CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION
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Mathai's poetry is always preoccupied with compassion. She brings out a realistic account of the endless physical suffering and mental agony of people. Man in a mood of ecstasy and trance touches the sharp edges of life. Every moment of life he becomes a victim between the periods of black despair and bottomless misery. One side of life always urges him into death, while the other holds him back to survival. This becomes Mathai's basic premise. In her poems we see an honest, sensitive personality brooding humbly upon experience as she has seen it or known it. Each of her poems is a small burning bush, containing a grain of truth slowly leading to illumination to know the things around us. Her poetic range is limited and narrow limitation has become an outstanding characteristic of Mathai's workmanship. She prepares her own boundaries and never steps beyond them. For many reasons, she is not a prolific poet. Even the range of her themes is very limited. Taking her limitations into consideration, it may be safely asserted that her small lyrics depend on deflationary irony which is the hall-mark of modern Indian poetry in English.
Mathai's poems might have their origin in her personal problems and experiences as a woman - one may sometimes feel that the poems are too personal to be serious or evocative. Search for identity which is the problem of most women poets does not figure prominently in her poems. She is not a poet who celebrates love. She rather mocks at it as Kamala Das does. Instances are various to illustrate situations where she mocks at love. Commenting on wife and husband relations Mathai drives her point through the situation and incident in the poem "Coming Running Jumping". Angela a domestic household pines for her husband's love, desires his affection and yearns his understanding. She wants to hear his voice, feel his warmth, tell him things and catch his smiles. But 'Master' being busy-scheduled husband appears to show detachment on every count. As a result she feels boredom and loneliness. Angela half-humorously depicts the manner of her busy scheduled husband in the following lines:

"Master coming early from the hospital,  
He taking big bag full of bumps -  
(My Italian bag, I thought. He always claimed it brought him luck) - 'and  
taking so much money' (She held her arms apart, a little girl clutching  
a larger bag of sweets) -
'he put it in the bag. He coming, running jumping down the stairs. He closing garage door and putting suitcase in the car. He no say goodbye. Master very naughty man".¹ Likewise, there are many similar occasions where she mocks at them half-humorously. It is natural to see that Mathai being a woman responds to woman's problems with feminine sensibility.

Her use of language is marked by simplicity and clarity. Plain prose goes for poetry. It is the language of her emotions, and she speaks to her readers as one human being to another. In this lies her originality and her distinction. There are no abstractions, no complexities, and no intricate, tortuous constructions.

Mathai's main problem is not knowing when to stop a poem. A good number of poems in each book especially in The Attic of Night, could have been cut out without any sense of loss because they tend to express emotions, already expressed. Though, she has published only three slender volumes of poetry, her poetry is characterised by sincerity and integrity.