

Class, Knowledge and Belonging: Narrating Postmigrant Possibilities

Roger Bromley, University of Nottingham

This paper looks at what has been called the ‘power geometry of time-space compression’ (Massey) by examining the intersectionality of class, gender and race in the construction of the differential mobilities which constitute postmigrancy, what has been termed a ‘bricolage of identifications’. In the process of this examination, an attempt will be made to outline new aesthetics and new forms of narrative, and the ways in which they are articulated with specific representational practices, as well as exploring the conflicts and contradictions, the dialectic of belonging and unbelonging, the split subjectivities which, in many cases, are a feature of these representations. Postmigration is seen as relational and a process of ongoing negotiation, not necessarily bounded by territory but transnational and post-ethnic in an age of globalization. Reference will be made to three recent texts: Zia Haider Rahman’s *In the Light of What We Know* (2014) in which class, privilege and knowledge, as signifiers of elite postmigrancy, are brought into question by displacement and unbelonging; Guy Gunaratne’s *In Our Mad and Furious City* (2018) which explores the ambivalences of postmigration along generational, religious and gender lines and develops horizontal place attachments through diverse ‘minority’ figures who seek to bypass the lens of ethnicity and, by means of street knowledge and language, attempt to grow a performative, immersive, embodied local belonging; Finally, Leila Aboulela’s short story collection *Elsewhere, Home* (2018), opens up the possibility of developing translations between cultures and cultural transformations in the hope of bringing about postmigrant futures which have spaces for Faith-based identities among others.