

Classic Poetry Series

Mahadevi Varma
- poems -

Publication Date:

2012

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Mahadevi Varma(26 March 1907 – 11 September 1987)

Mahadevi Varma (Hindi: महादेवी वर्मा) best known as an outstanding Hindi poet, was a freedom fighter, woman's activist and educationist from India. She is widely regarded as the "modern Meera". She was a major poet of the Chhayavaad generation, a period of romanticism in Modern Hindi poetry ranging from 1914-1938. With passage of time, her limited but outstanding prose has been recognised as unique in Hindi Literature. She was a prominent poet in Hindi Kavi sammelans (Gatherings of poets).

She was the Principal, and then the Vice Chancellor of Prayag Mahila Vidyapeeth, a woman's residential college in Allahabad. She was awarded India's highest literary award, for lifetime achievement, the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship in 1979, followed by the Jnanpith Award in 1982. She was the recipient of the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award, in 1988.

 Life

Mahadevi was born in the family of lawyers in 1907 in Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh. She completed her education in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. At a young age of nine in the year 1914, she was married to Dr Swarup Narain Varma. She lived with her parents till the time her husband completed his studies in Lucknow. It is during this period that, Mahadevi pursued further education at the Allahabad University. She did her masters in Sanskrit from there.

She met her husband for sometime in the princely state of Tamkoi somewhere around 1920. Thereafter, she moved to Allahabad to further her interest in poetry. Unfortunately, she and her husband mostly lived separately and were busy pursuing their individual interests. They used to meet occasionally. Her husband died in the year 1966. Then, she decided to permanently shift to Allahabad.

Mahadevi Varma was deeply affected by Buddhism and also contributed to the Indian freedom movement. She even tried to become a Buddhist bhikshuni.

Mahadevi was appointed as the first headmistress of Allahabad (Prayag) Mahila Vidyapeeth, which was started with a view to imparting cultural and literary education to girls through Hindi medium. Later, she became the chancellor of the institute.

She died on September 11, 1987 at 9:27 pm. Her bungalow still stands at Ashok Nagar colony in Allahabad. It is under possession of descendants of her deceased secretary, Pt. Ganga Prasad Pandey. On her birth centenary year (2007), they have recreated a room dedicated to her memory. Mahadevi Verma (1907–87) : was educated in Allahabad, where she founded the 'Prayag Mahila Vidyapitha', promoting education for girls. An active freedom fighter, Mahadevi Verma is regarded as one of the four pillars of the great Romantic movement in modern Hindi poetry, Chhayavada, the remaining three being Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala', Jaishankar Prasad and Sumitranandan Pant. She is renowned for her book of memoirs, Atit Ke Chalchitra (The Moving Frames of the Past) and Smriti Ki Rekhayen (The Lines of Memory). Her poetic canvas boasts Dipshikha (The Flame of an Earthen Lamp, 1942), a book comprising fifty one lyrics, all of which carry maturity of expression and intense mystical quality. Some of her other famous publications are Nihar (1930), Rashmi (1932), Neerja (1934), and Sandhya Geet (1936). Of her four prose works, Shrinkhala ki Kadiyan deals with the plight of Indian women. Her reflections on art and literature included in Sahityakaar ki Astha, evince a highly cultivated aesthetic sensibility, firmly rooted in the permanent values of life.

In 1935, She was appointed Honorary Editor of the famous Hindi monthly magazine Chand. She was honoured with the Padma Bhushan by the President of India. She died on 11 September 1987.

 Works

Mahadevi is considered to be one of the four major poets of the Chhayavaadi school of the Hindi literature, others being Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala', Jaishankar Prasad and Sumitranandan Pant. She was also a noted painter. She drew a number of illustrations for her poetic works like Hindi and Yama.

 Awards and Honours

Mahadevi Varma's creative talents and sharp intellect soon earned her a prominent place in the Hindi Literary world. She is considered among the four pillars of the Chaayavad movement. In 1934, she received Sekseriya Puraskar from the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan for her work, Niraja. Her poetry collection (Yama, 1936) received the Jnanpith Award, one of the highest Indian literary awards.

She also Honored with "Proud Past Alumni" in the list of 42 members, from

"Allahabad University Alumni Association", NCR, Ghaziabad (Greater Noida)
Chapter 2007-2008 registered under society act 1860 with registration no.
407/2000.

In 1956, the Government of India bestowed her with Padma Bhushan, India's
third-highest civilian award. She was the first woman to be awarded the Sahitya
Akademi Fellowship, in 1979.

In 1988, Indian Government bestowed her with Padma Vibhushan, the second-
highest civilian award

Deep Mere Jal Akampit Ghul Achanchal

Mahadevi Varma

Dhoop Sa Tan Deep Si Main

Mahadevi Varma

Jaag Tujhko Door Jaana

Mahadevi Varma

Jo Tum Aa Jaate Ek Bar

Mahadevi Varma

Kahan Rahegi Chidia

Mahadevi Varma

Madhur Madhur Mere Deepak Jal

Mahadevi Varma

Main Neer Bhari Dukh Ki Badli

Mahadevi Varma

Mere Deepak

Mahadevi Varma

Why An Introduction Dear

Why an introduction dear, you are within me,
reflections on starry nights, memories of a life,
creations of life in short spells, eyes notice
creations of life in short spells, eyes notice
gentle footsteps!
I don't much to treasure anymore,
you are the treasure I have in me.

Your dazzling, radiant smile like sunrise
Is the reflection of fragrant sorrow,
it is consciousness, and dreamy slumber,
Let me tire and sleep incessantly, for
Would I understand the creation, big-bang! !

You are drawn, I am just an outline,
you are the sweet melody, I am just a string of notes,
you are limitless, I am but an illusion of limits,
In the secrecy of real image-reflection,
why enact to be lovers! ! !

Why an introduction, since you are within me.

Mahadevi Varma