following section traces the chronological development of Indian-owned printing presses in Banaras during the nineteenth century.

¹ Lithography was a printing technology which was invented by Alois Senefelder around 1798. He developed a method of imaging limestone that produced a print. The significance of lithography is that it accelerated the process of printing and publishing during the nineteenth century.

² The region of northern India known as the North Western Provinces (NWP) came into existence in with the capital at Agra in 1836. In 1877, it merged with Oudh to become North Western Provinces and Oudh. In 1902 it was renamed as United Provinces of Agra & Oudh (or simply the United Province) that name continued until independence 1947 when it became Uttar Pradesh (known in present days).

³ Aloys Sprenger. (1854). *Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindustany Manuscripts of the Libraries of the King of Oudh, vol. I*. The Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, p. xii.

⁴ *Selections from the Records of the Government, North Western Provinces, vol. III*, Secundra Orphan Press, Agra, (1855), p. 237.

⁵ George A Grierson. (1889). *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*. Asiatic Society, Calcutta, p. 145.

Indigenous Endeavours and Printing Press in Banaras:

The establishment of the first printing press in Banaras remained unclear. One of the articles indicates that the printing press existed in Banaras before 1780. It was about a printing press 'at one thousand years old', discovered at Banaras when Warren Hastings was Governor-General (Priolkar, 1958, p. XV). This story ran in an American Periodical, '*The New-Yorker*', in July 1840 with the title of an 'Extraordinary Discovery of an Ancient Printing Press in India'. The newspaper informs that:

An extraordinary discovery was made of a press in India when Warren Hastings was Governor General of India. He observed that in the district of Benares a little below the surface of the earth, was to be found a stratum of a kind of fibrous woody substance, of various thickness in horizontal layers. . . Major Roebuck could collect it appears probable that the press had remained there in the state in which it was found for at least one thousand years".⁶

However, it was the first reference of the existence of a printing press in Banaras district in the 1780s.

In the nineteenth century, the Europeans' endeavours to establish the printing press in Banaras were minimal. Even the missionaries were not the pioneers in establishing the printing press. The lack of the European-owned press⁷, the absence of the missionary press and the coming of the lithographic presses paved the way for Indian participation in the print activities in Banaras. The source indicates that Indian-owned printing houses also flourished during 1820s and 1830s. '*Garhashta Chikitsa*' was one of the early printed books found in Ramnagar Fort's Library, Banaras (Medhasananda, 2002, pp.643-644), and was published from *Anjuman Yantralay* in 1827. '*Bharatvarsiya Itihas*' was printed from *Sarasudhanadhi* Press in 1839 (Medhasananda, 2002, p. 644). Both books were produced in lithographed form by these presses. Initially, the local *pandits* or Brahmans had enrolled in this printing activity, published their ritual and cultural works and played a central role in the emergence of print culture in Banaras.

Various actors shaped and featured the emerging local print culture in Banaras. The people welcomed the printing press for commercial purposes and identified it as an agent of enlightenment, progress, and social change. Due to their efforts, the print was not limited to the progressive and modern sections of society like Calcutta (Ghosh, 2006) and Bombay (Naregal, 2001). In Banaras, the printers-publishers came from backgrounds like *Brahmins*, *Kayasthas*, and *Khatris*. The print was

⁶ *The New-yorker*, 18 July 1848, p. 275.

⁷ In Banaras, only three European-owned printing presses existed during nineteenth century. James Princep first set up a printing press in 1822 for official use only, then Colonel Peter Lawrie Pew established the Recorder Press in November 1846 and last one the 'Medical Hall Press' established by Dr. E. J. Lazarus in 1854.

dominated by these groups who were migrated from Bengal, Maharashtra, or the Gangetic core region. Among them, Brahmins played a dominant role in print. The local learned Brahmins entered the publishing trade in large numbers in Banaras, indicating that ‘print was well compatible with their scribal and intellectual concerns’ (Stark, 2008, p. 78). IN THEIR WORKS ON BANARAS, M. A. Sherring, Francesca Orsini, and Dhirendranath Singh argue that some press proprietors were involved in the print business for their livelihood or for intellectual purposes. It paved the way for the establishment of private printing presses in the vicinity of the city during the nineteenth century.

The early attempt to establish a printing press in Banaras was made by Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal (1752-1820), an ex-superintendent of the Calcutta police and had good relations with the Church Missionary Society. When he established the first ‘modern School’ in Banaras, he understood that the school would not fulfil his ambition of enlightening the minds of Indian people in the absence of a printing press. He believed that the printing press would work as a civilising force. In 1818, he requested the London Church Missionary Society to send a printing press to Banaras. He wrote a letter to the Church Missionary Society, London, on 12 August 1818:

I long greatly that the most effectual means may be used for enlightening the minds of my countrymen. I am therefore anxious to have a printing press also established at Banaras, by which school books might be speedily multiplied, and treatises on different in different subjects might be printed and generally dispersed throughout the country. Without this, the progress of knowledge must be very slow, and the Hindus long remain in their very fallen state, which is a very painful consideration to a benevolent mind.⁸

He also asked the Missionary Society to send learned men or supervisors to run the press.⁹ But this request had not been fulfilled by the Church Missionary Society.

In 1830, Raja Udit Narayan Singh (1795-1835) of Banaras showed his eagerness to print religious works. He sponsored several publishing projects for their court. For instance, an edition of the famous *Mahabharat* translation was done in Hindi (*Brajbhasha*) under the aegis of the Raja of Banaras. Gokul Nath completed This Mahabharat translation¹⁰ and printed it at the Calcutta's Sastra Prakas Press in 1829-30. Unfortunately, the Raja did not possess a printing press.

The pioneer among the Banaras printers-publishers was Babu Govind Raghunath Thatte, a Maharashtrian Chitpawan barahaman, who established the first Indian

⁸ James Long. (1848). *Hand-Book of Bengal Missions, In Connexion with the Church of England*. John Farquahar Shaw, London, p. 70.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Grierson. (1889). *The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*. p. 118.

owned printing press ‘Banaras Akhbar Press’ in Banaras in 1844. It was a lithographic press and published both newspapers and books. The Press launched two weekly papers; the first was the Benares *Ukhbar* (*Banaras Akhbar*), published in January 1845 (Singh, 2003, p. 15), also known as the first Hindi paper in the Hindi Heartland. The second weekly paper was the Benares Gazette (*Banaras Gazette*), published in Urdu. The ‘*Ukhbar*’ was lithographed in *Nagari*, though the language was Urdu. Both papers were printed in four to eight pages. It was sold at Re 1 per month. The *Banaras Akhbar* was divided into many editorial parts, containing some translations from Sanskrit law books and local news gleaned from the other Indian vernacular newspapers and English newspapers. Raja of Nepal financially helped these two newspapers.¹¹ However, due to the aggressive nature towards the Christian Missionaries, the local government took action against this paper, and according to the ‘case of libel’ in 1853, the publication of the *Banaras Gazette* was suspended (Stark, 2008, p. 60). The *Banaras Akhbar* was continuously published till 1870. The paper began with a circulation 44; among them, half of the subscribers were European, and the rest were Hindus. Several titles (books) were also printed in Banaras Akhbar Press. Most of these books were published in *pothi* (manuscript) format (See Figure: 1). It was another way to sustain the print business. Thus, Raghunath Thatte remained in the printing business for almost three decades.



Figure 1: *Sanatankumaracaritra*'s Frontispiece printed in Banaras Akhbar Press in 1854.

Source: <https://chapakhana.rcc.uchicago.edu/gallery/>

The second printing press that came into existence in the city was the *Sudhakar* Press, established by Pandit Ratneswar Tiwary. The press was a lithographic press which used *Nagari* characters. A weekly Hindi newspaper, ‘*Sudhakar*’ was launched. But it used more Urdu (Persian style of Urdu) in its language than Hindi. In 1848, ‘*Sudhakar*’ paper had a good number of circulations of 50 copies taken by

¹¹ *Selections from the Records of the Government, North Western Provinces*, (1855), p. 237.

Hindus, 22 by Europeans and two by Musalmans'.¹² The paper contained local news and general information. Soon it lost many subscribers. The reason for the fall of *Sudhakar's* circulation was the gradual switch of languages in Urdu, Hindi and sometimes in Sanskrit. So, it became hard for this paper to recover its expenses. The monthly expenditure of this press was Rs. 50. In 1851, the paper went to the 'hands of Brindaban Tiwari'.¹³ Brindaban Tiwari printed the first book '*Jankee Bundh*' for the Raja of Banaras from this press in 1851. Another work, '*Chhandastarang*' (See Figure: 2), was published and circulated in good numbers. It was one of the early works that survived. Thus, it could be said that Raja of Banaras commissioned this press to print a few books for him. He started to use a high-flown style in which Hindi mixed with Sanskrit words. The readership of this paper remained intact among *Banarasi* Hindus as they understood this high-flown Hindi language. *Sudhakar Press* did not criticise the Christian Missionaries like the *Banaras Akhbar Press*.



Figure 2: Title page of *Chhandastarang*, Sambat 1911 (1854 CE).

Source: <https://chapakhana.rcc.uchicago.edu/gallery/>

It was loyal to the government. The Native Newspaper Report of 1851 informed that 'in style and type it is far superior to the other Hindi paper of Banaras, called the '*Banaras Akhbar*'.¹⁴ The column of this paper also contained articles on modern science, history, and useful knowledge. Due to educational publications, this newspaper became a useful instrument for the government to spread scientific

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 245.

¹³ *Selections from the Records of the Government, North Western Provinces, vol. IV*, The Government Press, Allahabad, (1868), p. 78.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

knowledge. The government extended financial support to the '*Banaras Akhbar*' by purchasing half of the published copies of the newspaper and distributing them among the rural schools.

The first Bengali printing press in the Banaras was the Mutba-Bagh-O-Bahar Press, opened jointly by Kedarnath Ghosh and Kali Prasad Benerjee in 1848. They published two weekly newspapers, '*Bagh-O-Bahar*' in Urdu and '*Banarasi Chandrodaya*' in Bengali. They had some 40 subscribers at Rs. 14 per annum each. The paper's quality was not good. These papers contained the local and current news and the 'Decisions of the Sadan Diwani Adalat, North-Western Provinces.'¹⁵ Among these papers, the '*Banarasi Chandrodaya*' was discontinued within one year, but '*Bagh-O-Bahar*' continued for many years. Over time, these papers changed in their content style. They started to include useful subjects like 'the description of the medical system, history, astronomy'.¹⁶ Apart from it, the Bengali almanac and Bengali works were issued from this press. Sometimes, a few books were produced and commissioned by the Raja of Banaras. In 1851, Kedarnath Ghosh resigned from the Bagh-O-Bahar Press and the press was run solely by Kali Prasad. The subscribers started to fall because the papers were severely executed. Later, this press contacted the government to remain in business and received financial support from them. It got a big financial boost in 1850 when the British Collector's Office commissioned 10,000 lithographed copies.

Kedarnath Ghosh and his editor, Munsif Harbans Lal (Munshi Harivans Lal), started a magazine named the '*Mirat-ul-Ulum*' or 'The Mirror of Science' in August 1848. It was edited by Munsif Harbans Lal. It was issued monthly. The periodical contained articles on Modern history and English modes of Agriculture. Unfortunately, it was discontinued in November, just after three circulations.

The first printing shop of the city dedicated to the printing of books was the 'Gulzar-e-Hamesha Bahar Press' (Rose Garden of Eternal Spring), established by Virsingh Khatri 'Vagvishvendra' in 1849. He had tried to open a printing shop before this press with the help of a stock company. Unfortunately, the Banaras Bank Scandal¹⁷ took place, which shook the whole city. As a result, the shareholders were afraid to invest in any risky venture. The 'Gulzar-e-Hamesha Bahar Press' did not publish any newspaper. Virsingh Khatri printed books in several languages like Sanskrit, Persian, Hindi and Urdu. The total number of copies of the book was 3,200, published in 16 titles. Out of these, the Press could only sell three copies of *Ashtadhyayi*, one copy of *Meghaduta*, and only five copies of the Hindi rhetorical treatise on Tulsidas. So he had to face a huge loss which was not recovered. This press was closed down in 1849.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 79.

¹⁶ *Selections from the Records of the Government, North Western Provinces*, (1855), p. 299.

¹⁷ The Banaras Bank collapsed due to the corruption of a non-native Colonel Pew, the managing Director of the Banaras Bank. For further details of the Banaras Bank Scandal see *The Constitution and History of the Benares Bank, Compiled from the Records*. Presbyterian Mission Press, Allahabad, (1849).

In 1850, the 'Mufad-i-Hind press' was established by Munshi Harbans as a printing shop. This press had launched a bi-monthly journal '*Sayuren-e-Hind (Sa'iri'n-e-Hind)*' in Urdu. It started with a good number of circulations of 75 copies. Harbans Lal was keen to promote scientific knowledge through this paper. The paper contained articles on the arts and sciences that fulfilled the needs of the merchant and mechanics. The native report of the government indicates that the journal 'was run by two persons – Harbans Lal and Bhiru Prasad'.¹⁸ Harbans Lal, the former editor of '*Mirat-ul-Ulum*', started '*Mufad-e-Hind*' Press for more profit but did not have much success. The Europeans supported the paper, while over half of Hindu subscribers discontinued their subscriptions. Harbans Lal printed the first Hindi prose version of the *Bhagavata Purana*, the *Sukhsagar*, in 1853.

The second Bengali press was Banaras Kashi Press, set up by Bengali Brahmin Kashidas Mitra in 1851. The Press published a weekly Bengali newspaper, '*Kasi Barta Prakashika*'. The '*Kasi Barta Prakashika*' was the only Bengali newspaper in Banaras with a high circulation of 92 copies (1851). The circulation of this paper was increased from 92 to 110 within a year. Most of the subscribers were residents of Banaras. Later, this press published one more Urdu periodical, '*Aftab-i-Hind*'. It contained articles on educational and scientific topics that attracted the government towards this paper. Its circulation reached 110. Along with Banaras, this newspaper was circulated in other stations of North-Western Provinces for distribution. Both papers contained local news and news of Rangoon, Calcutta, Bombay, China, Nepal and princely cities of India.¹⁹ Apart from that, extracts from the Government Gazette, like articles on the history of India, the medical system, Chemistry, and European Astronomy, were published in both papers. Some of the significant books, published by this press in well lithograph, were the editions of Tulshidas's *Vinaypatrika* and Chatra Nrpati's *Padaratnavali*, a Hindi Treatise on music. Both of these books were published in 1854.

¹⁸ *Selections from the Records of the Government, North Western Provinces*, (1855), p. 287.

¹⁹ *Selections from the Records of the Government, North Western Provinces*, (1868), p. 132.



Figure 3: *Kavitt Ramayan* printed in 1858.

Source: <https://chapakhana.rcc.uchicago.edu/gallery/>

The Ganesh Press was a lithographic press. It was established by Durgaprasad Katare in 1850 near Ghughrani *Muhalla*. This press mostly printed books in the Hindi language. Among the books, 'the famous works were *Tulsidas's Ramcharitamanas*, *Kabitta Ramayan* (1850), *Vinay Patrika* (1850), *Nandadas's Anekardh Manjari* (1850)' (Singh, 1986, p. 63). All these books were printed on handmade papers, which were manufactured by the local printers. Due to the limited economy, they did not try to buy the papers from the paper factories.

Another Lithographic press named Divakar Press was established by Shiva Charan in 1855. He published an illustrated version of '*Ramcharitmanas*' in 1855. Apart from it, several religious works like '*Pothi Kashi Yatra*' (1856), *Kavitt Ramayan* (1858), '*Shukbahtri*' (1859), '*Gitawali*' (1882) (Singh, 1986, p. 64) were published. Among them, *Kavitt Ramayan* was beautifully lithographed with illustrations (See Figure: 3).

In 1857, the local print industries were scattered in north India due to the uprising of the 1857 Mutiny. However, Banaras remained unaffected compared to other parts of north India. Before this Mutiny, 'no less than five newspapers and eighteen other presses were in operation in this city'.²⁰ Among these newspapers, only one newspaper, '*The Bal Patrika*'²¹, published in Hindi, had stopped during this time.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 165.

²¹ *Ibid*.

The print presses began their work again in 1858. But the number of presses had reduced from eighteen to twelve after the Mutiny. Apart from that, several large commercial printing firms were developed in the city in the following decades and engaged in commercial activities like producing books, almanacs, etc. In 1884, there were nineteenth functional commercial printing presses in the city.²² Except for the Medical Hall Press, all presses were owned by indigenous people.

After the Great Mutiny, the first Hindi Printing Press established in Banaras was the Banaras Light Press in 1860. Gopinath Pathak was the proprietor and printer of this press. The press used both types of presses, i.e., typographic and lithographic. This press received royal patronage and worked in close collaboration with 'a team of court poets (Narayandas Kavi, Munshi Harbans Lal, Babu Avinashi Lal and Babul Bholenath) to print accessible lithographic editions of the devotional classic of Tulsidas, Surdas and Kabir' (Orsini, 2004, p. 118). Dhirendranath Singh talked about the printing method of this press and mentioned that 'it was basically a lithographic press, but they kept typographic press too; they printed the 'title page' in the typographic press by using red ink which made it so attractive' (Singh, 1986, p. 63). It produced almost 200 titles. They also brought works of courtly erotic (*riti*) poetry, commentaries, and the Hindi texts produced in Calcutta for Fort William College, like Lallulal's *Sabhavilas*' (Orsini, 2004, p. 118). The magnificent work of this press was a *Brajbhasha* version of the Bhagavata Puran- '*Ananda ambudhi* (1868), commissioned by the Maharaja Raghuraj Singh of *Rewah*. The reputation of this press attracted the attention of Hindu reformer Dayananda Saraswati. He collaborated with Gopinath Pathak to print his *Sastrartha Kasi* (1869), a famous religious debate with the Banaras *pandits*, and *Advaitamat Khandanam* (1870), a refutation of the doctrine of non-duality.

During the 1860s, Hindi writers started to participate in the printing and publishing business. Among them, the contribution of Manna Lal Sharma 'Dwij' was unforgettable. He set up the Kashi Sanskrit Press in 1860. He also worked as a member of the Bhartendu circle. Another literary figure, Bhartendu Harishchandra, set up his press Harishchandra Chandrika Press in 1874 in his *Chaukhamba* residence. It was a lithography press. Earlier, he opened this press to publish his and his father's works. But not a single piece of Harishchandra was printed here. Some pieces of his father Gopalchandra '*Giridhardas*' were printed and published here. His father was also a renowned poet of *Brajbhasha*. One of his works, '*Jarasandh-Vadh*' epic was printed from Harishchandra Chandrika Press (Singh, 1986, p. 76). Later, Harishchandra became the founder and editor of three influential magazines, like *Kavivachan Sudha* (1867), *Harishchandra Chandrika* (1873) and *Balabodhani* (1874). But these magazines were not published by his Harishchandra Chandrika Press.

²² *Selections from the Records of the Government of India, Home Department, No. CCXIII*, Printed by the Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, India, (1884), p. 61.



Figure 4: Title page of 'Bharat Jiwan' paper, 23 March 1885.

Courtesy of Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Varanasi.

The establishment of Bharat Jiwan Press by Ramkrishna Varma in 1884 marked a turning point in local print history. He was also one of the members of the Bhartendu circle. Bhartendu Harishchandra inspired him to establish this press and suggested the title of this press. In 1885, Ramkrishna Varma launched 'Bharat Jiwan', a weekly paper (See Figure: 4). The *Bharat Jiwan* was one of the longest and most circulated newspapers of Banaras in the nineteenth century. The number of circulation reached 2,200 in a few years.²³ For the editorial work, he kept some sub-proprietors like Kartik Prasad Khattri, Harikrishna Johar, Ganga Prasad Gupta, Ramchandra Varma, and Krishna Prasad Gaud. The *Bharat Jiwan* paper started to print in eight pages. With time, the number of pages increased from eight to sixteen. The price of this paper was Rs. 1.5 (including postage duty). It contained socio-political news and information on contemporary writers and their writings, translations of Bengali novels in Hindi (*Khariboli*), etc. The paper was filled with more than half a dozen advertisements printed on the first and last pages for more profit. The Bharat Jiwan Press produced many books and soon became the leading book producer in Banaras in the 1880s. They had both typographic and lithographic presses. The qualities of printed books were good. The cover page was printed with light red ink. More than 256 titles were produced between 1884 and 1900 from this press.

²³ *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Panjab, North-Western Provinces, Oudh, Central Provinces and Berar*, (01-04-1887), p. 12. (South Asian Open Archive).

By the 1880s, print had attracted the Indian writers' community. Commercial printing and publishing paved the way for those professional writers who depended on their writing for their livelihood. Devkinandan Khatri was one of them, who was known as the most popular and potential writer in Hindi and Urdu. Influenced by Bengali novels he started writing novels and published them in instalments. His two best-known series of novels, *Chandrakanta* and *Chandrakanta Santati*, were published in 1888 from various presses and brought him fame and fortune (King, 1994, p. 32). Soon, he launched *Upnayas Lahari*, a monthly fiction, in which he used to publish a series of novels, *Chandrakanta* and *Chandrakanta Santati*.²⁴ Through these fiction publications, he acquired enough money. As a result, he set up his own 'Lahari Press' in September 1898. The press published the sequel to *Chandrakanta* and *Chandrakanta Santati* (Chnadrakanta's offspring). Soon, the Lahari Press became one of the foremost commercial printing presses in Banaras. It paved the way for the profitable market for the printers-publishers. As a result, fiction publishing became most popular in the last decade of the nineteenth century. After the death of Devkinandan Khatri, his son, Durgaprasad Khatri, was running the Lahari Press.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion, it can be said that the emergence of local print culture in nineteenth century Banaras was possible due to the pioneer efforts of the indigenous people. While tracing the role of the indigenous people in the establishment of the printing presses, the article shows the diffusion of print into two phases - the pre-Mutiny period (pre-1857 Revolt), when the local and state patronage remained a critical factor for the survival of the local printing presses and helped them to sustain their small business. The local Brahmin intellectuals and *pandits* were entering the printing business to publish their ritual and cultural works. They reflected the city's culture and religious concerns through their publishing. Instead of looking for substantial benefits, they want to run their print shops for a long time. The second was the post-Mutiny period, when private Indian owned presses were opened in the city more than before. In this period, the nature of print was more focused on commercial printing and publishing. The technological advancement made print portable, cheap and easy to access. The scenario changed after the 1860s when local printers looked at the market for profits rather than patronage. However, this development shifted from private printing press ownership to print entrepreneurs. Thus, the small print shops became a significant publishing house in the city in the second half of the nineteenth century.

²⁴ 'Statement of Particulars Regarding Books, Maps, &c., Published in the N. W. Provinces, and Registered Under Act XXV of 1867, During the Third Quarter of 1896'. *Quarterly List of Publications, North Western Provinces and Oudh*, (1896), N.W.P. and Oudh Government Press, Allahabad, p. 19.

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