The choice of this study of Anna Sujatha Mathai's poetry was influenced primarily by a hope of being able to arrive at meaningful critical discussion on current day poets focussing chiefly on her's The Attic of Night. A poet, critic, editor, director, social worker Mathai understands life and responds to it. Her poetic output is by no means negligible. She has to her credit two volumes of poetry - Crucifixions (1970), We the Unreconciled (1992) besides a significant anthology, The Attic of Night. Mathai is a conscious poet to whom poetry is not a gift to be adorned but a craft to be studied seriously. Her clarity of thought, clinical precision of words and phrases, and employment of social themes deserve a systematic study in order to evaluate her poetry in its proper perspective. Though she is not a leading poet of our time, her creative impulse to do something better for society makes her build a niche in the current scene of poetry. She has not yet achieved a settled status in poetry. Yet, we read her poetry for her sensitive approach her precise response to experience. Her poetic range is limited because she creates a small world and small milieu. This provides an opportunity to observe what is around her. She has a keen observation and also a powerful perceptual faculty with which she notices things that remain mostly unnoticed.
She also writes with 'a sense of compassion' and 'feminine sensibility' which suit her aesthetic goals. Today there is an increasing number of women poets with a heightened awareness of actual 'life-flow' experience. Their poetry has become an integral part of the Indo-English poetry.

The study has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter 'A Peep into the Past', discusses briefly the growth and development of Indian poetry in English. Poetry by its very nature, is the despair of literary critics. One can read poetry and enjoy it, derive emotional and aesthetic satisfaction from it. But when it comes to analysing or dissecting poetry, it becomes not all too pleasant a job. As Prema Nanda Kumar rightly says in an essay "The Lofty and the Ephemeral", 'it is the critic who backs away with fingers hunt by the diamond edges of the poetic lines'. The problem assumes an added complexity when it comes to Indian poetry in English or Indo-Anglian poetry, an off-shoot of Indo-Anglian literature. The progress of Indo-Anglian verse is divided into four major phases. Apart from the periodical growth of Indo-English literature from Henry Derozio to the present, special attention is given to younger generation of the present day poets like Tabish Khair, Bibhu Padhi, Bhatt Sujatha, Makaranda Paranjape and others. The brief mentioning of these poets explains how poetry has been taking its direction from one phase to the other.
Though the first chapter is concerned with the whole gamut of Indian poetry in English, it doesn't cover all aspects of Indian verse in English. The chapter surveys chiefly modern and emerging poets who added additional colour and flavour to the contour of Indo-English poetry. Their craftsmanship, sense of commitment, conversational directness, touching irony, apt phrasing and images of frustration are all well integrated in their poems. Persons, places, memories, situations, literary echoes and moments of vision, inspired their poetic utterance. Out of a vast coterie of poets, Anna Sujatha Mathai is chosen for the present study. Like the majority of current day Indo-Anglian poets mentioned earlier, Mathai also shares a sense of responsibility for society, a responsibility transcending all kinds of distractions and depicting reality faithfully in all its forms.

The second chapter brings out one of the chief characteristic features of Mathai's poetry. Her poetry is rooted in compassion. She is always moved by human condition. She feels that man in a mechanical world is caught between 'Living and Dying'. Being caught between the catastrophe of 'Living and Dying' he is unable to find a direction in life. Man in a mood of disgust falls into the clutches of death. Therefore, she makes an attempt to lighten the endless pain of human beings sharing it
through sympathy and consolation. It has become her poetic slogan when she generalises it as 'our highest hope', 'our tallest building' and 'our loveliest song'. She warns everyone to be cautious and prudent in all walks of life only to avoid danger and suffering. Her poetic output is confined to the agony of human existence. She points to an underlying pain that exists everywhere in our society. She finds words for the silent ache that millions of people carry in their hearts.

Mathai being a woman poet weaves the fabric of woman's anguish and deep sense of sorrow in her small poetic milieu which is the theme of the third chapter. This chapter also shows how feminism has influenced Indian society though it is borrowed from the west. A careful reading of Mathai's poetry reveals some of her chief concerns which reflect woman's pain caused by men and social norms.

In the concluding chapter, a brief assessment has been made of Mathai's poetry. Her poetry leaves the idea that in a world of hypocrisy and false values the poet faces an explorable challenge. In spite of some well established standards, Mathai has taken risks making her poems meaningful.
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