

Exploration of the Inner Thoughts of the Himalayan Litterateur D. C. Chambial

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About the Poet

D.C. Chambial (b. 1950, Bajrol in erstwhile Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh) spent his life at his native place and left his village for College studies at Dharamsala, a tourist place. He has spent much of life time at various places in Himachal Pradesh as an employee of Himachal Government. Finally, he settled at Maranda, a small town near Palampur, another tourist place in Himachal Pradesh and lives there with his family. He retired from SCVB Govt. College, Palampur, after having taught at Hamirpur, Nalti, Jainghpur, Kandwari, Bagsiad, Chamba, Dhaliara, and Dharamsala. A postgraduate and PhD in English literature from Himachal University, has supervised more than two dozen M Phil scholars of various universities and five PhD scholars from HP University. His poems have also been translated into Bengali, Danish, French, German, Greek, and Portuguese. He has published eight books of poems (*Broken Images, Bleeding Hearts and Other Poems, Perceptions, Gyrating Hawks & Sinking Roads, Before the Petals Unfold, This Promising Age & Other Poems, Mellow Tones, and Hour of Antipathy*) and *Himpaat*, a book of Hindi Poems. He has translated so many poems from Pahari of Himachal Pradesh to English and from English to Pahari and Hindi. Besides he has also translated one book of Professor Mahendra Bhatnagar from Hindi to English (*Death-Perception: Life-Perception*). He has also written two books of Criticism on the poetry of Krishna Srinivas and O. P. Bhatnagar. His poems have appeared in several magazines in India, USA, and Canada, Austria, Germany, Greece, and Spain such as *Poet, Skylark, Cyber Literature, the Quest, Canopy, Bridge-in-Making, Metverse Muse, Replica, The Future, Journal of Indian Writing in English, Bharat Protiva, Art and Poetry, Indian Book Chronicle, The Mawaheb, Plowman, Zenit, Archenoah, Perigramma, Capriccio, and Manxa*. They have also been included in several anthologies such as *Heaven, Modern Trends in Indo- Anglian Poetry, Prevalent Aspects of Indian English Poetry, Brave New Wave: 21 Indian English Poets, Busy Bee Book of Contemporary Indian English Poetry, Exiled Among Natives, Voices Across the Ocean: Poems from Australia and India, Capriccio Gedichte, Glissando, Liebesgedichte, Third Eye, Nascent Warmth, Poets for Africa, Henry C. Bunner & Harriet E.P. Spofford* anthologies in Memoriam, etc.

Text of the Interview

Q1. GK: Sir, as I know that you have already answered questions about your family background and education. So, I won't ask you that. But, I want to know how the Himalayan surroundings help to become a poet of high rank in the domain of Indian English Poetry. Apart from the Himalaya what are the other sources of inspiration for you to compose verse?

DCC: Himalaya is my home. Hence, one's surroundings naturally have their impact on the imagination of any person. I simply and truly try to portray my surroundings in their natural simplicity and true colours.

No surrounding can make one great or small. What is more important is how one benefits from one's surroundings in one's works and to what extent that use appeals to one's readers/critics. They are the true judge of one's writings.

Apart from Himalayan setting, you will also find sea fanning my imagination to create poems. The poems like 'Marina Beach, Madras', 'True Happiness', 'We Frolic & Frisk with the Waves', 'Tsunami Memorial Andamans' and a host of other poems in other collections have been inspired by bodies like rivers, lakes and sea.

Q2. GK: What is your definition of poetry? At which age you have responded the call of Muse? When fictions and short stories can give a writer immediate success then why have you selected poetry as your eternal partner?

DCC: Poetry for me is the spontaneous expression of thoughts matured with the passage of time about the outward impulses that set imagination in action.

My first poem was written when I was about 11 years old and studying in sixth standard. Though, that was in Hindi. I started writing in English in 1966.

Ha! It is a good question Goutam. The poem appears to me just like lightning and if I fail to catch hold of it, all disappears like lightning leaving only a dazzling haze. When it is captured and put down in black and white, it becomes my, in your words, eternal partner.

Q3. GK: In one of your interviews you have said, "Poetry is the bubbling of the excessive emotions in the poet's heart." Kindly throw light on this. As emotions play a big part for you, does your poetry sometimes become autobiographical? When emotions are not there, have you then felt writer's block?

DCC: As bubbles burst out when the air expands within them, similarly, poetry or poetic imagination can't hold back the fruits of inspired thoughts and it becomes almost impossible for the poet to contain them for some future moment. These demand immediate capturing and putting them on paper before these are lost in the vast ocean of oblivion from where they had appeared.

One's life and surroundings, unquestionably, find reflection in one's creations. One cannot remain in an "Ivory tower" to produce his creations purely as figments of fancy. To look and feel like genuine, these must have some truth, may be a little one, in them. This genuineness imparts flesh to the bones culled from fancy. You may call that autobiographical.

My compositions are erratic, solely controlled by my emotions. Sometimes I may write three or four poems at a time and sometimes for months I fail to write even a single line. You may call it what you like. Yes, thus, I do feel what you say "writer's block".

Q4. GK: Do you believe that a poet is born or is it the imaginations along with intuitive eye that make a man poet? What is the philosophy of your poetry or the capital idea as one can find in your poetry?

DCC: I firmly believe that a poet is born; poetry is something innate in a poet. Imagination is also natural with the born poet; it carries on his intuition. There have been poets, who learn the trade of poetry writing through many poetry writing courses and workshops. The difference between such poetry and the natural poet remains as is between the well trimmed plants in a park and the natural beauty of a forest on a hill side.

Humanitarianism is the cardinal philosophy of my poetry. I have sympathy for the suffering humanity. All human beings have similar blood, bones and feelings all around the globe. We must respect this equality of human beings and try to alleviate human suffering and gloom.

Q5. GK: You are the worshipper of Nature as far as I can reckon. Can you please elaborate a bit how and why you have projected Nature in your poetry? You are a believer in eco-centrism and strongly in opposition with anthropocentrism as your many poems (One such 'The Promising Age') confirm this. So how will you justify yourself as an eco-socialist if I call you so? Exploitation of nature still continues. Does it hurt you more when you see that people understand your message and still doing the same?

DCC: Yes, I worship Nature, because I live amidst Nature. Nature is something natural to me as poetry writing is. Can one alienate oneself from Nature, while living in nature? Nature is the blood of my poetic imagination. As flesh can't be separated from bones of a living being, so Nature can't be estranged from my poetic imagination. Nature provides me the leaven for my images, metaphors and poetic creations in totality.

Eco-centrism comes from the study and knowledge of surrounding environment and its degradation or exploitation by human beings for personal benefit. A true human being is always hurt seeing the vast scale destruction in our ecology. This ecological imbalance leads to disastrous natural catastrophes as seen in the colossal landslides in and around Kedarnath, in Uttarakhand, when thousands of lives were lost. So, it is the high time that

Man realizes this urgency and stops meddling with Nature.

The cited poem has references to several aspects of human life that have been eroding humanism and humanitarian values. The extremes won't take us anywhere; we have to find a middle path to attain human goals without causing harm to our ecology in the environment. Man lives in nature; hence, anthropology is also as important and sacred as Nature though their percentage may vary.

Exploitation of Nature continues unabated. People know it well, but a consideration for personal gains is the true culprit that is at the root of this destruction. A sensate, sensitive and sensible human being always feels hurt at such a spectacle. I am one among this lot. How can I be frigid to it?

Q6. GK: Your poem deals with moral and social degenerations where faith and devotion are hardly found and corruption prevails on a large scale. Here you become the social reformer. Do you agree with me? Kindly elaborate. You remind your reader of T. S. Eliot particularly Wasteland – ‘What the Thunder Said’. Tell me in what ways are you similar with Eliot?

DCC: Loss of moral values in society is the crux of the contemporary tragedy. Corruption is the result of this loss. Money is the beginning and end of modern man weltering in the mire of this degeneration. Everywhere you can see men killing fellow men even for a few rupees. There is no consideration with the contemporary man for anything other than the money.

The critics of my poetry are free to label me what they like. I consider myself a human being and that I am. It is left to them to call me a poet of humanity or a social reformer.

As a student of English literature and poetry, it is somewhat natural for one to be under its influence. There was time when Eliot's influence was dominant, but with the advance of years and maturity it has given in to Indian sensibility.

So far as you have cited 'What the Thunder Said' from *The Waste Land* by T. S. Eliot, it is about past—what happened in the past. While my poem, 'What does the Thunder Say?' (*Words: 1979-2010*) is about the present. Though the mode/style, to a greater extent, resembles to that of Eliot's poem, but my treatment is quite different. A comparative study of the two will amply reveal the difference. Similarity restricted only to the use of the word "Thunder" symbolizing the *Upanishdic* "Datta, Dayadhvam and Damyata" — "to give, to sympathize and to control" in literal translation for attaining peace in this world. However, my poem tries to peek into the soul of these and laments their loss in a world that is full of human atrocities and suffering.

Q7. GK: Do you really think that instead of being dead, the people, who are living now, are dying with a little patience? You have tried to show the real self of the politicians. Sir, can you briefly describe how you have projected the evil and the politicians in power? In this respect you are similar to Keki N. Daruwalla who has also shown the corruption in administrative section. Do you agree with me?

DCC: I'll construe it the other way. It is not the living people, who "are dying with a little patience", but dying without any patience, at all.

Contemporary politicians seem the worst lot. They think that everything is only for them and nothing for the common man. The examples are before every one of us. How much money they have amassed (and are piling up) for themselves! Here, I single out only one poem, 'The Tempest' (Words: 86) inspite of a host of them found in all my collections that will project the idea in good measure.

A vigilant spectator, of society and what is happening in it, is always watchful of the things and happenings taking place around him/her. One who is conscious to social changes taking place in society is bound to encounter such incidents. I think all poets are susceptible to such occurrences these days. One need not necessarily and deliberately follow the other. However, it is left for the critics to elicit influences of one or the other and show similarities and dissimilarities in them and their works. It may be just a coincidence that our thoughts, despite being thousands of kilometers physically apart, our approach toward corruption in upper echelons of society appear analogous. In this respect, I come closer to Nissim Ezekiel. I must admit that I haven't read much of Ezekiel. I, in fact, write in protest of Bombay School of poetry, because they thought that only people living in Bombay can write good poetry, whereas good poets have emerged even from the distant villages. In this regard, Professor Premanada Kumar, daughter of Professor K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar—the early historian of Indian English poetry, become more pertinent: "If Chambial can subsume so well the very best in the English tradition and the highest heights of India's spiritual ascension to give us 'The Gasps of Earth,' 'The Tempest' and 'A Wish,' it is very obvious that Indian poetry in English need not be Bombay-centric any more" (from her review of *Collected Poems: 1979-2004*).

Q8. GK: Critics project you as a pensive poet. Do you really think so? As a poet in which way do you want to be categorized? Your poem depicts certain postmodern characteristics of irony, humour, intertextuality and pastiche. So in this regard would you like to call yourself a postmodern poet?

DCC: To describe or tell about the rot in the society does not make one pensive. A poet, or any writer/artist for that matter, who tries to be realist is labeled as pensive. If there is something sad or miserable, depicted or pictured, in any work that is done to draw the attention of the people to that sad state of affairs. They should notice it and try to transform the distressing into something joyous: the human tears need replacement with human laughter; the ailing need medicines and better health care; the naked need clothes to cover their bodies; the hungry need food to fill their bellies.

“Irony, humour, intertextuality and pastiche” are the tools with an artist, be he a poet, prose writer of novels and stories, or painter. With these tools in hand, he tries to mirror society and hold a mirror unto the society. You can give any name to one who wields them well to achieve his projected target.

Q9. GK: How have you presented the condition of women in your poems? What is the present scenario of women in your eyes apart from your delineation of women in your verse? Would you like to call yourself a feminist or a believer in the equality of man-women in all spheres of the society?

DCC: To talk about women and their place in society does not make one feminist, a term with which such a person is labeled. I have looked at the treatment women get in our society at the hands of men from a very close quarter. For all the ills of the society, why should women be held responsible? Are men not responsible for these? What is happening these days in our cities overtly and may be in our villages covertly? Here, I say overtly, because it comes to public knowledge through media, and covertly, because it remains far from the eyes and camera of the media. Our daily Newspapers and TV news channels and shows are rife with such revelations.

Education and monetary self-reliance have shown some improvement in the present scenario, but it cannot be completely eliminated from the society as long as the men’s mentality does not change. Society, especially men in the patriarchal thought-pattern, need to change their outlook on women. They are not commodities for men to enjoy and throw away in a utilitarian manner: they are also as good human beings as men are. The gender difference does not make them inferior. Now-a-days they have excelled men in almost all walks of life.

I am for man-woman equality. I think none of the two can exist without the other. Therefore, one should have respect for the other and treat them as equals. I definitely advocate the cause of women equality and, for that, critics may call me feminist; they can also call me humanist. Has anything been left out?

Q10. GK: Apart from the usage of free verse coupled with compact imagery, what are the salient features of your poetry? What makes you different from other contemporary Indian poets writing in English? Are you familiar with contemporary Indian English poets or whose poetry do you read or want to read?

DCC: When a baby is conceived or born, does the mother know how it is to be as an adult? A baby is conceived and then delivered. So is the case with an artist/poet. I do not meditate much about the poem’s resultant attributes, but at the time of a thought’s maturity, I am in the hurry of delivering it: put it in black and white; first, for myself, and then, for the readers. An artist gets as much joy after the completion of his work as a mother does after giving birth to the baby. Free verse and rhymed verse the things to be looked after later

on. Though most of my verse is free, but I have also written poems in rhymed verse: the example is my recent poem, 'GMG: The Man of Allah', a ballad.

Once again, I leave it to my readers/critics to find what makes me different from other poets.

As a practicing poet, I am well aware of other Indian English poets. As an editor of a 30-year old Journal of literary criticism and contemporary poetry (*Poetcrit*), I come across a wide variety of poets and poetry. I rejoice all. You can say, I am an omnivorous reader. All are equal for me: men or women. I like what appeals to me good and substantial and reject what does not.

Q11. GK: After reading *Perceptions*, I think that patriotism makes you so much enthusiastic that you sing inspiringly. How do you want to describe your patriotism? How have you used spirituality and prayer of devotion in your poems? What, according to you, is the significance of using theology in present social context?

DCC: You have put so many irons in the same smithy: many ideas—patriotism, spirituality, and religiosity—in one question. Let me take them one by one.

Patriotism is one's love for one's country/nation. The country in which I am born that feeds me and has provided me with varied kinds of amenities to live and grow, I must be grateful to her for the same. Besides, my body is the result of five elements—void, earth, sky, air, and water—that are also of my country. Therefore, how can I be disloyal or antinational towards her? So, I love my country from my heart and soul and is manifest in my poems and what you call patriotism.

Spirituality comes when one thinks about the elevation of one's spirit: spirit or soul; it is part of the Greater Soul, the God—*Aatmaiva Pramatta*—soul is the God. Our religious literature also teaches us: *Brahmoasmi*—I am Brahman. It also emphasizes the same idea or notion that is in *Aatmaiva Pramatta*. In other words our soul is the estranged part of the Greater Soul, the God. Human soul is as sanctimonious as God. We should never attempt to desecrate it by our misdeeds by committing *adharm*. *Dharma* leads us on the right path, while *adharm* on the unrighteous one. Human soul always attempts, through its *dharma* (deeds/karma), to merge with the Greater Soul, say, to attain Moksha. Let our senses, seeking sensual pleasure, not lead it astray. The expression and practice of this philosophy leads to spirituality.

Prayer of devotion or religiosity/theology is to achieve mental peace. Religion teaches us to lead our life steeped in moral and ethical values that engender peace and harmony not only for the soul but also in the society.

I use theology with the purpose of establishing harmony with the Supreme One, who is

the sole creator of this cosmos. When we work against his purpose, we wreak His vengeance and fall as is manifest, in Christianity, in the Fall of Man. Whatever we are, we are due to Him and we should only work to revert to Him after our short sojourn on this Earth. So, whatever I do or write is the result of inspiration that comes from Him. I am only an insignificant particle in His creation.

Q12. GK: How have you defined Indianness in your poetry? Please illustrate a bit. You are a poet but a human being first. So in which way would you like to be remembered as a poet or as a human being? As a poet your poetic features sometimes cast you as a romantic poet. Would you like to call yourself a romantic?

DCC: Indianness in Indian English literature is reflected in the use of Indian culture, languages, and festivities, besides other manners and mannerisms of people's social behaviour, etc. The same things you will find in my poetry as well. Basic human ideas remain throughout. Their colouring with native/Indian characteristics makes Indianness.

I am a human being; so, I wish to be remembered as a human being. Poetry is my art that I have learnt intuitively. For that matter, all artists are first human beings and then something else. Art is integral to an individual. When someone is remembered, his art is also remembered. In literary circles of Indian English poetry, D.C. Chhabial is known as a poet.

You have truly pointed out the Romantic traits of my poetry. Dr. Arbind K. Choudhary of Assam has done two or three papers on the Romantic aspect of my poetry and asserted Keatsian influence on it. Whenever I write, the idea of the moment becomes the premise of my composition and nothing else bothers me.

Once again, my reply is the same: I am a human being occasionally writing poems for my own pleasure and satisfaction. You may call me a Romantic, pensive poet, or social reformer, social realist or by any other name that pleases you, but I'll always remain a humble human being thinking about the well-being of my fellow human beings.

Q13. GK: Poems like 'Longing in Void', 'Vultures in Sky', 'A Captive', 'Sand-Smell Spreads' and many other pieces show that your poetry is the outcome of longing and yearning. How will you justify this? Although your poetry (Poems like 'A Blind Race', 'Man is Lost', etc.) utters pessimism but sometimes optimistic philosophy is also there. How do you make a balance in between pessimism and optimism? What role does your poetry serve in this case for the majority section?

DCC: The poems, you have mentioned, you say, manifest the trait of longing and yearning. There are, always, certain ideas churning in the mind of the poet with respect to society and when they find expression in the work of that artist/poet, they become mouth-piece of his innate desires, longings and yearnings. When such ideas or beliefs, whether

individual or reflective of collective mass aspirations come out on paper/canvas, the individual poet/artist feels relieved from the burden that he/she had been carrying in his mind. Thus, a poet/artist cannot divorce such aspirations, desires, longings and yearnings from his creative process. So is the case with me.

The other poems, 'A Blind Race' and 'Man is Lost' evince greedy aspect of human nature. The first one is about man's mammon worship—a desire to be rich overnight by sacrificing human "ethics and morals". The second one tells of different modes of amassing wealth through "corruption, scams and hawalas" or by "getting dowry" and when they fail to do so, they do not hesitate even killing the young brides with an eye on trapping another victim for the same purpose. Thus, these poems do not evince pessimism, but obliquely expose such social evils and advocate for their eradication to make society happy and free from such evils infecting it.

Pessimism and optimism are two facets of the same coin, here society. What appears to be pessimistic cherishes in its heart of hearts a hope for a better tomorrow. What seems optimistic today must have been burgeoned from the tears of yesterday. As past cannot be estranged from present, so are pessimism and optimism. Thus, pessimism and optimism are as integral to human thought as blood and bones to human body. They go side by side.

My poetry, as I think, is about hope and never yielding to despair. Moments of despair teach humanity to recoil like a spring and pounce upon the opportunity that lies ahead.

Q14. GK: Why have you mentioned so many natural calamities in your poetry? Is there any particular message that you want to give by these descriptions of natural disasters? Your poetry reveals that you long for a better society rather a brave new world. So what kind of utopian society do you dream of?

DCC: Though the mention of natural calamities in my poems is topical, yet it has a message for humanity. Yes, these natural disasters remind Man that he has not been able to win over them. He still remains a pigmy before Nature. Therefore, Man should not consider himself as all powerful. There is Nature or God that is only omnipotent.

I believe in a society in which everybody lives peacefully, dutifully and leads an upright life. There is none poor and downtrodden. All have a home to sleep, bread to eat and clothes to put on. The State looks after the health of its people. There are no strife and struggle based on class and caste. It is a society where there is no exploitation and oppression. It shall be a society in which people live with love respecting one another's individuality. In this society duties come first than rights. One's loss is everybody's loss and one's joy becomes everybody's joy. In short, there is no me first approach and none think of amassing wealth beyond one's means. Honesty, humility and happiness will be the motto of life!

Q15. GK: Death is a recurring symbol in your poetry as your pieces like ‘In Desert’, ‘Death on Road’, ‘Dance of Death’, ‘Balía’, ‘Death by Fire’ and other compositions prove it. So, can you elaborate your philosophy of death? Your belief in God and your profound knowledge of *Bhagwat Gita*, *Upanishad* and other age old Hindu religious texts remind me the poetry of Nissim Ezekiel. So how will you justify this similarity? Do you seek interest in Ezekielean School of poetry in this regard?

DCC: In my childhood, within a span of three-four years I had seen deaths in my family that has an appalling impact on my sensibility. As I grew up and later for PhD study my topic of research was “The Theme of Death and Suffering in the Poetry of Krishna Srinivas, Shiv K. Kumar, and O.P. Bhatnagar.” Here, too, I had to study various theologies and their philosophy of Death. So, it is imminent that deaths, in early life, and my study about the philosophy of death, in various major religions of the world, have left an indelible mark on my sensibility.

Death is the ultimate truth that none can deny. When Arjuna in Mahabharata becomes diffident seeing his relatives on either side in the battlefield and decides not to fight, Lord Krishna teaches about the immortality of soul. I am telling in plain English that - The soul neither is born nor dies; it is immortal. It remains indestructible even after the destruction of body in death. (Quoted in The Gita II: 20)

And, later, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna the Eternal Truth: *Jatsya hi dhruvo mrityu* [(The Gita II: 27)]—one who is born must die.

Therefore, death need not be afraid of. It is the end of physical body. *Atman* or soul that regulates it during its physical existence, on this Earth, is immortal.

It is somewhat natural that I, being a Hindu, believe in Hindu scriptures and know a little bit of it. This knowledge also helps me to regulate my life. My tradition and history are ingrained in it.

Nissim Ezekiel was Bene-Israel Indian Jew by birth. He studied and learnt about Hinduism and its scriptures as source of knowledge and projected this knowledge in his poetry. Instead of calling it Ezekielean School of poetry, I’ll preferably call it the Hindu School of poetry. As Ezekiel has first used this knowledge in his poetry, so it was easy for the historians of Indian English poetry to call it Ezekielean School of poetry after him.

Knowledge is not confined to one person or religion or country. Now, we are living in a world that has been reduced, through information technology and transportation facilities, to a village or a clan—*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* - walls to knowledge, now, lie demolished. It is the responsibility of the historians of the Indian English poetry to name and rename any particular thought ascribing it to any particular school. No disputation, nor any confusion.

Q16. GK: D. C. Chambial may be termed individualist. In terms of creativity what is your definition of individualism? What are the threats of individualism according to you? Your poetry laments for the identity crisis and displacement of man. Do you agree with me?

DCC: Yes, I uphold your comment. Every individual is different from any other individual. No two individuals are alike not only in appearance, but also in their mental ability and style, manners and mannerisms, as well.

In creativity individualism originates when a particular writer's ideas are original and not imitative. Every writer has his/her own style of saying things and expressing his mind in his/her way and that makes the statement, "style is the man", or "a man is known by his style", true.

I don't find any threats to individualism. However, that way one stands apart from other groups and schools of thought and it makes difficult for the historical critics to assign him to this or that group or movement.

Identity crisis and displacement are somewhat relative terms. I don't think there is any such crisis or displacement in my poetry. I prefer to be all inclusive or cumulative than isolative in my poetry.

Q17. GK: Now-a-days poetry is given less importance in comparison to novels, dramas and short stories. How are you seeing the future of Indian English poetry? As a poet and teacher of English and Indian English literature, what suggestions would you like to give? As a poet have you any specific goals to achieve?

DCC: Yes, here I do agree with you. So far as fiction—novels, short stories—and drama are concerned, these are in vogue but poetry, despite getting less importance, is neither curtailed nor dead. One major reason for it, according to me, is that the common reader wants to read for entertainment without mentally exerting much. In fiction, the author describes everything in detail to satisfy and entertain his/her reader.

On the other hand, a poem/poet what it/he/she says/expresses is in very few words. Some call it economy of words or telegraphic writing. Therefore, much is left for the reader to imagine and interpret. Problem also arises when some symbols, universal or personal, and allusions, of all types are introduced in poetry to emphasize the objective of the poet. The reader does not like to involve in this kind of exercise. This accounts for little readership for poetry than fiction with the common reader. Nonetheless, many new and younger poets are writing with their authentic and original voice in Indian English.

As a teacher, I would suggest that more and more Indian English poets are included in the syllabi of all Indian universities and colleges at graduation and post-graduation levels. It

will expose the students of literature to the ethos of the older and elder generations and contemporary poets. Indian English poets write about India and Indian society and culture and contemporary social problems that Indian students can comprehend better than the foreign poets belonging to other countries and cultures.

As a poet, my sole objective is to hold the mirror unto the society so as to develop a harmonious and happy society far from “the sick hurry and divided aims” of the present age.

Q18. GK: How are you spending your leisure time to relax apart from writing? Do we expect any fiction or translations from you? Sir can you discuss your future projects with your readers?

DCC: Writing is not my vocation. It is my work in leisure. Besides writing, I also edit a bi-annual Journal of English language (*Poetcrit*) devoted to literary criticism and contemporary poetry. Whenever I get time, I also translate works—short stories and poems—from English language to Hindi and Pahari language of Himachal Pradesh.

I do think of writing short stories, besides poetry. I have also written about 5-6 short stories and these have also been published in anthologies and journals/magazines of English language. I have manuscript of another collection of my poems almost ready for publication. It may see the light of the day, as I hope, in 2017.

Q19. GK: Now so many young poets are coming up in the domain of Indian English poetry. What will be your advice to them?

DCC: As an elder poet, I would suggest, rather than advice that the younger generation poets should undertake to be more original, in ideas as well as style, respecting their individuality, than imitating others. Many younger poets are far better than the elder ones. However, a lot of reading of good works of literature and revision of the written work embellishes it. I see a bright future of Indian English poetry in their hands.

Q20. GK: Thank you, Sir, for giving your precious time and your honest confessions.

DCC: It is my pleasure to have exchange of ideas with you Goutam. Thank you.
