



### Thinking on Thresholds

The Poetics of Transitive Spaces  
*Edited by Subha Mukherji*

**Pub Date:** November 2013  
**Binding:** Paperback  
**Price:** £25 / \$40  
**ISBN:** 9781783080731

**Category:** LITERARY CRITICISM / General  
**BISAC code:** LIT000000  
**BIC code:** DSB

**Extent:** 252 pages  
**Size:** 229 x 152mm; 9 x 6  
**Illustrations:** 8+ colour and bw illustrations

**Rights Held:** World

*This title is also available as an ebook*

#### Description

**Why does the position of the threshold exert such a compelling hold on our imaginative lives? Why is it a resonant space, and so urgently the place of writing – the place where one may remain, avoid speaking or naming, yet speak from? Through a combination of case studies and theoretical investigations, *Thinking on Thresholds* addresses these questions and speaks to the imaginative power of the threshold as a productive space in literature and art.**

‘Borders suggest both crossings and blockades, but they are not a place to pause, as a threshold is. This book luminously explores a large range of such pauses in literature, art and music – moments of hesitation between physical spaces, between languages, between cultures, between texts, between stories, between then and now, between sleep and waking, between life and death, between gods and humans. The critical and theoretical approaches represented are rich and varied, and most marvellous of all, the threshold never becomes simply a metaphor or remains simply a solid location. That, among other things, is what thinking on it means.’ –*Michael Wood, Professor of Comparative Literature and Acting Associate Chair, Department of English, Princeton University*

‘Windows, national and racial borders, the hymen, the barrier between stage and auditorium, music as threshold between past and future, the outer, inner and middle ear – this innovative collection of essays on liminality crosses literature, drama, music, and the visual arts, moving across genres and languages, so that the book itself is a series of meeting points and thresholds. Liberated from the customary categories of criticism, the writers look deeply into the constellation of meanings conjured by the threshold. From narratological thresholds to the threshold of the body, readers will find that they look with a new intensity at the idea of the border, the barrier, the in between, the gap, the pause, crossings, meeting points.’ –*Isobel Armstrong, Emeritus Professor of English at Birkbeck, University of London and Senior Research Fellow of the Institute of English Studies, University of London*

‘In essay after mind-stretching essay, this book demonstrates the virtues of lingering on the threshold, that enigmatic in-between space in life and art which frames our encounters even as it shapes the ways we think.’ –*Richard Scholar, Fellow in French, Oriel College, University of Oxford, and author of *Montaigne and the Art of Free-Thinking**

‘This collection of vividly written and critically lively essays re-energizes the notion of the “threshold” in unexpectedly fresh ways. It skilfully illustrates how a theoretical concept can be applied to a variety of texts, issues and disciplines through essays that are imaginative, astute and immensely pleasurable to read. The appeal of the book is the balance achieved between intellectual depth and accessibility; this is thoughtful, engaging scholarship.’ –*Tamara L. Follini, Clare College, Cambridge*

**Readership:** Students and scholars of literature, comparative literature, aesthetics and cultural studies.

#### Contents

Introduction – Subha Mukherji; Part One: Doors, Windows, Entries; 1. Windows: Looking In, Looking Out, Breaking Through – Gillian Beer; 2. ‘Zero...Zero...and Zero’: Permeable Walls and Off-stage Spaces – Jean Chothia; 3. ‘The Queer Part Doors Play’ in Nabokov’s ‘Laughter in the Dark’ – Beci Dobbin; 4. ‘Invasion from Outer Space’: The Threshold of Annunciations – Subha Mukherji; Part Two: Lives and Narratives, Territories and Worlds; 5. Unsettling Thresholds: Mignon and Her Afterlives – Terence Cave; 6. Dangerous Liaisons: Desire and Limit in ‘The Home and the World’ – Supriya Chaudhuri; 7. Writing Through Osmotic Borders: Boundaries, Liminality and Language in Mehmet Yashin’s Poetics – Rosita D’Amora; 8. Dancing and Romancing: The Obstacle of the Beach and the Threshold of the Past – Jonathan Lamb; Part Three: Matter, Mind, Psyche; 9. ‘Remember Me’ – Michael Witmore; 10. Between Sleep and Waking: Montaigne, Keats and Proust – Jeremy Lane; Part Four: Reading, Writing, Playing, Listening; 11. Reading on the Threshold – Jason Scott-Warren; 12. When I Begin I have Already Begun – Gabriel Josipovici; 13. Thresholds in Improvisation: Freedom, the Eternal Present, and the Death of Jazz – Rick Foot; 14. Thresholds of Attention: On Listening in Literature – Angela Leighton; Select Bibliography (including Discography)

#### About the Editor

**Subha Mukherji** is currently Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of English at the University of Cambridge. She has worked extensively on the relation between law and literature in the Renaissance, and on interdisciplinarity more broadly.

#### Ordering in the UK/Rest of the World

Marston Book Services  
P.O. Box 269  
Abingdon, Oxfordshire  
OX14 4YN, United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 (0)1235 465577  
Fax: +44 (0)1235 465556  
direct.orders@marston.co.uk  
trade.orders@marston.co.uk

#### Ordering in North America

Books International  
P.O. Box 605  
Herndon, VA 20172-0605  
United States  
Tel: +1 703 661 1570  
Fax: +1 703 661 1501  
bimail@presswarehouse.com