

An Interview with Indian Writer Dr. Dipak Giri

S. Mahalakshmi
Assistant Professor of English
Chikkaiah Naicker College
Erode-4, Tamil Nadu, India
Email: maharavin33@gmail.com



Dr. Dipak Giri, with his triadic role as a writer, an editor and a critic, is a well-known academic from Cooch Behar, West Bengal, India. He has brought out so many books on women, Dalit, Tribals, Transgender, Homosexual and other marginalized community of people in India. Apart from books pertaining to people living on the fringe of society, he has also brought out so many books of criticism on Indian English literature. For his large and incredible contribution to literature, he has been awarded with “Emerging Editor of the Year” in 2018 in Vishwabharati Literary Festival at Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University, Hyderabad, India. In 2020, the Journal of Commonwealth Literature, an international journal of repute, published by Sage, U.K. considered his works as worthy of being included in the Indian section of "The Bibliography of Commonwealth Literature". At

present he is on the verge of bringing out his twentieth publication. His major works include New Woman in Indian Literature: From Covert to Overt, Transgender in Indian Context: Rights and Activism, Same Sex Desire in Present India: An Anthology of Literary Texts and Contexts, Woman-Nature Interface: An Ecofeminist Study, Perspectives on Indian Dalit Literature: Critical Responses, Tribal Perspectives in India: Critical Responses, Queer Sexualities in Indian Culture: Critical Responses, Subaltern Perspectives in Indian Context: Critical Responses and From Literary Composition to Cinematic Adaptation to name a few.

SM: When did you first realize you wanted to be a writer?

DG: During my college days when I found some of my poems which I'd contributed to college magazines got published and earned some recognition from people of my acquaintances, I realized that there might be possibility of other self- the self of a writer within me and then I tended my mind toward writing. During my eleventh and twelfth standards in Cooch Behar College where co-incidentally I've now been appointed as an Invitee Faculty, I contributed poetry to the yearly magazine of the college. Again when I admitted for graduation to University B.T. & Evening College I contributed to yearly magazine every year. By and by I realized in those days I'd try my luck in writing had ever opportunity come to me.

SM: When did you feel the real opportunity came to you for becoming a writer?

DG: With the publication of my first book Indian English Drama: Themes & Techniques the real opportunity indeed, came to me. I came in contact with a large number of academics, writers and scholars who later contributed to my other books also. In 2018, when I was awarded "Emerging Editor of the Year" in Vishwabharati Literary Festival at Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University, Hyderabad, India I felt gratitude to the organizers and overwhelmed by congratulating people around me. This award truly instilled in me a non-stoppable energy paving path for more publications in future.

SM: Where do you get your information or ideas for your books?

DG: Obviously, from the society and the real world where people live in. There are many problems and sufferings in this world. People living in the margin are the most victims of these problems and sufferings and these people, especially women, Dalit, tribal, transgender,

homosexuals and other subaltern people are the area of my concern. I write about them and my books are nothing but the voice of these marginalized sections of people.

SM: What does your family think of your writing?

DG: My family always tries to provide me congenial atmosphere for my writing. They encourage me and are always beside me in respect of my writing.

SM: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

DG: Writing is a pleasure for me, so it always energizes me. But other involvements interrupting my writing always seem to me exhaustible and disturbing. I always like not to be disturbed by any other involvement while writing but there are other serious activities in life which, though not always welcoming, cannot be ignored. So, I've to manage both.

SM: Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

DG: I always try to stick myself to originality so that the content can appear convincing and trustworthy. Ever since I started writing I've been trying to cater the taste of my readers by reaching the ground reality instead of building castle in the air.

SM: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

DG: I think none can be a writer devoid of emotion. Emotion plays the major role in writing. A writer should have an emotional attachment to the theme or area on which he or she is writing or working.

SM: What other authors are you friends with, and how do they help you become a better writer?

DG: The other authors, whom I know in person and have been in good terms, always instil the spirit of creativity in me both by their works and words.

SM: Do you want each book to stand on its own, or are you trying to build a body of work with connections between each book?

DG: Every time when I engage myself into writing, I always try to focus on new area, completely unrelated with the area of my previous book. With this aim, I always try to give something new and original to my readers. Suffering humanity is the subject area of my book, irrespective of caste, class, gender, colour, race and religion. So, my books never confine within

the same subject; rather they make any group or community of people as a subject to be dealt with. Besides I've also interest in Indian literature. So, I've brought out many books on Indian literature also.

SM: Why Indian literature only?

DG: No, I've not said that I've no interest in literature other than Indian. I've also interest in literature other than Indian but I'm more inclined to Indian literature, so I like to work on Indian literature more, though I never dislike any book which appears to me worth-reading, irrespective of Indian or non-Indian origin.

SM: What was the best money you ever spent as a writer?

DG: The best money that was spent by me as a writer was for my first book, entitled Indian English Drama: Themes and Techniques because it was due to this first book that what I'm today. This book paved the path of my writing career so no money spent by me can equal to the money spent for my first book.

SM: What are the most important magazines for writers to subscribe to?

DG: Since I myself have been performing the role of an editor-in-chief in an international magazine, named "Creative Flight", I've never felt to subscribe to any other magazine. However, if I feel any magazine to be subscribed to in future, I'll do.

SM: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

DG: I've always been with some or another unfinished book because once I complete one book I become busy with another. However, I never leave one in the midway in order to start with another because I always believe in finishing one before starting another.

SM: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

DG: My area of research, as I've already stated, is people of grassroots whose life is full of pains and sufferings and who are made victims of discrimination and exploitation by the mechanism of power politics in our society. Woman, Dalit, tribal, homosexual, transgender and other subaltern class of people are my area of research. I usually spend a period of time, in most cases a period of one month in collecting valid data and information prior to beginning the original research.

SM: Do you view writing as a kind of spiritual practice?

DG: Yes, I've complete faith and belief that writing is a kind of spiritual practice. In the process of writing, the creator is divinely inspired and looks the world going beyond the ordinariness with divine eye. So, writing is nothing but a process of spiritualization by which a writer is chastened to create something new and divine.

SM: How long were you a part-time writer before you became a full-time one?

DG: I'd been a part time writer for three years before becoming a full time one. Prior to writing a book of my own, I used to contribute to others' books, and I'd spent as a contributing author as long as three years.

SM: How many hours a day do you write?

DG: I don't maintain any schedule of routine. It depends on my spare time. I've always been pre-occupied with some or other academic activities along with my professional and familial duties. So, I've to struggle to spare time as I've already stated. However, I always value time and try to use it to the best of my ability for my writing whenever opportunity comes.

SM: This is my final question to you. Do you hide any secrets in your books that only a few people will find?

DG: No, I don't hide anything in my books; rather my books are always heart to heart talk where I bring to the fore nothing beyond what lies in my heart because I believe the real worth of a book lies in its acceptance and a book is only acceptable when it creates bonding between an author and a reader and this is only possible when an author would be capable of unlocking his heart in his books.