The proposed research is an attempt to find out the origin and development of Śaivism in the Brahmaputra Valley from earliest times to twelfth century A.D. Brahmaputra Valley was an amalgamous place where non-Aryāns and Aryān Cultures were intercorporated. Basically in Brahmaputra Valley we find the foundation of the non-Aryān culture which was based on phallic or symbollic worship. Gradually we have noticed the change of the non-Aryān culture which was mixed up with the Aryān culture during Naraka-Bhagadatta period. So it is really interesting that the religion of Śiva could have been the Aryān or non-Aryān culture relating to the origin and development of Śaivism in Brahmaputra Valley.

Therefore, the origin and development of Śaivism in Brahmaputra Valley is still an important topic which needs a detailed study. Prevalence of Śaivism in Brahmaputra Valley is proved by the existence of Śiva temples, the monoliths in linga form in large number spread out in the valley. Besides these the literary sources, the classical literature, the Purāṇas, the inscriptions and epigraphs give us abundant materials about Śaivism established in Brahmaputra Valley from time immemorial. So the aim and objective of my study is to have an idea and find out the real facts lay behind the popularity and existence of Śaiva cult in Brahmaputra Valley and then prove the origin and antiquity of Śaivism in this valley. How Śaivism came to the valley and why it became popular among the masses, needs a detailed study.

Besides collecting information relating to my topic from various sources, I have also visited many places and Śiva temples. In this way I
met various persons, priests, committee members and many others whom I asked what they know about the origin and antiquity of Śaivism and Śiva temples of their locality. They gave me as much as information they knew. I tried my best to include all information as much as possible in my thesis. I believe there are many places of worship to be included which I could not cover much. There is no end or my research work which could give us satisfaction left behind which I could not cover.

Lord Śiva is the guardian of the people of Brahmaputra Valley. Even the sources refer to the people of the valley as the gaṇas (masses) of Śiva. Hence the people of the Brahmaputra Valley has been worshipping Lord Śiva since very early time. Therefore we find so many Śiva temples and places of worship, large or small almost everywhere in the Brahmaputra Valley. It is not possible to collect each and every detail relating to origin and antiquity of Śaivism of those places because the locals of many places also do not know every detail. Therefore my work includes basically the important ancient Śiva temples or the places of Śiva worship. I tried my best to include all possible information on the origin, antiquity and development of Śaivism in the Brahmaputra Valley from earliest times to twelfth Century A.D.

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(Linajyoti Medhi)