It is a humble attempt to study about the poetic genius of Mahadevi Verma with critical analysis. Since my school-days, I have not only been attracted by her poetry but also by her grand personality expressed through it. In her poetry there is the capacity to give us an idea of the Great Being, the creator. This attraction of my childhood turns into curiosity and inquisitiveness towards her to know more and more about her.

While completing my dissertation paper — 'Mahadevi Ki Sandhinee Aur Nalini Bala Devi Ki Sandhiaur Sur', I come closer to Mahadevijee. But it was only one book of each of these two poetess was studied. Now closer affinity to Mahadevijee demands more minute as well as more extensive study of her. The result of which is the production of this monograph.

Initially I faced certain problems, particularly in collecting the works of Mahadevijee. But by the grace of the unknown Being of Mahadevijee all these problems are solved and I proceed with my work.
An endeavour has been made here in this monograph to study the poetical works of Mahadevi Verma from our own viewpoint and to advance our own comments on them. Since Mahadevijee was very much related to the Mystic Being, a very bright character of her appears to us. Below I quote the lines which attracted me most:

"Vikste Murjhane Ko Ful,
Uday Hota Chhipne Ko Chand,
Shuny Hone Ko Bharte Megh,
Deep Jalta Hone Ko Mand,
Yahan Kiska Anant Youwan Ore Aakhir Jiwan."

(Mahadevijee)

This attraction of mine might be due to the fact that I also have enough curiosity towards the Mystic Being and have complete faith on Him like that of Mahadevijee. This attraction led me to do research on her works to know of her more and more. Finally with the advice and kind guidance of my respected Gurudev Dr. Dharmadeo Iwari, Shastry, M.A.,Ph.D., Professor and Head of the Department of Hindi, Gauhati University, the title of thesis has been decided as — "Mahadevi Verma's Poetry : A Critical Study."

Of course some other scholars have already completed their research works on the writings of Mahadevijee, which were carried from different viewpoints. Although enough
works were done on Mahadevijee yet, to my mind, there are several aspects of her poetry which are yet to be explored. Mahadevijee is really a genius and more and more research would open different aspects of her works.

Therefore we have studied her poetry from our own viewpoint. Here in this monograph a study has been made on the style and form, the emotions and thought as expressed in the poetry of Mahadevijee.

We propose to study the subject in the following manner. For the sake of convenience, the whole work has been divided into nine chapters; and in addition to these there is an introductory chapter.

The introductory chapter deal with the preface and arguments for the necessity of such research work on Mahadevijee. Here, there is a very brief description of the whole research work.

The different subjects which are dealt with in different chapters are as follows:

Chapter- I : The Introduction
   a) Importance of the subject;
   b) Technique & Scope of the thesis;
   c) Subject-matter of the thesis etc.
Chapter- II: Mahadevi as a poet and her place among the poets.

Chapter- III: Chhayavad & Mahadevi Verma's poetry.

Chapter- IV: Rahasyavad (Mysticism) & Mahadevi's poetry.

Chapter- V: Lyrical elements in Mahadevi Verma's poetry.

Chapter- VI: Symbolism in Mahadevi Verma's poetry.

Chapter- VII: Treatment of Nature in Mahadevi Verma's poetry.

Chapter- VIII: Use of Aesthetical emotion (Lalitya Yojna) in Mahadevi Verma's poetry.

Chapter- IX: The Conclusion.

In the Chapter- I, the necessity of the study has been explained. The methods applied in the research work and in handling the subject has also been indicated here in the chapter. There is also an indication of the subject matter of the thesis in brief:

The Chapter- II deals with finding out the place of Mahadevi as a poet. Here we made an analysis of Mahadevi's poetry from the point of expression of the emotions of agony, mystic feeling and the art of the poetry, and compared them to the works of other poets. Being influenced
by the Buddhist philosophy her mind was bent towards the source of all Karuna, the Spiritual Being. Her offering of love to this 'Being' elevated her to the status of a real devotee.

In the Chapter- III, we discussed the poetry of Mahadevi in connection with the elements present in the Chhayavadi poetry. It is however seen that all the elements for which Chhayavad was originated are found in tact in her poetry, and she used them most successfully. Among the Chhayavadi poet she has established herself as the poet of 'Vedna' and 'Karuna' i.e., of agony and pity.

Her works have been studied from the point of mysticism in the Chapter- IV. Mahadevi Verma is primarily a mystic poet; and mysticism is spreading all over her poetry. As an Indian, she owned philosophic outlook through this philosophic approach she expressed all her mystic feeling. The history of mysticism in Indian literature is as old as the Vedas. She, in her poetry, has expressed her love towards the unknown, invisible and unlimited Force of Consciousness.

The Chapter- V deals with the elements of a lyric and of art. Mahadevijee composed all her works in the form of poetry. All her poetry was written with a favourable state of happiness and distress. Her lyrics are fit to be sung and as such most of her lyrics are now presented
by the Durdarshan in the shape of songs. Her lyrics are full of sweetness and tender feeling. Therefore, her lyrics are the priceless treasure of the Hindi literature. Her lyrics give expression to her feminine like emotions in a natural way.

In the Chapter VI, we attempted to study symbolism in Mahadevi's writings. There are various symbols, which were often used by Mahadevijee, like Deep, Ful, Nirjhar, Akash, Neer, Rajni, Jaljit etc. of which the symbols of 'Deep' has been used most frequently and that too in different senses standing for life, soul, devotion, dedication, happiness and others. Her use of symbols made her poetry more beautiful. Most of her symbols are used sometimes as a force behind some words and sometimes as figures. But her symbolism is quite unique and artistic.

To what extent her picturisation of nature becomes successful, has been studied in the Chapter VII. To ascribe human qualities on nature is Chhayavad and to establish a relationship with the living Eternal Soul is mysticism. The Chhayavadi poets regard all the elements of nature as living ones. Mahadevijee also ascribed consciousness to elements of nature since she had been a Chhayavadi poet.
In the Chapter-VIII, a study has been made, considering all aspects of poetry like lyrical elements, use of images, symbolism, figures and metres employed, language style etc. on the poetry of Mahadevi. The central point of the study has been the literary beauty of Mahadevi's poetry. Here attention has been given to both aspects of thought and art. In her poems there are all-consciousness, humanism, aesthetic emotions and spiritualism. All these added literary beauty to her creations.

The Chapter-IX deals with the conclusion of the whole thesis. It includes all the conclusions of different chapters on different elements in her poetry. As such it becomes the final finding of the whole work.

I, here, take the opportunity to express my sincerest regards and gratitude to my respected Gurudev, Dr. Dharmadeo Tiwari, Professor and Head of the Department of Hindi, Gauhati University, without whose guidance and help it would rather have been impossible for me to go on with the research work. I shall remain evergrateful to him.

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Date: 1.11.93

(Signature)

(MRINALI KUNWAR)