



PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVES IN LITERATURE, MEDIA AND CULTURE



Editors

Dr. Soumy Syamchand
Dr. Durga Lekshmi G S

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Contesting Liminal Spaces: A Study on Select Women's Narratives from Tibet and Bhutan

Rashmi S. Pillai

Abstract

This chapter discusses how characters in select women's narratives from Tibet and Bhutan contest the rites of passage and liminal spaces in their lives. The gender, social, geographical, cultural, religious spaces and other aspects attributed to myths and folklore are contested by these women characters in the narratives – which include a memoir, a travelogue and two novels – in similar as well as different contexts, but almost similar geographical landscapes; along with the social, cultural and national rites of passage that can cause a liminal fluidity. At the same time, it can also be observed that these women put up a strong resistance to the external efforts which forcibly alter their identity, but their eros overcomes this resistance. They try to unify with their previous state of unity or unify in ways in which their previous state of integrity would not have permitted.

Keywords: Liminal spaces, Women narratives, Rituals and superstitions.

"Liminality may perhaps be regarded as the Nay to all positive structural assertions, but as in some sense the source of them all, and, more than that, as a realm of pure possibility whence novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise." – Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, 1967.

"Where is the furthest I can travel to Mother?" Her mother replies: "Where can a girl travel to? Perhaps as far north as Tibet and as far south as India." – Kunzang Choden, *The Circle of Karma*, 2015.

Introduction

The aura of the Himalayas always fills us with awe and intrigue. The snow-clad mountains, the richness of flora and fauna, and breath-taking scenery are enchanting and a nature lover's haven. But above all, the richness of the Himalayas lies in its cultural and ethnic diversity. The reasons for this are aplenty. Movement within the Himalayas has been taking place since the