

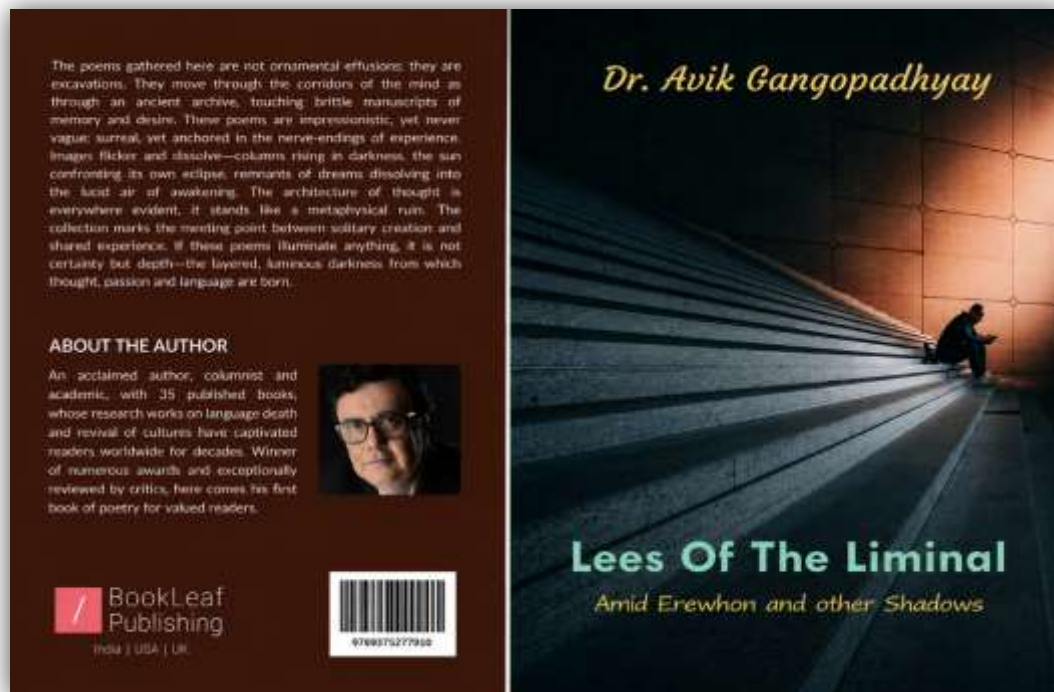
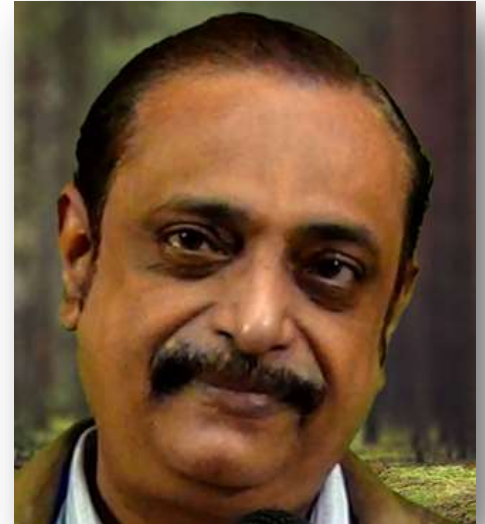
Book Review**Jaideep Mookherji**

Indologist & Independent Researcher

Book Review

Reviewer's Biography

Jaideep Mookherjee is an Independent Researcher, critic, transcreator, and an eloquent speaker in the sphere of art, literature, and culture, with publications in esteemed Indian, French, and German papers and journals on Comparative Literature and Indology. A frequenter into the worlds of Indian and Western philosophy, he is also involved in Greek Language and French Art. Never misses close encounters with Indian Classical and Western Classical music. He can be reached at jaideepmookherjee@gmail.com.



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Lees of The Liminal
Amid Erewhon and other Shadows
 by
 Dr. Avik Gangopadhyay

Wisps of Metaphysical Chimera

Abstract

This review examines Dr. Avik Gangopadhyay's *Lees of The Liminal: Amid Erewhon and other Shadows*, a collection of twenty-one poems that explores the residual impressions of perception, consciousness, and lived experience. The volume is situated at the threshold between the real and the imagined, where memory, identity, mortality, and metaphysical uncertainty converge. The review argues that Gangopadhyay's poetry is fundamentally concerned not with resolving philosophical oppositions but with inhabiting their tensions. The poems move between consciousness and subconscious disquietude, reality and imagination, life and death, certainty and wonder, defeat and hope, and nothingness and meaning. Particular attention is given to the collection's dialogic treatment of abstract and elemental forces, through which Reality, Imagination, Life, Death, Nature, Hope, Fantasy, and Nothingness acquire distinct poetic voices. The concluding sequence intensifies this philosophical inquiry, presenting mortality as a condition of meaning, uncertainty as a source of wonder, and artistic creation as an existential response to an ultimately indeterminate universe. The review therefore reads *Lees of The Liminal* as an introspective and metaphysical work in which poetry functions as an excavation of inward life and as a threshold between darkness and illumination.

Keywords: Avik Gangopadhyay; *Lees of The Liminal*; metaphysical poetry; existentialism; consciousness; identity; mortality; reality and imagination; nothingness; poetic introspection; philosophical poetry; artistic creation.

Dr. Avik Gangopadhyay, a polymath of distinction with intellectual forays into the world of literature, linguistics, philology, philosophy, history and aesthetics, has once again stolen the thunder with his slender volume of impressionistic poems. This anthology, by his own admission, has arrived like a long-withheld whisper. Avik Gangopadhyay has always believed that there comes a time when the world gets quiet and one is left with one's own psyche. Very individualistic and shaped by one's own impressions that remain as the aftermath of conscious cognition of the world of experiences. As always with this poet, he never barges into anybody's thought process with hectoring doctrines. He shares his intellectual as well emotional maunderings in a subtle stream of consciousness that appeals more to the reader's ingenuity as an option for cognizance.

Indeed, the publication of these poems was prompted by an inner urge to articulate the poet's hunch on what remains after the perception and cognition of reality.

The title itself bears the stamp of the threshold of the world of perception and the residue of impression. His very first poem “In the Study” admits how his inner self in an irrepressible urge to articulate, kneels before a ghost of emotions, as torrential pang slashes on the panes of brain. As he senses the devouring of harmony by cacophony, he realizes a la Keats that fancy cannot cheat so well. Life is defeated and death remains puissant.

In his second poem, “Shadows”, he asserts that the shadow has its own light that the body envies. In the next poem “Issue of Blood”, he brings out the inner self’s scuffle with idea and word in the tide of despair as silence devours breath. He confesses in the very next poem, “Unknown Identity” that he lost his way in his known path and is devoured to the brim by his own identity, much like Frost.

There are twenty-one poems in this collection, in which the poet strives to sit beside the reader in the glow of a failing screen as he becomes the pulse of creation, while wonder grows tired of its own astonishment.

Every poem of the first eleven poems expresses an eerie feeling of consciousness that penetrates deep into the subconscious realm of disquietude.

The final ten poems bring the readers into the threshold of meaning, forming a remarkable philosophical coda to a collection already preoccupied with memory, mortality, identity and the unstable borders between the real and the imagined. The volume announces itself as an excavation of the inward life, and these concluding poems fulfil that premise with particular intensity: here, poetry becomes less an account of experience than an arena in which Reality, Imagination, Life, Death, Nature, Hope and Nothingness are invited to speak.

“L’imagination” and “Réalité” establish the conceptual architecture of this final sequence through a sustained interrogation. Reality accuses imagination of confusing longing with fulfilment, while Imagination challenges Reality’s insistence upon evidence, certainty and limitation. The paired poems are effective precisely because neither side is allowed complete victory. Their repeated questions create a restless rhythm, suggesting that human consciousness survives through the tension between what is and what might be.

“Me and You” extends this dialectic into the oldest philosophical opposition: Life and Death. Presented almost as a dramatic dialogue, the poem refuses to sentimentalise either principle. Life calls itself beginning, hunger and becoming; Death answers as stillness, completion and the horizon that gives existence its shape. The poem’s achievement lies in its refusal to treat death merely as an antagonist. Instead, it becomes the necessary counter-definition through which life acquires significance.

The lyrical imagination then expands beyond the human in “Que la terre, le ciel et l’eau parlent.” Earth, Sky and Water converse as primordial presences, transforming cosmology into a language of intimacy. Their dialogue moves from origins and nothingness towards mutual recognition, until love becomes a possible answer to cosmic anonymity. The poem is among the collection’s

most expansive gestures: elemental nature is not scenery but consciousness, memory and relationship.

The next two poems, “Lasst die Niederlage, die Depression und die Frustration sprechen” and “Lasst die Hoffnung, die Fantasie und die Tagträume sprechen,” shift from metaphysical abstraction to recognisable psychological states. Defeat, Depression and Vexation acquire distinct voices, while Hope, Fantasy and Daydream answer with different forms of imaginative resistance. Particularly compelling is the collection’s refusal to make hope simplistic: it is fragile and conditional, whereas fantasy becomes an imaginative rehearsal for possibility. “The Unclosing Parenthesis” offers perhaps the sequence’s most paradoxical meditation. Immortality, apparently desirable, is imagined as an existence deprived of endings—and therefore deprived of urgency, ripeness and meaning. The poem makes mortality paradoxically precious: endings are what give shape to love, desire and experience.

“The Theorem that Silences Wonder” continues this philosophical enquiry by personifying inevitability. Certainty becomes an enemy of surprise, while predetermined knowledge threatens to impoverish wonder itself. The poem is intellectually provocative because it suggests that uncertainty is not merely ignorance but one of the conditions of imagination.

In “Waiting Room for Meaning,” Nothingness is transformed from terrifying absence into a contemplative space. It becomes the interval in which the unfinished self can listen, question and become. This is a characteristic movement in Gangopadhyay’s poetry: darkness is repeatedly denied the status of mere negation and instead becomes the condition from which illumination emerges.

The final poem, “Syllables in Silence,” provides an apt culmination. Here the poet confronts the paradox of artistic creation itself: why create meaning in a universe that offers no guaranteed answer? The response is neither doctrinal nor consolatory. The poet continues to arrange language against the abyss, making artistic creation an act of existential affirmation.

Taken together, these final ten poems reveal the deepest impulse of *Lees of the Liminal*: not to resolve oppositions but to inhabit them. Reality and imagination, life and death, certainty and wonder, emptiness and meaning remain perpetually unfinished. The concluding movement therefore returns the reader to the book’s governing idea—that poetry is an excavation into the “layered, luminous darkness” from which thought, passion and language arise. Gangopadhyay’s achievement is to make that darkness not an ending, but a threshold.

The work reveals the poet’s understanding of the subtle thoughts that emerge from our own subconscious mind and strive to shape our conscious behavior which sometimes make inroads in our behavioral responses to the world outside.

Written in lucid language, the poems call for deep introspection for a clear understanding. The collection is an architecture of thought standing like a metaphysical ruin where without life no story would dare to start and without death no story would dare to find any relevance.

Published by Book Leaf Publishing, the 55-page book has a very impressive frontispiece that is thought provoking. The poet has expressed his gratitude to all his friends and well - wishers who have inspired him in articulating his creative urge into an opus that stands distinctly apart as a specimen of ruminant outpouring of stimulating reflections on life.

In his characteristic manner he introduces the anthology in his moments with the Readers where he provides a glimpse of the generic character of the poems. The anthology is a must read for the introspective reader fond of doping out contemplative literary creations.