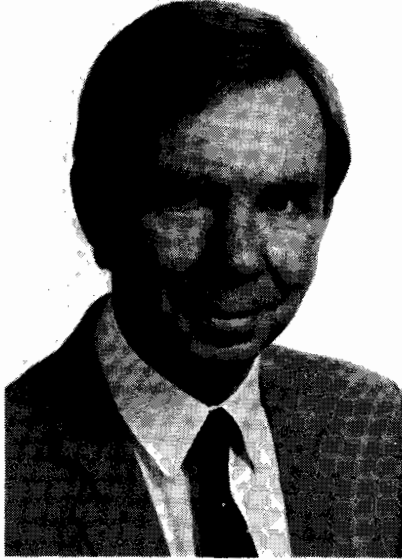


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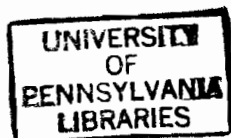
पानीं केरां बुदबुदा, अस मानस की जाति ।  
देखत ही छिपि जाइंगे, ज्यों तारे परभाति ॥ - कबीर

*This life of ours is like a bubble of water;  
As soon as you see it, it disappears,  
Like the stars at dawn. - KABIR*



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## *Bārahmāsā* in *Candāyan* and in Folk Traditions

SHYAM MANOHAR PANDEY

*Bārahmāsā*, the description of the twelve months has been a very popular genre in the literature and folklore of northern India dating back to the twelfth century. The first literary *bārahmāsā* was composed by a Muslim Persian poet Sād i Salmān (AD 1043-1131) who lived in Lahore. Sād i Salmān, whose full name was Masū'd ibn Sād i Salmān, lived during the Ghaznavī period of Indo-Muslim history. Masū'd was a wealthy landlord and was made Governor of Jalandhar for some time. His political interests led to repeated periods of imprisonment, but in AD 1107 he was finally set free and lived to an old age (A. Schimmel 1973, p. 11). It was Sanā'ī,<sup>1</sup> the Persian mystical poet from Ghazna, who carefully collected his verses. A little later Jain poets too started writing *bārahmāsā* and the tradition continued for a long time.

Sufi poets writing in Hindi also used the *bārahmāsā* genre, along with *saṭ ṛtu* ('six seasons') descriptions, and my objective here is to discuss the *bārahmāsā* of these Sufi poets. These writers are Maulānā Dāūd (*Candāyan*), Kutuban (*Mṛgāvati*), Malik Muhammad Jāyāsī (*Padmāvat*; *Kanhāvat*) and Mañjhan (*Madhumālātī*). Later I will compare the Sufi *bārahmāsā* tradition with Masū'd Salmān's *bārahmāsā* and with other *bārahmāsā* current in the folk literature of the Hindi speaking area.

The first Sufi poet to use the *bārahmāsā* genre was Maulānā Dāūd. His composition *Candāyan*, completed in AD 1379 (during the reign of Firoz Shāh Tughlaq, 1351-88), contains a *bārahmāsā* description of the heroine Mainā's *virah* following her husband's elopement with another woman.<sup>2</sup> Mainā's pangs of separation month by month are described in the following sections.

### *Sāvan*

After Candā has eloped with Lorik, his wife Mainā starts suffering from the pangs of separation in the month of Sāvan (July-August). Crying desperately, she watches day and night for her husband's

return, and keeps repeating his name (v. 339). She is like a fish out of water.

In the meantime she hears that a caravan of seven hundred traders has arrived whose leader is Surjan. Surjan, a Brahmin, listens carefully to Mainā's *virah* tormented message. Mainā describes her separation through the twelve months, beginning with Sāvan (July-August). In fact, most of the early Sufi texts describe *bārahmāsā* beginning from Sāvan, the only exception being *Padmāvat*, in which the *bārahmāsā* begins in Āsārḥ.

In Sāvan the dry earth becomes drenched with water, and greenery sprouts everywhere. Mainā requests Surjan to tell Lorik that the rainy season has captured her eyes and that they are shedding tears continually, rotting the strings of her garlands, and the kohl on her eyes, a mark of her beauty, has wiped off. Mainā requests Surjan to tell Lorik that ever since Candā took him away in Sāvan, Mainā's eyes have continuously poured water. 'O Surjan! Give Lorik this message that Mainā has been unfortunate and cannot sleep since he went away.'

Kutuban,<sup>3</sup> author of *Mṛgāvatī* (1503), follows *Candāyan* when he describes the earth as wearing a garment of greenery. Rūpmiṇī in *Mṛgāvatī* suffers in the same way as Mainā in *Candāyan*. She requests Dullabh, the leader of the merchants' caravan, to tell her husband Manohar that she has been scorched by *virah*. In *Mṛgāvatī* the bearer of the message is also a leader of merchants but he does not seem to be a Brahmin as in *Candāyan*.

Jāyāsī uses more detailed imagery in his *Padmāvat*.<sup>4</sup> Nāgmatī suffers in Sāvan due to the absence of Ratnasen. In her sorrow she sheds tears of blood which fall to the earth as velvet insects (*vīr badhuṭī*). In the month of Sāvan, as is the tradition even now, girls swing on their swings in happiness, but Nāgmatī was overcome by the pain of *virah* and was trembling with agony. Like the author of *Candāyan* and *Mṛgāvatī*, Jāyāsī describes the earth as having put on a garment of greenery. In *Padmāvat* it is the bird Parevā who is a messenger. Here Nāgmatī, in her message to Ratnasen, says that the whole world is filled with water and that there are impassable mountains and dense forests on the path. 'How could I come to you? I have no wings to fly.' Jāyāsī's long and detailed descriptions single him out from the other poets of this tradition of Hindi Sufi poetry.

In *Kanhāvat*<sup>5</sup> which is attributed to Malik Muhammad Jāyāsī,

milkmaids suffer from *virah* when Kṛṣṇa leaves them and goes to Madhupurī. Their eyes shed water like the eaves of a house during the rainy season. This imagery is also found in *Padmāvat*: the clouds are raining heavily but the milkmaids are drying up. Those women who, united with their husbands, are swinging on swings and wearing nice garments have been described in the same way as in Sufi texts. The milkmaids, like other women suffering from *virah*, are without embellishments and feel that their lives are useless. Here the wind carries the milkmaids' message to Kṛṣṇa.

In *Madhumālatī*, Mañjhan<sup>6</sup> describes the heroines' *virah* as follows: 'Both the thick clouds of the Sāvan month and Madhumālatī's eyes are overflowing with water like the rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā.' Madhumālatī sheds tears of blood and, as in *Padmāvat*, the tears turn into velvet insects as they fall. As in *Candāyan* and the other Sufi texts, Madhumālatī's eyes shed tears continuously and she is plunged deeply into the agony of separation.

#### Bhādō

In Bhādō (August-September) the nights become deep, dark and fearsome for Mainā, who is still a young girl. Lightning flashes and loneliness seizes her heart in the absence of her husband Lorik. Without a companion she suffers painful isolation. Tears fall from her sorrowful eyes and fill both land and sea. It is impossible for her to cross the mountains and the waterlogged earth to reach her husband. In the last two verses she complains that Lorik listened to a wicked woman (Candā) and ran away with her. Mainā spends her nights crying (*Candāyan*, v. 38).

*Mṛgāvatī*'s description of the month of Bhādō in the Indian rainy season is more detailed than the description in *Candāyan*. It is continuously raining in torrents and the nights are deep and dark. Lightning is also flashing (v. 318). Like Mainā in *Candāyan*, Rūpmiṇī is also described as being afraid. Her bed is no longer comfortable for her; it bites her like a serpent. Here Kutuban shows his familiarity with Indian myths and legends. Rūpmiṇī's eyes shed water in the same way as rains fall in the Slesā and Maghā *nakṣatra*.<sup>7</sup> Rūpmiṇī has become like a *pāpīhā* bird always calling *piu, piu* ('loved one'). The croaking of frogs which kills Rūpmiṇī has also been described here. She says that she is sinking

in the ocean of *virah* and that there is no boatman or rope that she can hold onto. Her eyes are overflowing like the flooded Gaṅgā. Her bed is also floating in the floods.

Malik Muhammad Jāyāsī (v. 318) in *Padmāvat* describes the nights of Bhādō to some extent as in *Candāyan* or *Mṛgāvati*. Lightning flashing in the deep, dark and cloudy nights is similarly described, and the water flowing from Nāgmatī's eyes is similarly likened to water falling from the eaves of a house. This imagery first appears in *Candāyan* and then in *Mṛgāvati* and is continued in *Padmāvat*. Nāgmatī is drying up in the rainy season—this is Jāyāsī's own imagination. In Bhādō the land and sky meet but Nāgmatī drowns in the profound water of youth. She says, 'O loved one, come and protect me.'

In *Kanhāvat* (v. 310) the dark night of Bhādō has been depicted in the same way as in other Sufi texts. In their palaces the milkmaids are suffering and are complaining that Kṛṣṇa has gone away and been enchanted so that he does not care to send them any messages. The earth is filled with water and so are the eyes of the milkmaids; without Kṛṣṇa, who is compared to a boatman, they drown in the deep water of *virah*.

It is needless to say that the poet of *Kanhāvat* also follows *Candāyan* and *Mṛgāvati* as far as the description of nature is concerned. There is close similarity between *Padmāvat* and *Kanhāvat* in that Nāgmatī is also sinking in the deep water of youth and calls out to her loved one, Ratnasen, to save her. In *Madhumālatī*, Madhumālatī is burning in the forest fire of *virah* during the dark night of Bhādō. This forest fire of *virah* is her only friend in bed in the dark night of Bhādō. Simh and Maghā disturb her and her eyes shed tears in the same way as water falls from the eaves of a house. Again it can be seen that this description has been borrowed by Mañjhan from his predecessors who wrote *Candāyan* (v. 343/5) and *Padmāvat* (v. 346/4).

#### *Kvār*

Now the month of Kvār (September-October) comes and the star Canopus (Agastya) appears.<sup>8</sup> The rains stop but Mainā's husband Lorik does not return. *Kās* (a tall grass) grows and the swans start swimming in the ponds. Cranes, wagtails, and herons also appear. In this month of Kvār young girls are happy with their husbands

and start burning lamps in earthen plates. In this new season of freshness, king and poor alike cook nice food in the dark fortnight of the month at the time of Pitṛpakṣa<sup>9</sup> and eat well, but Mainā cannot eat anything. There is no enjoyment for her. She is without her loved one. Mainā expects Lorik to saddle his horse and return home but the *mechu* (*malekṣa*, unclean one) does not return (*Candāyan* v. 345-7); he remains cruel and obdurate.

Kutuban describes Aśvin (Kvār) a little differently. Here the appearance of the star, the stopping of the rains, the appearance of flowers, grass, birds, wagtails, and cranes have all been described in the same manner as in *Candāyan*, but *virah* has become like the Hastī *nakṣatra* (*hathiyā*)<sup>10</sup>, thundering and roaring. Rūpminī is alone in her bed. In *Mṛgāvati* the image of the elephant of *virah* is repeated in lines 5 and 6 of the stanza. The phrase *maimant kuñjar* ('maddened elephant') has been used here for the symbolic elephant who is trampling the body of Rūpminī suffering from the agony of *virah*. In *Padmāvat* the star Agastya and diminishing water have also been described as in *Candāyan* and *Mṛgāvati*. Wagtails, cranes, and partridges too have been described as in *Candāyan*. The description of the elephant of *virah* tearing Nāgmatī's body into pieces and eating her up is more or less similar to the descriptions in *Candāyan*. However, Jāyāsī describes Citrā, Hastī, and Uttarā *nakṣatra* in some detail,<sup>11</sup> displaying his excellence as a poet all the time. 'The elephant of *virah* disturbing Nāgmatī' is not his original idea but the request to Ratnasen to come as a lion to control the elephant (v. 347) is his own creation and adds to the excellence of his poetry.

In *Kanhāvat* (v. 311) the poet describes the happy women whose husbands are at home and who are eating well, but tells us that Kṛṣṇa has tricked the milkmaids Rādhā and Candrāvalī. The star Agastya and the partridge (*khañjan*) are described here as well. The milkmaids lament and say, 'Had we known that Kṛṣṇa would not return we would not have let him go.'

Mañjhan describes, in *Madhumālatī* (v. 404), the festival of Navrātrī, and the wagtails, cranes, and partridges as in *Candāyan*. All the birds are chirping and chanting but Madhumālatī is flying in the forest like a bird. All are happy in this season but Madhumālatī is crying. In Kvār the rains stop and the water begins to subside, but Madhumālatī's eyes are filled with tears; she can neither speak nor describe her sorrow.

*Kārtik*

In the month of Kārtik (October-November) the nights are pleasant and clear but the moonlight burns Mainā, and she suffers painfully. Other women make beds for their worthy husbands and embrace them. Mainā thinks her loved one will come for Dīvālī to play and sing on this great festival of lights, but he does not return, and the whole world becomes dark for her. Candā took away her bright one (husband), and she suffers in his absence. Her husband has left Mainā and become someone else's. Mainā requests Surjan to plead with him on her behalf and prays that he might return to worship the deity on the festival of *devathān*.<sup>12</sup>

Like Maulāna Dāūd, Kutuban (v. 320) also describes the bright nights of the *śarad* season and the cool moon, all of which disturb Rūpmiṇī since she suffers the pains of separation. In *Padmāvat* the cool nights and bright moon are also described while Nāgmatī burns in *virah*. Kutuban does not describe the Dīvālī festival of lights, but Jāyasī refers to it and the women singing festive songs as in *Candāyan*. *Candāyan* refers to the worship of *devathān*, but in *Padmāvat*, *munivar* or *manorā* worship is mentioned.<sup>13</sup> All the women celebrate the festival in *Padmāvat*, but it is a painful occasion for Nāgmatī without her husband.

Kārtik is also painful for the milkmaids in *Kanhāvat* (v. 312) and the moonlight also burns them. Women whose husbands are with them enjoy themselves, but the milkmaids suffer because Kṛṣṇa is away and nobody comes to them from Madhuban with a message.

Madhumālatī (v. 405) is tormented by the cool moon—a standard image found in almost all the Hindi Sufi texts. Other women enjoy themselves, but Madhumālatī suffers in Kārtik. The Dīvālī festival is referred to here, but Madhumālatī is miserable and flies from one forest to another.

*Agahan*

In Agahan (November-December) the nights start becoming long and the days, short. Mainā in *Candāyan* (v. 347) says that her own body is decaying day by day. The wind blows slowly and she feels the cold attacking her body, yet her husband Lorik does not return to protect her. She burns with *kām* ('sexual desire') and the pain of *virah* causes wildfire in her body. It burns her to ashes and

smears the ashes onto its face and body. *Virah* is clearly personified here as a Śaiva *sādhū* who picks up the ashes of corpses and smears them on his forehead and body. Mainā is deeply anguished and prays to God not to give such suffering to anyone. In contrast Candā enjoys the company of the Sun, Lorik, leaving behind her own husband Bāvan. Mainā feels insulted that her husband has abandoned her and laments that in that cold season the shameless Candā sleeps and enjoys herself with someone else's husband.

*Mṛgāvātī* describes how cold the world feels in Agahan (v. 321). Here Kutuban's Rūpmiṇī sends her message to her husband Manohar and requests him to come and enjoy himself with her as the prime of her youth will never return again. At the end of the stanza Kutuban says, 'One should not forget love even for a moment. This youth declines just as water slowly drips out of cupped palms (*añjalī*).'

Following *Candāyan*, Malik Muhammad Jāyasī in *Padmāvat* describes the declining days and the expanding nights. At night hearts tremble as the cold season begins, but Nāgmatī burns in *virah* like the wick of a lamp. Other girls are with their husbands and embellish themselves with fine garments, but Nāgmatī is deprived of all this. Like Mainā in *Candāyan*, Nāgmatī is also burning in the fire of sorrow in separation. She sends her message to Ratnasen and tells him that even bees and crows were burnt black by Nāgmatī's fire of *virah*. Here one sees the universalization of *virah* so typical of Jāyasī (e.g. *Padmāvat* v. 349. 8-9).

In *Kanhāvat* (v. 313), the shortening of the day and expansion of the nights are described in the same way as in *Candāyan*. Here *saur supetī* ('thick quilts and sheets') are being prepared by all the women who are with their husbands, but the milkmaids are shedding tears of *virah* because Kṛṣṇa who used to sleep with them on the bed (*sej suvanār*) is away from them. They are dying of cold and wish Kṛṣṇa could come as the Sun to embrace them and dispel the cold. It is to be remembered that *saur supetī* for thick quilt and sheet first appear together in *Candāyan* when the month of Pūs is described (v. 340) and occur in descriptions of this month also in the works of subsequent Sufi poets (*Mṛgāvātī* v. 322, *Padmāvat* v. 350). The only exception seems to be *Madhumālatī* (v. 406) which describes Agahan as a cold month in which people want to be near the fireplace. The happiness of the

daytime has diminished and the sorrows have increased for Madhumālātī whose intense *virah* has been vividly presented here.

### Pūs

Now the month of Pūs (December-January) comes and Mainā watches the path for her husband's arrival (*Candāyan*, v. 348). She cannot sleep even for a moment day or night, cannot bear the cold, and feels neither dead nor alive. In every house women arrange thick quilts and sheets (*saur sapetī*) and eat meat of various kinds and ghee (clarified butter), but Mainā's heart burns in separation. She does not want to wear fine clothes or bodices. She thinks that her loved one will return with the arrival of the month of Pūs but that does not happen. Kings and paupers, all enjoy themselves at home with their women in this period, but Lorik has gone away on business (*baniḥ*), and Mainā sheds tears. She requests Surjan to ask Lorik what profit he will gain if he loses his main asset (*pūḥ*).

In *Mrgāvatī* (v. 322), Rūpmiṇī is also suffering in the month of Pūs. The frost (*tusār*) has thickened and her cold bed causes her more anguish. She is alone on her bed and the thick quilt and the bed sheets are uncomfortable for her. It is clear that *Mrgāvatī*'s descriptions are distinctive, but Kutuban describes Rūpmiṇī's *virah* as intensely as Maulānā Dāu'd depicts Mainā's in *Candāyan*.

In *Padmāvat* (v. 353), Nāgmatī trembles in Pūs. As in the other works, the sun is weak but her *virah* is great. Even with the thick quilt and sheet she feels cold as if the bed were submerged in ice. A female partridge who is separated from her mate during the night is united with him in the daytime, but Nāgmatī can meet her husband neither in the daytime nor during the night. Nāgmatī is alone and the vulture of *virah* is attacking her. It seems that this vulture of *virah* which is eating her up during her lifetime will not spare her even after her death. Nāgmatī has become thin and emaciated: her flesh has melted and her tears have changed into blood. As these examples reveal, although Jāyasī borrows many themes from *Candāyan*, he surpasses his predecessors in poetic skill.

In *Kanhāvat* also (v. 314) the cold is terrible in Pūs, and cruel (*nichoh*) Kṛṣṇa does not return. The milkmaids' hearts tremble with pangs of separation and they shiver like the leaves of a tree. The firepot of *virah* (*aṅgīthī*) burns their bodies to ashes. This

image is found in *Candāyan* in the context of the description of Māgh (v. 349.2). The milkmaids say if Kṛṣṇa returns and embraces them, they will revive. They pray to him to come and save them. While the intensity of the *virah* described here is akin to that described in other Hindi Sufi texts, the vulture of *virah* and the image of the partridge and its mate are not found in *Kanhāvat*.

For *Madhumālātī* (v. 407) the night is difficult in this month of Pūs. Other girls desire to meet their husbands, but she flies from one forest to another like a bird, complaining that her husband has left her in the full bloom of youth. Other wives meet their husbands happily, but Madhumālātī is deprived of hers. The biting cold of Pūs has not been mentioned here.

### Māgh

In Māgh (January-February), it is frosty and so cold that even the strings of Mainā's necklace tremble on her breasts. Her teeth chatter with cold and tears trickle from her eyes. The firepot of *virah* burns in her heart. First she burns from the pangs of separation, then the frost strikes her. Her life has become burdensome for her. Just as the frost strikes the lotus causing it to decay, so her husband Lorik has caused her to decay in the month of Māgh. In the mornings of this *hemant* season she finds herself without the Sun (Lorik). Candā has eloped with the Sun and that *malekṣa* ('wicked one') has slept with another woman. She requests Surjan to tell Lorik that she is dying, struck by frost, and that he should return soon to comfort her (*Candāyan*, v. 349).

In *Mrgāvatī* (v. 349) Rūpmiṇī also burns in *virah* even though the cold wind blows. She requests her husband to come and shine like the Sun to remove her cold. The last *dohā* in *Mrgāvatī* is very interesting; Rūpmiṇī says that *virah* has stolen all her happiness and comforts in the same way as Rāvaṇ abducted Sītā. Her husband should come and kill Rāvaṇ as Rām (Raghuandan) did.

The frost of Māgh strikes Nāgmatī in the same way. Just as in *Candāyan* (v. 349.7) Mainā calls her husband to come in the form of the Sun and warm her up, so in *Padmāvat* Nāgmatī requests Ratnasen to come and do likewise. In the cold season the *virah* burns Nāgmatī to ashes and wants to scatter them all around. Jāyasī uses hyperbole (*atisayokti*) (v. 351) to intensify the depth of Nāgmatī's *virah*.

In *Kanhāvat* (v. 35) the frost of Māgh disturbs the milkmaids

just as it does Mainā in *Candāyan*. Thick quilts and sheets (*saur sapetī*) are cold as ice to them; they suffer from *virah* and complain to their co-wife Kubjā.

For Madhumālātī (v. 408) it is a terribly cold season (*siyāl*), but she sits on the branch of the *virah* tree, which is extremely painful for her. The last verse ('My husband took away all my happiness and besides this, *virah* was attacking my bones and flesh with its sharp knife (*kātī*)') epitomizes Madhumālātī's condition.

### Phāgun

In *Candāyan* (v. 350) Maulānā Dāūd says that people feel that the cold increases four-fold in Phāgun (February-March) and the wind blows hard, but for Mainā the cold has increased by seven times more. She is dying in the month of Phāg since Lorik is not there to embrace her. In every house girls play Phāg with sticks (*ḍaṇḍāhar*). They are as blessed as princesses; they chew betel leaves, put kohl on their eyes, braid their hair, put vermilion in the part of their hair and a special mark on their forehead. They dance the Phāg dance and their ankle bells ring sonorously. The whole world is overcome with joy, but Mainā sheds so many tears of blood that her bodice and clothes become red. She requests Surjan to tell Lorik that Mainā has been burned to ashes during the period of Holī. In *Mṛgāvātī*, the *virahinī* is also burnt to ashes (v. 324). The whole world plays Phāg or Holī and *Mṛgāvātī* puts her life itself in the burning Holikā bonfire, hoping that her ashes might fly to her loved one. The spring season has arrived but *virah* is singing *carcarī* songs to burn her to ashes. She sheds tears of blood and thus her body turns vermilion. The wind also disturbs her, the courtyard and the bed do not please her, and the spring passes in vain since her beloved has left her and become someone else's. The festival of Vasant ('spring') is pleasant for others, but for *Mṛgāvātī* it brings the madness of youth. Leaves fall from the trees and still her husband does not come back home.

In *Padmāvat* (v. 352) the wind of Phāgun blows and the *virahinī* Nāgmatī suffers still more. Her body has withered like a dried leaf. Trees have put on flowers and nature is happy, but Nāgmatī is anguished. People enjoy Phāg and women dance and sing Holī songs (*carcarī*, etc.), but Ratnasen has put the bonfire of Holikā into Nāgmatī's heart. Nāgmatī says that she will burn her body

and reduce it to ashes and ask the wind to scatter them on the path; maybe her loved one will put his feet on the ashes. She wants to meet him in any way possible.

In *Kanhāvat* as in *Candāyan*, the cold in Phāgun is four times stronger than in the previous month. Women who are with their husbands embellish themselves and play Holī, but the milkmaids dry up in *virah*. The sun also burns them, and Kṛṣṇa has gone away and hidden himself in Madhuban. The milkmaids remember him and suffer (v. 316).

In *Madhumālātī*, the heroine recounts her sorrow. Her burnt body has become like Holikā's bonfire. Autumn has set in and gardens are deserted. Madhumālātī goes to all the trees and sits on their branches in the form of a bird, lamenting and crying. She suffers the pangs of separation as she is away from her husband. Her youth is in full bloom, but in her heart she is dry and deserted (v. 409).

### Caitra

In the month of Caitra (March-April) buds appear and the green trees dress in white and red; the lotus blossoms and the sandal trees and other flowers generate sweet fragrances. Bees wander around the perfumed flowers. Mainā says to Surjan that the spring season has arrived, but her husband has seen another creeper and fallen in love with it (*Candāyan*, v. 351). This new season does not please Mainā at all since her husband has not arrived. She requests Lorik to return and see her garden; she is decaying, lonely, making her bed on thorns, and cannot sleep. She requests Surjan to tell Lorik that Mainā does not enjoy his company even for a moment.

In *Mṛgāvātī* (v. 325) new leaves have also appeared and flowers have blossomed. Cuckoos have started singing, but Rūpmiṇī has started burning in the fire of *virah*. *Candāyan* and *Mṛgāvātī* both contain descriptions of intense *virah*, but in *Padmāvat*, as usual, the descriptions of nature are exhaustive. In this spring season women sing Basant and Dhamār, but for Nāgmatī the world is deserted. Cuckoos sing, and it appears as though Kāmdev, the god of love, is shooting his five arrows. Nāgmatī pours out tears of blood which soak all the trees and their leaves, and the *majith* and *tesū* flowers. Mango trees start to bear fruit; bees buzz around all



the flower trees, but they do not please Nāgmatī. They are all like thorns piercing her heart. In the end she requests Ratnasen to be like a homing pigeon and rush back home. The parrots of *virah* have attacked the fruits of her youth. Only he can save her (Padmāvat v. 353).<sup>14</sup>

In *Kanhāvat* women celebrate this spring festival and bring flower garlands home for their husbands. They also decorate their beds with flowers, but for the milkmaids it is not pleasant. All the liveliness of nature burns them in sorrow. Spring is beautiful only when the husband comes home smiling. The milkmaids remember Kubjā and despise her because she has detained Kṛṣṇa and made them suffer. Nights bring death to them, and the whole day they sit and wait for Kṛṣṇa (v. 317).

In *Madhumālātī* (v. 410) the trees have put on new garments of leaves and bees buzz everywhere. The leaves which had fallen in the autumn have appeared again but for Madhumālātī it is still autumn because her husband Manohar has left her. The Sun of *virah* is in the eighth position and shines sharply right upon her head.

### Vaiśākh

Mainā says in *Candāyan* (v. 352) that the trees bear fruit in Vaiśākh (April-May). Mainā always thinks of her beloved, keeping him in her heart. She asks Lorik, who lacks good taste, to return and protect his 'mango garden' (i.e. Mainā), and enjoy himself with her. Who else could protect her? It grieves her that she is not able to discover which forest Lorik is living in. She suffers the pangs of separation and, feeling miserable, cries the whole day. She tells the valiant Lorik to return soon, for in his absence the ardent heat burns her badly. The spring season passes but Lorik does not come to her bed. He wanders around another creeper, like a bee enjoying the fruits of another vine.

In *Mṛgāvatī* (v. 326) the trees have also been described as bearing fruit. Rūpmiṇī requests her husband to return and enjoy himself with her, saying that she has protected his mango orchard so far, but it is impossible for her to protect it any longer from wicked ones. The parrot of *virah* wants to eat up all the fruit, and it is impossible to make him fly away.

Jāyasī (v. 354) describes the hot Sun who wants to go towards the Himālayas to cool himself. Instead he drives his chariot towards Nāgmatī who then burns all the more with *virah*. Nāgmatī feels

hot despite all her cool clothes, and her heart burns like a kiln. *Padmāvat* does not contain all the descriptions of the mango trees and orchards found in *Candāyan* and *Mṛgāvatī*, but at the end of this section Nāgmatī says that the lotus which had blossomed in the pond of her heart has dried up and that new leaves could sprout in it only after her husband's arrival.

In *Kanhāvat* (v. 318) the Sun is extremely hot and burns Candrāvalī, Rādhikā, and the other sixteen thousand milkmaids. As in *Padmāvat*, cool clothes feel hot to the heroines (here the milkmaids), and sandalpaste fails to cool them down. Akrūr has taken their beloved Kṛṣṇa away to Madhupurī, and he does not care to return.

In Vaiśākh Madhumālātī suffers extremely in contrast to the other girls, who enjoy themselves with their husbands (v. 411). It is still the spring season and trees have put on flowers, but for Madhumālātī everything looks desolate and she is tormented at every moment. Yellow, red, and green leaves and fruit appear on the trees, but the fruits of Madhumālātī's youth, still unripe, fall off in the absence of her loved one.

### Jeth

After the month of Vaiśākh, Maulānā Dāūd describes the month of Jeth (May-June, v. 353). The moon (*cād*) has seized the sun, and the sun, burns the earth. Ardent heat scorches Mainā and tells her the tale of separation. Even cool drinks such as *khaṇḍavānī* and fresh water feel as if they are on fire. Due to the intense heat, she does not apply sandalpaste to her body nor use perfumed grass (*khas*). People start thatching their roofs and repairing the huts in preparation for the rainy season. All the other women enjoy union with their husbands, but Mainā burns in *virah*. She requests Surjan to beg Lorik to return home and to become the water of a river to extinguish her fire.

Kutuban also describes the extremely hot sun in the month of Jeth that produces wildfire. Rūpmiṇī invites her husband, Manohar, to come and give her coolness. Since Madan, the god of love, burns her, he must come like the cool wind coming from the Malay mountains. She sends her message through Durlabh, requesting him to tell Manohar to come as a cloud. Otherwise the sun will burn her, and she will crumble to pieces (v. 327).

In *Padmāvat* Malik Muhammad Jāyasī (v. 354) describes the

scorching heat and the dust storms of Jeth. Mountains are also extremely hot in this month. *Virah* rises and roars like Hanumān and starts burning Nāgmatī's body like the city of Laṅkā. Winds blow from four directions and fan the flames so that they reach her bed (*palāṅkā*). Nāgmatī burns and becomes black like the Yamunā River (Kālindī). The fire of *virah* has become intolerable for her. Jāyasī says that the hungry ravenous crow, who has started eating her flesh, has struck her bones. Nāgmatī's deep sorrow has been depicted here in detail; no other poet of this tradition surpasses Jāyasī in his use of similes and metaphors, and in his poetic excellence.

In *Kanhāvat* (v. 319) descriptions are simple, without any ornamentation. In Jeth the milkmaids have become lifeless. There is scorching heat (*lū*) and the wind blows sharply; wildfire spreads and so does the *virah* of the milkmaids, burning them thoroughly. They pray to Kṛṣṇa to come back from Madhuban to cool them.

In *Madhumālātī* (v. 412) also the month of Jeth is extremely hot. The sun spreads fire and Madhumālātī's heart is scorched by *virah*. Her husband is not with her to share her bed; she suffers *viyog* (separation), exile, and loneliness; her form changes from that of a human being into that of a bird. All this makes her desperate. She wants to die, but death does not approach her to take her away.

### Āsārḥ

The last month Maulānā Dāūd describes is Āsārḥ (June-July, v. 354) when clouds start thundering and people begin to repair their homes, palaces, and halls; kings as well as ordinary men all start new lives; and traders who have gone to distant islands return home. Everyone who lives away from home is anxious to return, but Mainā's husband remains unconcerned. Her loved one causes her *virah*, and so her body becomes feeble and her flesh decays. She endures a hellish plight and suffers death every day in the absence of her husband. Who could bear the pangs of separation every day? Mainā requests Surjan to tell Lorik that Sāvan has begun again and she cannot control herself and keep herself alive. She looks after the house and store and sheds tears of blood.

In *Mṛgāvātī*, Kutuban follows *Candāyan* (v. 328) when he describes the roaring of clouds in the sky—though here they appear to roar like elephants—and lightning flashing in every direction.

As in the description in *Candāyan*, traders return home. Rūpmiṇī's husband, however, remains in a foreign land. The month of Sāvan begins again and the world is filled with water. Indra and Śani unite to make Rūpmiṇī suffer and cry.

The *bārahmāsā* in *Padmāvāt* starts in the month of Āsārḥ and ends in the month of Jeth. Āsārḥ comes and the clouds thunder in the sky just as in *Candāyan*. But the *virah* in *Padmāvāt* starts a great war and blows its trumpet loudly. Dark, white and grey coloured clouds wander about like soldiers, the flocks of white cranes look like the banners of an army, and the lightning is like the brandished swords of a king. These vivid descriptions in which the king of *virah* launches a war against Nāgmatī are not found elsewhere in Hindi Sufi texts. Peacocks and cuckoos along with frogs all disturb Nāgmatī, and she worries about who will repair the roof of her house. It is interesting to see that Ratnasen is described in the text as a king, but here his wife Nāgmatī, is described as worrying about a roof which needs repairing. In many folktales heroines are described as queens, but they wash their own clothes like ordinary women. In Āsārḥ Nāgmatī is devoid of happiness without her husband.

Like *Padmāvāt*, *Kanhāvat* also describes the month of Āsārḥ at the beginning of the *bārahmāsā* (v. 308). Clouds thunder and lightning flashes here as well. Cuckoos, peacocks and partridges all call and frogs, who bring the message of rains, croak. Thus the milkmaids suffer agony in separation, saying that Kṛṣṇa is as near to them as a necklace is to the body, but a great mountain like Kubjā has blocked him from coming. It is hard for them to bear this pain and sorrow of separation.

In *Madhumālātī* (v. 413) the thundering of clouds and flashing of lightning are also described, and in this work also people are roofing their houses against the rains. Madhumālātī complains that the earth is turning green and the buds of flowers and fruits are sprouting on the trees and plants, but in her husband's heart love does not sprout. She tells her friend that she spent twelve months in *virah* and asks her to help her come out of it.

It is interesting to see that all the messengers start suffering from *virah* when they listen to the message. Their suffering emphasises a universal cosmic *virah*. Listening to the sad tale of *virah* in *Candāyan*, Surjan himself becomes filled with sorrow; *dvandva* ('conflict and confusion'), *udveg* ('anxiety'), *ucāṭ* ('sleeplessness') all take hold of him as he starts burning in the fire of

*virah*. He forgets his own original trade and remembers only the pangs of separation. Not only Surjan, but all his friends and companions also, start burning in the wildfire of *virah*. This *virah* is so strong that all the houses on the path burst into flames. All the animals and birds are blackened by the fire of *virah*. The fish in the sea and the partridges in the lakes suffer from it; the moon's face in the sky is blackish, and the clouds have become dark; both the old and the young have started suffering from the pangs of *virah* (vv. 362-3).

*Mrgāvatī* follows *Candāyan* closely in this universalization of *virah*. For example, Nāyak in *Mrgāvatī* is also plunged into the grief of *virah* and *dvandva* ('confusion', 'conflict'); experiences *udveg* ('anxiety'), and *ucāt* ('sleeplessness'). He forgets his own trade and carries the load of all this suffering. Rūpmiṇī's message has deeply affected him. As in *Candāyan*, people who collect taxes on the path (*dānī*) all burn in *virah* along with the houses and forests. In *Mrgāvatī* even the sea burns up (vv. 332-3).

In *Padmāvat*, when the bird carries the message, the fire of *virah* spreads everywhere and the whole of Siṃhal (Sri Lanka) starts burning. As the fire rises, the clouds become dark, and the earth, sea, fish, forests, and trees all burn from this cosmic *virah*.

In *Kanhāvat* the earth and sky all burn from one spark of *virah* (v. 322). Kṛṣṇa asks the wind why it is burning so intensely, and it replies with the message sent by Rādhā, Candrāvalī and the milkmaids. Kṛṣṇa listens to the message, and love grows in his heart until finally they meet. The suffering of the milkmaids is as intense here as in the other Sufi texts.

It is clear from these descriptions that Sufi poets have a special purpose in describing the *bārahmāsā*. The philosophy of *virah* is central to the Sufi concept of love, and this finds clear expression in the *bārahmāsās*. All the messengers begin to suffer as they listen to the message of *virah* which the poets make universal and cosmic. They have chosen the *bārahmāsā* theme to convey the *virah* felt by the soul as soon as it separates from the Divine. Love and the pain of *virah* are almost synonymous in Hindi Sufi texts.

#### *Salmān Masū'd's 'Bārahmāsā'*

The *bārahmāsā* of Masū'd Sādī Salmān (1043-1131)<sup>15</sup> is the first work of this type in Persian though it does not deal with *virah*. It was composed in praise of King Masū'd who succeeded Mahmūd

Ghaznavī (d. 1030) and reigned for ten years, from AD 1030 to 1040.

This *bārahmāsā* begins with the Iranian month of Parvardīn which begins on 21 March and ends in the month of Spandārmāz (which is called Isfand Māh in modern times). The poet, who lived in Lahore, was probably influenced by Indian folk literature or the literary conventions in which descriptions of the six seasons were very common. In Indian folk literature twelve month descriptions must have been as popular during Salmān's lifetime as they are today, but literary *bārahmāsās* appear at a comparatively late date. The oldest example according to Agarcand Nāhtā, is *Bārahmāsā* by an unknown poet, probably composed in the thirteenth century. Vaudeville (1986, p. 18) has analysed the contents of this work which praises Dharma Sūri. It will be interesting to compare this *bārahmāsā* with Salmān's *bārahmāsā*, which is nothing but a eulogy of King Masū'd.

Salmān begins his *bārahmāsā* by asking the people to remain happy. God is great and His commandment is that we should obey the king until the Day of Judgement. King Masū'd is great, and the kings of Rūm send gifts to him. He sits on the throne and possesses various kinds of jewels. All beautiful gardens are symbols of his glory, and he merits praise for them. People taste the good fruits of the trees of his justice. The poet Salmān Masū'd wishes him well and prays to God that his glory remain forever and that prosperity and happiness follow him.

The second month that Salmān describes is Ardibahisht, which falls in April. In this month the world becomes a paradise and the enjoyment of wine is permitted. Without wine life is useless. The glory of this month is great: fields, gardens, and mountains have started smiling with flowers and the clouds have started shedding tears, birds have started chirping; the earth has put on different types of raiment; angels have started shaping the earth in beautiful forms; God has given power to the king, and he is enjoying the flowers and perfumes.

Khurdād Māh, which begins in May, looks beautiful with its blooming gardens; the flowers and nature are embodiments of happiness in this season; birds sing sitting on the tree of liberty; slaves and king alike are happy in this season. It is good to drink in this month. King Masū'd is great; his kingdom is superb; he and his people are all happy; he is the custodian of religion; prosperity and generosity are due to him. The poet Salmān prays

for him and wishes that he might rule until the Day of Judgement.

With regard to Tir Māh, the poet declares:

O Beautiful One, with the face of a moon, you should ask for wine in this month. This is a good time. You must enjoy wine. It is through wine that the heart feels fresh. My heart is happy with wine. If you see sins in me, I may tell you truly that I do not have many sins or faults in me. The wine is costly. Even the king feels so when he proceeds for a war with his soldiers. Our king is like a lion. He has captured all the territories; other kings are his slaves.

The poet goes on to say that we are all happy in the month of Murdād, which begins in June:

You must drink wine in this month. The earth has assumed various beautiful colours. The eyes of the clouds are filled with tears. The earth and mountains have all put on new clothes. The city of Rūn looks beautiful with its new garments. Be happy and ask for wine under the protection of our king. King Masūd is the crown of all kings. Jewels obtain brilliance from the king. The throne of the kingdom is stable due to him. O king, I wish you might live long in happiness. Let your enemies die in fear and agony

In the next month, Shahrīwār, people are happy because of the king's justice: 'I am also happy. O my friend, dear to my heart, give me wine and remember the king. He is happy on the throne. There is no other king whose crown is so beautiful.' The poet goes on to say that in the month of Shahrīvūr 'The king has been selected by the sky (destiny). Nobody has ever seen such a good king. In this season camphor has increased on the earth. You should also take perfumed wine in your hand. In this prosperous kingdom you should hold the wine cup since the spring season has now arrived. O king, through your kindness the autumn of the world has changed into spring.'

In the seventh solar month, Mahra, the moon shows its compassion to the people. If you cannot drink this month, you are unfortunate. In this month the faces of my friends look clean in the daytime but their hearts are black. But the king is the blessed one. He wishes well to others. All other kings are his slaves. There is no other king like him. Mecca and the Kab'ah are very expensive places to see, but our king is easy to approach. He is prosperous; even the sky serves him and bows before him in respect. He has many slaves. His kingdom offers glory to the people.

In the eighth month, Ābān, the rains begin:

They are hidden in clouds. You should drink the water of grapes (wine) at this time. It is good to sleep during this time but it is better to drink and be intoxicated. Have you seen that man who is wise and intelligent and who has broken the backbone of my poverty and removed my sorrow? He has wine, and through this wine he protects others. Pass your time in happiness. Drink wine as you have been set free from sorrows. King Masūd is sitting down to drink; we must be happy with his justice.

On the arrival of the ninth month, Āzārmāh, the poet says:

Give me strong burning wine. Burn fire. People in the houses are happy. Let this month come with his face as shining as fire. It is true that the gardens are without flowers and the trees are without fruits, but King Masūd has made this garden like a paradise. People are safe with his justice and generosity. God has given him power. His name is glorious. May the king's glory, kingship, and generosity live—as long as the moon and the sun are in the sky.

When the tenth month, Dei, comes, the wind starts dispersing camphor over the earth. It starts snowing. The autumn wind becomes cold, and the army of cold waves start moving from the sky. 'King Arsalān Masūd is great; he has changed this earth into a garden. King Alexander and Naushervān have now incarnated in you. Your sense of justice is better than theirs. I wish you a life as long as the sky.'

The poet says that wine is necessary in the month of Bahan:

Wise men infuse new life in the world this month. Minstrels, singers, and wine cup bearers (*sāqī*) appear now and start singing. They play the *rūd* and bring wine for the king in order to celebrate the festival in his presence. The king is sitting and will definitely drink. He is superb, unparalleled, next to none. Sometimes God brings a cold season and sometimes a hot one. The king also sometimes becomes generous and sometimes cruel.

Spandār, the twelfth month of the Iranian solar year, is said to be

the last month for the enemies who are going to die. This month brings a new message of life. Gardens will be green again, flowers will blossom, and beauty will spread everywhere. Birds will start chirping in the plains and in the gardens, clouds will appear and cover the sky, the wind from the north will blow, and fragrance will spread. I thank the king. Through his kindness the new year will bring prosperity and happiness. O king, the sky is beautiful for you. The sea is for you to govern. There are all kinds of gifts and the ornaments for your kingship. May God bless you.

You shine like the Sun and give light to your people. Progress every day and earn more and more prestige from your people.

This poem of Salmān is the first *bārahmāsā* in Persian literature, but its content is neither *virah* nor union of lovers as we find in Indian traditions. In India, literary *bārahmāsās* started appearing in the thirteenth century; before that only the *ṣaṭ ṛtu* (six seasons) descriptions are found. From the Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa to the Apabhraṃśa poet Addahmāṇa of the twelfth century *ṣaṭ ṛtu* are found in large number. Masū'd Salmān is the first and last Persian poet to compose a *bārahmāsā*. It can safely be assumed that he may have been influenced by Indian folk traditions, but his descriptions of nature, praise of his contemporary king, and emphasis on wine drinking is his own creation. The first Jain poet, the anonymous author of *Bārahnāvāū*, describes the greatness of a Jain master, but his *bārahmāsā* is a Jain religious text.

Vaudeville in her *Bārahmāsā in Indian Literature* has made a general study of *bārahmāsā*, including some translations of the original texts. *Virah bārahmāsā* are found in folk traditions in large number. Hindi Sufi poets borrowed their themes from folk tradition, demonstrating the philosophy of *virah* everywhere they could. In *Candāyan* not only the wife, Mainā, but also Surjan, who carries the message of *virah*, begins suffering from the pain, sleeplessness, and anxiety caused by the message. Other Sufi texts follow *Candāyan* in saying that nobody could remain untouched by *virah*.

Krishna Dev Upadhyay has collected fifteen *bārahmāsās*<sup>16</sup> of which eight begin with Āsārḥ,<sup>17</sup> as do four of the eight collected by Ram Naresh Tripathi in *Kavitā Kaumudī* (Bombay: Navnit Prakashan, 1966). It is interesting to see that a large number of *bārahmāsās* begin in the rainy season. In Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* the Yakṣa sends his message of *virah* in Āsārḥ. This tendency seems to be very common in the folk tradition.

One example of folk *bārahmāsā* beginning with Āsārḥ is given here from the Upadhyay collection. The *virahinī* says:

O friend, the first month was Āsārḥ; we could hear the thunder in this month. My cruel husband did not come at all, his heart was obdurate. It was drizzling in Sāvan, but my husband was getting wet in a foreign land. The suffering woman remembered her husband and repeated his name. Peacocks screamed in the forest. In Bhādō the night was fearsome and it rained heavily in all directions. Partridges were chanting and frogs were

croaking. In Kuvār my husband was in a foreign country and my three symbols of vermilion, kohl in my eyes, and youth—all wanted to kill me. Kārtik came, the special bathing (*Kārtik snān*) began, and all my friends bathed in the Ganges; all put on yellow garments, but I put on old tattered clothes. In Agahan my husband brought me home after the *gaunā* ceremony and then left for a foreign land. He did not even send me a letter after he left and did not care to find out news of me. In Pūs it rained, but I was alone, my house was empty, and the night did not pass easily. I did not know when the morning would come. Māgh came. I felt cold. If my beloved husband had been here, I would have made him sleep in my lap, and the winter would not have affected me. In Phāgun Phaguvā was celebrated and all my friends played Holī. If I had played Holī, people would have spoken ill of me. My whole body was burning in *virah*. The month of Caitra was sad for me. My husband had gone away. I was as unfortunate as a black female serpent. It seemed my husband would return in the spring, but he did not come back. Vaiśākh was hot, and I shed tears. How could I blame that Yoginī who had charmed my loved one? In Jeṭh the heat was scorching and the hot wind blew, but still my husband did not return. He was hard and had no tears in his eyes.

This is an example of a simple folk woman's *virah bārahmāsā* with no literary ornamentation. Perhaps this kind of *bārahmāsā* was the inspiration behind the literary versions even though they start in different months. Vaudeville has explained that the literary *bārahmāsā* is indebted to folk literature and not vice versa (Ch. Vaudeville 1986, p. 20). All over northern India such *virah bārahmāsās* are found as an independent genre in folk literature. Their descriptions of external nature through the twelve months are in consonance with the emotions of woman suffering from *virah*. Sufi poets used the *bārahmāsā* to depict the philosophy of *virah* or *firāq*, which was in the origin of creation. Through sexual symbolism these works express the desire of the soul to unite with the divine.

*Candāyan* begins in Sāvan, and all other early Sufi poets except Jāyāsī follow *Candāyan* in this respect. However, it is clear that all these *bārahmāsās* begin in the rainy season, whether in Āsārḥ or Sāvan, because a *virahinī* is understood to suffer most when the clouds thicken and lightning flashes. There are some exceptions such as Narpati Nāth's *bārahmāsā* (which begins in Kārtik), but most *virah bārahmāsās* begin in the rainy season.

I would like to add here that the four volumes of oral epics based on the Lorik-Candā tale which I have published so far do not include *bārahmāsā*. Sufi poets as well as secular poets such as Narpati Nāth, the author of *Viśaḍdev Rāso*, or the Jain poet

Vinaycandra Suri who wrote *Nemināth Catuspadikā*, were influenced by lyrical folk songs. The long oral epics *Lorikī* or *Canainī* which I have studied have not used twelve-month descriptions although they have messengers who carry the message of Mainā's *virah* to Lorik. In the Banaras version Jaggū Bañjārā carries the message of Mainā Mājari to Lorik, whereas in the Allahabad version a caravan of traders are the messengers. In the Mirzāpur version the messenger is a barber named Gāngī. In all the oral versions of the epic, messengers play an important role in carrying the message of *virah*, even though they all come from different caste backgrounds. In *Candāyan* it is the Brahmin Surjan who is the messenger, but he is a trader by profession. An interesting aspect of this *virah*, description is that Mainā Mājari protects her fidelity and faithfulness when faced with adverse situations. But the most important aspect of *Candāyan* is that the poet suggests a philosophy of *virah* to demonstrate the profound nature of divine love.

#### NOTES

1. Sanā'ī, whose literary activities cover the first half of the twelfth century, was the first Persian author to write an extensive poem elaborating the doctrines of Sufism.
2. For the *bārahmāsā* see verses 343-54 of Gupta's edition of *Candāyan*.
3. For the *bārahmāsā* see verses 317-28 of Gupta's edition of *Mṛgāvātī*.
4. Jāyāsī's, *bārahmāsā* in *Padmāvat* begins in Āsārḥ and goes up to Jeth-Āsārḥ (verses 344-56 in V.S. Agraval's edition).
5. *Kanhāvat* is a Kṛṣṇaite text attributed to Jāyāsī. Its date of composition seems to be AH 947, which corresponds to AD 1540. His *Padmāvat* is also supposed to have been composed in AD 1540. The poet refers to Humāyūn and not Shershāh as the contemporary king. It is difficult to believe that in the same year a poet of Jāyāsī's calibre could write two epics, one of which is of such inferior quality. Two different kings are mentioned in these two texts, which also creates some doubts about the authorship of *Kanhāvat*. However, this is the first text in Hindi which deals with the Kṛṣṇa story although it is a Sufi text in which Kṛṣṇa is divine and the women are seekers after love. The *bārahmāsā* occurs in verses 309-19. For details on *Kanhāvat* see S.M. Pandey, 'Kanhāvat a Kṛṣṇaite Sūfi Text', *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica*, 26 (1995), 187-8.
6. Mañjhan, who wrote *Madhumālātī* in AH 952 (AD 1545) belonged to the Śattārī order of Sufis. His teacher was Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, who was a famous saint of this sect. In Gupta's edition of *Madhumālātī*, the *bārahmāsā* is described in verses 402-13.

7. Sleṣā and Maghā *nakṣatra* (verses 315-18) appear in the month of Bhādrapada. It rains in this period very heavily. Maghā is the name of the tenth lunar asterism and contains five stars (*Mṛgāvātī*, v. 318).
8. This becomes visible in northern India at the end of rainy season and heralds the onset of autumn. When Agastya appears, the monsoon withdraws, which is why the sage Agastya, who gave his name to the constellation, is said to have swallowed the ocean (Ch. Vaudeville 1986, p. 67).
9. The dark half of the month of Bhādō when rites are performed in the honour of the deceased ancestors.
10. Name of the thirteenth lunar mansion. It rains heavily and clouds thunder during this period.
11. Citrā, the fourteenth lunar mansion, is said to be the friend of moon since it is under this *nakṣatra* that the moon begins to shine brilliantly again in a pure sky.
12. The waking of Viṣṇu on the eleventh of the bright half of the month of Kārtik.
13. Agravāl accepts the reading of *munivar* and interprets it as 'the Seven Rishis', whom girls worship at the time of Divālī. According to M.P. Gupta, the correct reading is *manorā* which is a festival celebrated by women after the rains are over (*Padmāvat* 348/7).
14. For a complete and a literal translation of the verse see Ch. Vaudeville 1986, p. 72 and A.G. Shireff, *Padmāvātī* (Asiatic Society: Calcutta, 1944), p. 212.
15. See his *Divān* ed. Rashid Yasimi: Mu'asasa-yi-cāp wa intišārāt Pirū 3, Tehrān Hijra Shamsī 1339 (1961), pp. 653-8. Sanā'ī, the mystical poet from Ghaznā, carefully collected his verses (see note 1). See also Annemarie Schimmel 1973, p. 11. I am grateful to Nādir Tanhā for supplying me an Italian translation of Masū'd's Persian *bārahmāsā*.
16. Krishna Dev Upadhyay, *Bhojpurī grām gīt* (Allahabad: Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, vs 2000 [1943]). It was later published under the title *Bhojpurī lok gīt*, vs 2011 (1954). In *Bhojpurī grām gīt* fifteen *Bārahmāsās* were collected, but in the second edition most of them were taken out, leaving only 4; see pp. 407ff.
17. See Shyam Manohar Pandey, 'Bārahmāsā kī paramparā aur Padmāvat' in *Sūfi kāvya vimarśa*, ed. Shyam Manohar Pandey (Agra: Vinod Pustak Mandir, 1968), pp. 97, 104.

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