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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Illustration -- Acknowledgments -- A Note on Transliteration -- 1. The Text and the Research Context -- 2. The Text in Recitation and Song -- 3. The Text Expounded: The Development of Mnas-Kath -- 4. The Art of Mnas-Kath -- 5. Words Made Flesh: The Text Enacted -- 6. The Text in a Changing Society -- Glossary of Names with Transliteration -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	The Life of a Text offers a vivid portrait of one community's interaction with its favorite text-the epic Ramcaritmanas-and the way in which performances of the epic function as a flexible and evolving medium for cultural expression. Anthropologists, historians of religion, and readers interested in the culture of North India and the performance arts will find breadth of subject, careful scholarship, and engaging presentation in this unique and beautifully illustrated examination of Hindi culture. The most popular and influential text of Hindi-speaking North India, the epic Ramcaritmanas is a sixteenth century retelling of the Ramayana story by the poet Tulsidas. This masterpiece of pre-modern Hindi literature has always reached its largely illiterate audiences primarily through oral performance including ceremonial

recitation, folksinging, oral exegesis, and theatrical representation. Drawing on fieldwork in Banaras, Lutgendorf breaks new ground by capturing the range of performance techniques in vivid detail and tracing the impact of the epic in its contemporary cultural context.

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