

OTHERING IN CHRIS CLEAVE'S NOVELS *INCENDIARY*, *LITTLE BEE*,  
AND *EVERYONE BRAVE IS FORGIVEN*

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
OF  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

AYŞE TEKŞEN MEMİŞ

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS  
IN  
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

FEBRUARY 2018



Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

---

Prof. Dr. Tülin Gençöz  
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bilal Kırkıcı  
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

---

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Margaret J. M. Sönmez  
Supervisor

**Examining Committee Members**

Assist. Prof. Dr. Dürrin Alpakın Martinez Caro (METU, FLE)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Margaret J. M. Sönmez (METU, FLE)

Assist. Prof. Dr. Kuğu Tekin (Atılım Uni., IDE)

---

---

---





**I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.**

Name, Last name : Ayşe TEKŞEN MEMİŞ

Signature :

## ABSTRACT

OTHERING IN CHRIS CLEAVE’S NOVELS *INCENDIARY*, *LITTLE BEE*,  
AND *EVERYONE BRAVE IS FORGIVEN*

Tekşen Memiş, Ayşe

M.A., English Literature

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Margaret J. M. Sönmez

February 2018, 136 pages

This thesis attempts to examine the issue of Othering and the possibility of embracing the Other as represented in Chris Cleave’s novels *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*. These novels were chosen for this study because they all contain examples of characters and plots that are relatable to the issue of Othering. The novels show that the self is socially and thus artificially identified in its function within and through a labeling system which creates differential categories of race, class, and gender. In Cleave’s novels, the relation of the self to the Other takes place within, and is organized along, these power relations of race, class and gender. More to the point, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* confront the politics of the formation of the self which cause the making of the Other—the non-Western, the female, the poor, all of which have turned into stable concerns within society.

**Keywords:** Other, Race, Gender, Class, Chris Cleave

## ÖZ

### CHRIS CLEAVE'İN *INCENDIARY*, *LITTLE BEE* VE *EVERYONE BRAVE IS FORGIVEN* ROMANLARINDA ÖTEKİLEŞTİRME

Tekşen Memiş, Ayşe

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Edebiyatı

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Margaret J. M. Sönmez

Şubat 2018, 136 sayfa

Bu tez, Chris Cleave'in *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* ve *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* romanlarında işlenen ötekileştirme ve öteki olaak nitelendirilenin kabullenilme ihtimalleri konularını incelemeyi amaç edinir. Bu üç romanın bu çalışma için seçilme nedeni, üç romanın da ötekileştirme konusu ile ilgili karakterler ve olay örgüleri içermeleridir. Romanlar gösterir ki benlik sosyal ve yapay olarak etiketlendirme sistemi içerisinde ve bu sistem yoluyla nitelendirilir ve bu süreç de ırk, sınıf ve toplumsal cinsiyet gibi farklı kategorileştirmelerin oluşmasına neden olur. Cleave'in romanlarında, benliğin öteki ile olan bağlantısı, ırk sınıf ve cinsiyet gibi güç dengeleri ile ve bunlar üzerine kuruludur. Daha da önemlisi, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* ve *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* öteki olgusunun oluşmasında rol oynayan ve toplum içerisinde sabitleşmiş, batılı olmayan, kadın, yoksul kavramlarının benliği oluşturma politikalarını ele alır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Öteki, Irk, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Sınıf, Chris Cleave

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Margaret J.M. Sönmez who supported me during this difficult process with her endless tolerance and forbearance, and without whom I would never be able to find it in me to complete this thesis. I also would like to thank the jury members Assist. Prof. Dr. Dürrin Alpakın Martinez Caro and Assist. Prof. Dr. Kuğu Tekin for their valuable support and suggestions.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT .....	iv
ÖZ.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. RACIAL ISSUES AND ETHNIC OTHERING .....	8
3. ENGLISH SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIAL CLASS OTHERING .....	44
4. GENDER ISSUES AND SEXUAL OTHERING.....	76
5. CONCLUSION .....	114
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	120
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A: TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET .....	125
APPENDIX B: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU .....	136

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the issue of Othering and the possibility of embracing the Other in Chris Cleave's novels, *Incendiary* (2005), *Little Bee* (2008) and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* (2016). These novels were chosen for this study because they all contain examples of characters and situations that are presented and explored, in the novels, in terms of Othering. If in a shared world, we postulate the reality of difference, then the self should pose the question of why s/he thinks that s/he is different from the Other party. While asking this question, the questioning subject becomes aware of the frames within which the self is socially and thus artificially identified in its function as part of a culturally imposed labeling system which creates differential categories of race, class, and gender, among other distinctions. In Cleave's novels, the relation of the self to the Other takes place within, and is organized along, these power relations of race, class and gender. More to the point, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* confront the politics of the formation of the self which cause the making of the Other—the non-Western, the female, the poor, all of which have turned into stable concerns which, when revealed as constructs, threaten the very identity of selfhood. This is the reason why the thesis is mapped around those three main concerns of the concept of Othering which are race, class and gender.

Related to the term Other, the novels ask following questions: Is it possible to embrace the other socially, individually, politically, economically, and culturally? If it is possible to embrace the Other at a personal level, then should it be done with recognizing the differences and showing respect towards them or should all of those differences be disregarded? Where does the self end and where does the Other start? Where does Otherness stem from? What does the Other mean?

*Other* means:

[as a verb] to become conscious of by viewing as a distinct entity; to conceptualize (a people, a group, etc.) as excluded and intrinsically different from oneself; . . . remaining from a specified or implied group of two or (in later use occasionally) more; opposite; alternative, the rest; separate or distinct from that or those already specified or implied; different; (hence) further, additional; different in kind, nature, or quality; in predicative use now frequently implying the absence of any common characteristics; used pleonastically to designate an additional person or thing explicitly characterized or identified as of a different kind from that previously mentioned; that which follows the first; the second, the remaining ones; a separate or distinct person or thing of a kind specified or understood contextually; another person; someone else; anyone else; another thing; something else; anything else; a person other than oneself; a person or group that is outside or excluded from one's own group; [*slang* Usually with *the*] sexual activity; sexual intercourse. (*The Oxford English Dictionary*)

Chris Cleave's novels *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* bear a notable examples of problems of Otherness and Othering. In *Little Bee*, when the English O'Rourke couple Sarah and Andrew meet two Nigerian girls on a beach in Nigeria, they are left with the question whether or not they should intervene in the story of those Nigerian girls. In *Incendiary*, there is the story of an East Ender English woman who loses both her husband and her son in a terrorist attack in a stadium in London, presented as a letter to Osama bin Laden who appears to have been responsible for the attack; her relations with a middle class couple bring the issue of class othering to the fore alongside the narrator's questioning, and novel's presentation of ethnic Othering. In *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, set during World War II, the protagonist, Mary, is an upperclass English woman who chooses to teach and act as a guardian of poor, mentally disabled, or ethnically different children left wartime London as they were not seen as important enough to be evacuated.

These novels thus deal prominently with the problematic issue of Othering and the choices made by individuals concerning how to react to the Other party. In all two of them there are English protagonists, and in *Little Bee* there are two protagonists; Susan, who is an English woman, and a Nigerian girl, Little Bee. The two protagonists of *Little Bee* (like that of *Incendiary*) are also the narrators of the novel; Little Bee narrating six out of the eleven chapters of the novel and Susan narrating the other five. Though in *Incendiary* and *Little Bee* there are first person narrators, in *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* there is a third person narrator. In all three novels, the setting is mostly in London: *Incendiary* is set completely in London, the story of *Little Bee* takes place partly in Nigeria and partly in London, and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* is set in London and Malta, and in some parts of the novel, in the English countryside. It can be claimed that, in all the three novels, there is an emphasis upon the racial, class or gendered gap between two people or groups of people; that of the English upper and middle classes versus the lower and classes, white English versus coloured foreigner, non-Muslim community versus the Muslim community living in London, and men versus women. In *Little Bee*, a white middle class family finds itself engaged in a situation with Nigerian, coloured, non-British and poor people. *Incendiary* depicts, alongside a clash between the Muslim world and the non-Muslim English society, a clash between the working class East End and the more prosperous parts of London; the original East End occupants representing the poorer, working class society. As it is shown in Cleave's novel, it might be claimed that the encounter with the Other is not an option but an inescapable possibility, especially the new professional classes start to buy up and "gentrify" properties in East end neighbourhoods. The choices taken by individuals in their encounters with the Other are presented as complex and stressful.

When the conditions that form a person's identity as different from the rest break down, the concept of Otherness is born. A person displaying the excluded or Othered characteristics will be excluded from society, too, because at this point of change and insecurity, the possibility of a thorough integration is

eliminated. It can even be claimed that Otherness is based upon “the idea that difference is the condition of the identity of subjectivity,” and “the identity/difference, self/other relation is organized in fundamentally spatialized ways - around tropes of here and there, inclusion and exclusion, presence and absence, in-place and out-of-place” (Barnett 4). As Bhabha states, recognition

discloses the contingent and conflictual relationship between the “what” and the “who” of agency: what a person is in the context of shared social and historical norms; and who he is in a more private, particularistic sense. It is the shifting ratios of “what” and “who”—determined by social differences, psychic dispositions, moral and political discriminations—that makes the agent’s disclosure deeply problematic. (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 12)

The concept of the Otherness entrails two different and yet parallel meanings in itself; it reveals itself to be almost a paradox. The first is that it puts pressure on the person to inseparably belong to a group; and the second is that it puts emphasis upon the inevitable detachment of the person from the group. “The realm of the paradoxical . . . belongs neither to the one nor the Other. It is an interstitial realm of the in-between—a space and time of ‘thirdness’” (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 6). The same can be claimed for smaller groups of people mingling with larger groups. The actual reason that causes this detachment is the force and the pressure used by the community upon the person to be a part of some larger unit. The impossibility of existing as an individual in a single unit, conforming thoroughly to the communal unit, is responsible for the creation of the Other. The isolation that is brought up by such enforcement creates an infinite circle where the person is left alone seeking for a ground parallel to the unit’s to stand on. Such a balance is not easy to accomplish, since the more the person tries, the greater is the possibility of failure. Given the circumstance that the search for those parallel grounds is bound to fail, the possibility of success remains a utopia. “Recognition—without which it would be difficult to take responsibility for hospitality in either of its modalities—is a problem of negotiating Alterity, not a matter of accommodating

diverse cultures or multiple identities” (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 7). On the grounds that this recognition is achieved by the two mediums (self and Other) mutually, the formation of identity is completed. There is no identity formation apart from the relation between self and Other in a social context:

*To see a missing person, or to look at Invisibleness, is to emphasize the subject's transitive demand for a direct object of self-reflection, a point of presence that would maintain its privileged enunciatory position qua subject. To see a missing person is to transgress that demand; the 'I' in the position of mastery is, at that same time, the place of its absence, its representation. (The Location of Culture 47)*

For Marx, class Othering starts when the object that is produced when the labour becomes alien to its producer. The labour itself is alienated, and this: “(1) estranges nature from man and (2) estranges man from himself, from his own active function, from his vital activity; because of this it also estranges man from his species. It turns his species-life into a means for his individual life. Thus, the separation of the individual from the communal whole happens” (*Early Writings* 328). Marx states that through society, the true unity of the individual and nature becomes possible. Marx also states that to claim that society is reproachable would be wrong, considering that the society connotes a man extracted out of nature: “Society is therefore the perfected unity in essence of man with nature, the true resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature. . . . It is above all necessary to avoid once more establishing ‘society’ as an abstraction over against the individual” (*Early Writings* 350).

Since Simone de Beauvoir’s time it is generally accepted that gender is a construct of the society that we live in, whereas sex is a term relating to physical differences that exist between humans and is a common and age-old form of differentiating system. The word gender, thus indicates the socially biased formation where humans have to conform to rules that they do not actually understand and that they find unnecessary. In this troubling system, the woman

might find herself struggling to conform to the assigned gender roles. As Beauvoir points out in her *The Second Sex*, that not every female human being can be called a woman. To be identified as a woman needs courage and dedication to a cause. The woman tries to find a place for herself within the male dominant society that is ready to reject her: “Be women, stay women, become women. So not every female human being is necessarily a woman; she must take part in this mysterious and endangered reality known as femininity” (*The Second Sex* 23). Woman’s existence is not autonomous; it is rendered through its relation to the male identity. “Humanity is male, and man defines woman not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being” (*The Second Sex* 26). While for the heterosexual male identity, existence is not that problematic; the perspective that the woman has towards herself is more indirect and therefore problematic. The woman, it is argued, thinks of herself only in relation to the male identity. Her own identity, that is to say, is constructed upon the contrast that she observes between the male and female identity. In this case, the word Other becomes the core of her identity:

Man thinks himself without woman. Woman does not think herself without man. And she is nothing other than what man decides; she is thus called “the sex”, meaning that the male sees her essentially as a sexed being; for him she is sex, so she is it in the absolute. She is determined and differentiated in relation to man, while she is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other. (*The Second Sex* 26)

In this first chapter, which is the introduction, I have introduced the terms Other and Otherness; and explain what racial, sexual, and class Othering suggest as well as presenting a map of different approaches that the self might produce in its encounter with the Other party. In the second chapter, I will introduce the theory of racial and ethnic Othering in the light of Bhabha’s and Taylor’s theoretical approaches and will analyze the three novels in terms identity, objectifying and gaze which are the elements that the theory of race is constructed upon. In the third chapter, I will introduce the issue of class Othering

and as all of the three novels deal with the English society, I will introduce the English class system, how it worked at the time of these novels' settings (the 20<sup>th</sup> century), and where it fails. In this chapter, providing examples from the novels, the structure of class is going to be analyzed through the aspects of language, money, the personal, and historical past in the light of Karl Marx's and Terry Eagleton's theoretical works. In the fourth chapter of the thesis, I will first explain the difference between sex and gender and I will then present how gender is constructed on a social basis and question whether it is to the benefit or disadvantage of women. I will analyze these novels by looking at the issues of sexual Othering and woman's voice in the light of Simon de Beauvoir's and Judith Butler's theoretical works. In the fifth and the final chapter of the thesis, conclusion, I will provide a summary of the problems and questions raised within the thesis, and present an assessment of Cleave's approach to the interrelationship between race, class, and gender in and through all three novels.



## CHAPTER 2

### RACIAL ISSUES AND ETHNIC OTHERING

In this chapter, I will seek to identify some of the racial issues raised in Chris Cleave's novels, *Little Bee*, *Incendiary* and *Everyone Brave is Forgiven*, in the light of Homi K. Bhabha's and Charles Taylor's theoretical works. In his these three novels, Cleave questions and analyses the possible approaches to the issue of racial Othering. The novels claim that the gap between two different cultures, ethnicities and colours will always remain, and Cleave also shows that even the concept of multiculturalism creates problems. Because it explores racial Othering in greater depth than the other novels, *Little Bee* will be examined first, followed by *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, that presents a coloured boy as a main character, and then *Incendiary*, where racial Otherness is present throughout but not in the form of any directly present main characters.

The novels show that there can be different individual approaches to the Other. They imply that neglect of the Other can actually aim at the possibility of equality. This is, when differences are unseen, every person will have the same neutrality, which will allow them to be depicted in the same way, even though that depiction will be excessively generalized. On the other hand, is equality always equality? Sometimes it might possess the meaning of inequality, as Cleave the novel *Little Bee*, through the Nigerian character Little Bee, depicts. This novel shows that it is hard for the refugee to enable her identity to be recognized by the country s/he finds herself in. Little Bee, as an African refugee, feels despised and unwanted when she is in the asylum centre in Britain. The British people react to Little Bee's existence either in an unwelcoming way or with superficially generous actions. Little Bee is also convinced that the gap between her and the other world remain no matter how hard the two sides try. She believes that she will continue to be unwanted, the British will continue to

see her as unwanted. How she suffers from racial discrimination is depicted in the first sentence of the novel where she says:

Most days I wish I was a British pound coin instead of an African girl. Everyone would be pleased to see me coming. Maybe I would visit you for the weekends and then suddenly, because I am fickle like that, I would visit with the man from the corner shop instead—but you would not be sad because you would be eating a cinnamon bun, or drinking a cold Coca-Cola from the can, and you would never think of me again. We would be happy, like lovers who met on holiday and forgot each other's names. (*Little Bee* 1)

She is aware that she needs to be able to fit in, and yet she is also aware that she will not be able to do this. What she chooses to compare herself with in the passage given above is important. The British pound coin is something of little importance in the daily life of a British person. Though it is a part of the British currency, and thus welcome, the value it has is small, and the things that it can buy are also of little value. The importance given to it by Little Bee is not about its material value, but it is about how easily it is accepted and welcomed by the society. What Little Bee implies is that as a living human being she should be given more value than that of a pound coin, but she will not be welcomed and accepted even to the limited extent that a pound coin is. She opposes the duration of being kept waiting before being welcome into the British society along with not being given the real attention that she deserves by the society. The further comparison she makes between herself and the British pound coin is also worth looking at: “How I would love to be a British pound. A pound is free to travel to safety, and we are free to watch it go. This is the human triumph. This is called, globalization. A girl like me gets stopped at immigration, but a pound can leap the turnstiles, and dodge the tackles of those big men with their uniform caps, and jump straight into a waiting airport taxi” (*Little Bee* 2). When she first steps into the country, she finds herself placed in a detention centre. From her perspective within this detention centre, Little Bee's new world is divided into only two halves,

which are the refugee camp and the real London out there. That is why, when she is in the detention centre, she cannot help thinking that her colour is the reason why she is kept behind the doors which separate the detention world and London. After she leaves the detention centre, the first place she goes to is the house of the other protagonist and narrator, Sarah—, who had chopped off the top of a finger in a deal to save Little Bee's life during a curious incident when she and her new dead husband Andrew were holidaying in Nigeria. *Little Bee* does not leave Sarah's house until her first outing when she realises that there are other non-white people living in London, and even integrating with whites in partnerships:

And I was looking very hard at these people, because this is how it was with them: the boy's father had dark skin, darker even than my own, and the boy's mother was a white woman. They were holding hands and smiling at their boy, whose skin was light brown. It was the colour of the man and the woman joined in happiness. It was such a good colour that tears came into my eyes. (*Little Bee* 218)

She is surprised at what she sees, for what she was actually expecting to see was Londoners having an explicit cultural conflict with each other, and not such promising image. Until this moment, Little Bee's mind was occupied with the idea of racial conflict and the separateness of white and black skin colours. For Little Bee, this specific moment changes from an extraordinary one to an ordinary one only moments later. When she starts to look around, she realizes that the world is actually a place full of people of many colours. She says:

This I saw with my own eyes, and when I looked around the crowd I saw that there was more of it. There were people in that crowd, and strolling along the walkway, from all of the different colours and nationalities of the earth. There were more races even than I recognized from the detention centre. I stood with my back against the railings and my mouth open and I watched them walking past, more and more of them. And then I realized it. I said to myself, Little Bee, there is no them.

This endless procession of people, walking along beside this great river, these people are you.

All that time in the detention centre I was trapped by walls, and all those days living at Sarah's house in a street full of white faces, I was trapped because I knew I could never go unnoticed. But now I understood that at last I could disappear into the human race, like Yvette chose to do, as simply as a bee vanishes into the hive. (*Little Bee* 219)

In the quotation given above, she emphasises that she sees a possibility of not being seen as different from other people. The novel here indicates the dream of an ideal society that does not attempt to either underline or consciously disregard the differences among different skin colours and ethnicities, but that is concerned with erasing the categorization that leads people to notice that there is actually a difference to be noticed. The example that *Little Bee* gives is important for this reason. She likens herself to a bee in a hive, which shows that her desire is to be a functioning part of society. This moment is important because this is the moment when the image on her mind which depicted the host society as a fragmented and conflicted society, disappears. She is filled with the hope that she will be accepted by the society.

If, within a predominantly white society, differences are ignored, people are required to act according to the norms of the white people. As people other than the white men and women will have no chance to adapt to those norms, inequality will appear. So *Little Bee's* utopian vision is not as idyllic as it appears to her, then. Thus, it is better to look for recognition of differences rather than the neglect of differences. However, this does not mean that the process of recognition will be achieved without any problems. If people pay attention to the differences that shape a person's characteristic features, they will judge that person as a being who is shaped by only those differences (a form of stereotyping typical of prejudiced behaviour). It is as if the person was created by only the differences and as if no identical feature can be found. This is a prejudiced approach that prevents people from being able to observe one another truly. Lawrence, whom Sarah has been having a love affair with, is an example of this kind of prejudiced thinking. What Lawrence says is the extreme extension

of this insight, and is the antithesis to what Little Bee thinks or hopes. He emphasizes the same statement throughout the whole novel. He states that Little Bee will not belong, and that—especially having illegally removed herself from the detention centre—she will be sent back to Nigeria which will eventually mean Little Bee’s death. He knows this because Andrew and Sarah saved her life years before, when they encountered Little Bee and her sister being pursued by other Nigerians. If she is sent back, she will most probably be found and then killed by these men. Lawrence’s understanding thus suggests that the Other will be discarded no matter what is waiting for him or her on the other side, the Other will always be seen as superfluous. The British community will have difficulty in accepting Others, as Lawrence states: “This isn’t your country. They’ll come for you, I promise you they will. They come for all of you in the end” (*Little Bee* 188). It is not clear whom Lawrence refers to with the phrase *all of you*. Does he mean all refugees, all immigrants, or all the black people? He seems to have categorized all non-white people together as the Other. Furthermore, if Little Bee manages to find a job, will it make it easier for her to be accepted by the British community? What makes all the other people from different ethnicities that she saw on the train British, and if they are British, then, why cannot Little Bee be a British person, too? In the novel, the characters who represent the British community are Sarah, Andrew, Lawrence, Charlie and Sarah’s office mates. While those characters form the white social structure of England represented in the novel; the characters from the detention centre: Yvette, Nikiruka, Little Bee, and the sari girl, are kept outside of the borders of the society. How the British characters form and maintain their British identities is depicted in a passage where Sarah explains how she became one with England and the English identity:

I remember the exact day when England became me, when its contours cleaved to the curves of my own body, when its inclinations became my own. As a girl, on a bike ride through the surrey lanes, pedalling in my cotton dress through the hot fields blushing with poppies, freewheeling down a sudden dip

into a cool wooded sanctum where a stream ran beneath the flint-and-brick bridge. Coming to a stop, the brakes squealing from the work of plucking one still moment out of time. Throwing my bicycle down into a pungent cushion of cow parsley and wild mint, and sliding down the plunging bank into the clear cold water, my sandals kicking up a quick brown bloom of mud from the streambed, the minnows darting away into the black pool of shade beneath the bridge. Pressing my face into the water, with time utterly suspended, drinking in the cool shock. And then, looking up and seeing a fox. He was sunning himself on the far bank, watching me through a feathery screen of barley. I looked back at him, and his amber eyes held mine. The moment, the country: I realized it was me. I found a soft patch of wild grass and cornflower by the side of the barley field, and I lay down with my face close to the damp earthen smell of the grass roots, listening to the buzzing of the summer flies. I cried, but I didn't know why. (*Little Bee* 198)

The integration of personal identity with a bellowed countryside is shown here. It is supported by a whole culture of appreciation of that countryside being associated with regional identity. This is shown in that she was riding her bike within the path noticing her dress, the hot fields, poppies, the cool wood, and other life habitats and the wild animals outside of her path. They are the stereotypical images of an English rural scene. This is why she says at the beginning of this passage that this was the moment she became England and England became her. She reacted to this moment by crying. She was going through just the opposite of what *Little Bee* went through when she went to her first outing from Sarah's house. Just like the moment when *Little Bee* encountered British society for the first time, here Sarah meets that Other natural world which she identifies with more easily with the abstract concept of "nationality". In this context, *Little Bee* is like the fox Sarah encountered. *Little Bee* and fox are equally parts of the natural world, even if they look and behave differently from herself. Sarah herself is also making this resemblance in her mind:

No, it wasn't going to work anymore, denying her, or denying what had happened in Africa. A memory can be banished, even

indefinitely, deported from consciousness by the relentless everydayness of running a successful magazine, mothering a son, and burying a husband. A human being, though, is a different thing entirely. The existence of a Nigerian girl, alive and standing in one's own garden—governments may deny such things, or brush them off as statistical anomalies, but a human being cannot. (*Little Bee* 98)

The fox's lying sunning on the ground resembles the moment when Little Bee took her first step on the British soil at the beginning of the novel:

Yvette gave me a great push in the chest and I flew backward. And that is how it was, the first time I touched the soil of England as a free woman, it was not with the soles of my boots but with the seat of my trousers.

"WU-ha-ha-ha!" said Yvette. "Welcome in de U-nited Kindom, int dat glorious?"

When I got my breath back I started laughing too. I sat on the ground, with the warm sun shining on my back, and I realized that the earth had not rejected me and the sunlight had not snapped me in two. (*Little Bee* 20)

Just as a fox is unrecognized by the government and just as such a recognition is irrelevant and unimportant, regarding Little Bee's existence under any sort of legal document is irrelevant to the physical fact that she, too, is part of the natural world. Legalities and paperwork do not change the fact that she exists, and she is there and just as alive as a fox.

The ethical responsibility towards another person when two or more people encounter each other is both human and social. However, the idea of help might fail in the course of itself. In a cultural context, the Other party will be identified through a system of understanding of dominating identities.

. . . recognition itself might be a problematic issue. When recognition is not done thoroughly or if it is done on wrong terms, the problem of misrecognition arises. And it brings the problems of forms of social and psychic alienation and aggression - madness, self-hate, treason, violence which "can never be acknowledged as determinate and constitutive conditions of civil authority, or as the ambivalent effects of the social instinct itself. They are always explained away as alien presences, occlusions of

historical progress, the ultimate misrecognition of Man” (*The Location of Culture* 43).

The relationship between Sarah and Little Bee is an example of such misrecognition. Sarah’s childhood encounter with the fox is a foreshadowing of her encounters with Little Bee. The reason why Sarah cried at her encounter with the fox is because she recognizes the distinction between the freedom of naturally belonging somewhere and the constraints of mere bureaucratic or social belonging. When Little Bee turns up at her house, Sarah urges Little Bee to tell her what happened on the beach after Andrew and she left the sisters. She wants the gaps to be filled by Little Bee. Sarah, although her knowing what happened afterwards will not be useful for Little Bee even on a personal level because her life in Africa is part of a different world from Sarah’s, Sarah asks only to feed her curiosity rather than to help. It shows the underlying selfishness of Sarah, and Cleave shows that this is the major fault of the British characters in the novel. Their actions fail to help the Others, as Sarah says:

This isn’t about the decisions you made anymore. Because the biggest thing in your life, the thing that killed Andrew and the thing that means you can’t sleep, is something that happened without you.

I realized, more than anything, that I need to know now. I needed to know what had happened after the killers took those girls away down the beach. I needed to know what had happened next. (*Little Bee* 126)

What happens outside of Sarah’s life irritates her, and she tries to make herself a part of it. Andrew did not know what happened to Little Bee and her sister, and he killed himself. Sarah fears that she will go through the same if she keeps herself apart from Little Bee’s story. This is also why Chris Cleave chose to give the episode of Sarah’s finger-cutting from a doubly-mediated perspective. When that scene is narrated in the novel, it is narrated from Sarah’s perspective, but not directly—it is given as she thinks or imagines that



Little Bee might have depicted the scene. With Sarah's voice, the readers are shown this scene:

I looked straight at Little Bee. She saw the white woman put her own left hand on the hard sand, and she saw her pick up the machete, and she saw her chop off her middle finger with one simple chop, like a girl topping a carrot, neatly, on a quiet Surrey Saturday, between gymkhana and lunch. She saw her drop the machete and rock back on her heels, holding her hand. I suppose the white woman looked just amazed. (*Little Bee* 115)

The ethical responsibility to act appears not in the presence of recognition but in the absence of it. The core of this lies in the idea that, in terms of misrecognition, the Other and self relate to each other, but when they relate, they involuntarily keep the distance in-between. Thus the two selves open themselves, but that is not enough to eliminate the distance. At this point, the self gives up the idea of being responsible for the Other and moves to a situation of passivity. The idea of ethical responsibility and taking action for the other party itself can be problematic. Whether the act is done out of generosity or natural responsibility becomes a crucial question: in other words, although the self thinks or even congratulates itself that the act of relating to the Other is done out of generosity, the self eventually expects a return from the Other. When the self gives, the self expects to take back. In this context, whether it is impossible that any rapprochement or action taken for the Other can be morally or ethically "pure" should be questioned. When the self gives and waits for the return, the self feels the urge to be the master. Now that the self has made an act of generosity, it is the self's expectation to wait for a return of the gift itself. In this sense, rather than having an affirmative meaning, the concept of tolerance consists of a negative meaning. When the self tolerates the Other, the Other is at the position of someone guilty. However, if pure hospitality is possible, it can also be a trauma, as "pure hospitality befalls the subject as a trauma, because it is a response to an unanticipated arrival, to a *visitation* without *invitation*. . . . The unexpected visitor, as a figure of alterity, overwhelms the self-possession of the

subject” (Barnett 11). Hospitality and reaching the other’s viewpoint require recognition, but, in this book and in a literal sense, it is not likely that Little Bee would have had any knowledge about Surrey Saturdays and gymkhanas. Cleave shows the shallow perspective that Sarah and the British middle classes in general possess, as also (indirectly) the limitations of people from different cultures about each other (Little Bee’s knowledge is as limited as Sarah’s). Sarah is struggling to exclude Little Bee. She wants control over the story that she wants to internalize, and she shows herself in the centre of it. The reason why Cleave gave this scene from Sarah’s perspective can be to show that Sarah’s cutting of her finger is itself a shallow and ultimately self-serving action, an act of amour propre or enjoying the image of oneself that is projected onto others, because it is not likely that it would solve the real problem which is an oil conflict in Nigeria. Even on a personal level, it might not have been enough to save Little Bee’s life. That is why this trivial topping the carrot simile is double-edged – Sarah imagines that Little Bee would be surprised by and perhaps admire the ease with which Sarah apparently sacrificed her own finger, but the attentive reader will note that the significance of Sarah’s act is minimal outside of her own mind.

A genuine desire to understand the world and mind of the racial Other is missing from Sarah’s side, and Lawrence also shares the same lack. Having control over the cutting story and trying to learn what happened after the cutting action are attempts to stay in control and a desire to assert or reassure oneself of superiority. This is why Lawrence likens Little Bee and Sarah’s situation to that of Sarah’s harbouring and being a shelter to Little Bee, even though Little Bee opposes this idea in the following quotation:

But Lawrence was serious. “Look,” he said, “I think you and I need to make a plan for your welfare. I’m going to be very clear about this. I think you should go to the local police and report yourself. I don’t think it’s right for you to expose Sarah to the stress of harbouring you.”

I smiled. I thought about Sarah harbouring me, as if I was a boat. (*Little Bee* 185)

Lawrence perceives of and shows Sarah as the more powerful and superior one who saves and protects Little Bee. From his perspective the British person is put into the position of a hero, and the Nigerian one is depicted as a vulnerable and powerless immigrant who needs to be saved; however, Cleave's story shows the difference between the two characters in a very different light. While depicting Sarah throughout the novel as someone with little understanding and foresight, Little Bee is described as a person with an understanding that is beyond her age. Little Bee quickly understands that the British nation cannot save her let alone her people, and that is why she does not ask for help from them, although she does for a while hope for some help from individuals.

The identity of a person is shaped according to the relation it has with the identities of the others "in a simultaneous process of identification with and differentiation from selected 'others'" (Barnett 4); however, in the context of this novel, this means that the identity of the self will lack the means that make the self different from the rest. At this point, a different term emerges which is non-identity. According to this idea "if identity is relational, then identity-formation works primarily by excluding some element that takes on the role of the Other, setting up an image of non-identity that confirms the identity of the self or the collective community, but in turn, this excluded element always threatens to undermine the appearance of self-contained identity that it supports" (Barnett 4). When the difference is eliminated, so is subjectivity; and when the subjectivity is eliminated, the concept of autonomous individuals or groups also breaks down. Barnett explains this in the following sentences:

This understanding presents identity-formation as a process of controlling boundaries and maintaining the territorial integrity of communities or selves. It therefore entails an automatic calculus of the rights and wrongs of different modes of relating. The assumption is that moral harm arises primarily through the failure or refusal to recognize the reciprocal and co-constitutive characteristics of subjectivity. (Barnett 4)

*Little Bee* provides an illustration of this as the distance between the perspectives of Sarah and of Little Bee seems to be getting narrower towards the end of the novel. Sarah starts to understand where she was failing when she tried to help Little Bee, and that what she has done might not have been enough to actually save Little Bee from her troubles, as she says to her son here: “Because we still haven’t done enough to save her, Charlie. I thought we had, but we need to do more. And we will do more, darling. We will” (*Little Bee* 261). She herself is aware of the progress she is making, as she reveals when speaking to Lawrence:

Isn’t it sad, growing up? You start off like my Charlie. You start off thinking you can kill all the baddies and save the world. Then you get a little bit older, maybe Little Bee’s age, and you realize that some of the world’s badness is inside you, that maybe you’re a part of it. And then you get a little bit older still, and a bit more comfortable, and you start wondering whether that badness you’ve seen in yourself is really all that bad at all. You start talking about ten percent.”

“Maybe that’s just developing as a person, Sarah.”

I sighed, and looked out at Little Bee.

“Well,” I said. “Maybe this is a developing world.”

(*Little Bee* 209)

The concept of identity can be divided into two: personal and collective. An individual’s identity is determined by this “curriculum vitae”; by these life experiences. However, the collective one is all about membership and belonging.

Being true to myself means being true to my own originality, which is something only I can articulate and discover. In articulating it, I am also defining myself. I am realizing a potentiality that is properly my own. This is the background understanding to the modern ideal of authenticity, and to the goals of self-fulfillment and self-realization in which the ideal is usually couched. (*Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* 31)

As it can be seen in the excerpt from the novel above, Sarah states that she is discovering herself while becoming herself. She questions where she belongs

and to what extent her identity is shaped through this belonging. Sarah narrated her encounter with the wildness of the natural world as a child, and what she saw was another world (that of the fox) that she was not entirely a part of. As is stated, in her conversation with Lawrence above, however, when she got older, she realised that the wild world actually was no different than her socialized existence. In the childhood passage she understood this emotionally if not intellectually. The soil on which she saw the fox is also a part of her own country. In fact she physically and mentally bonds with it, but the fox and her identity have very different existences based on this shared soil. Here the realisation hits her that the boundaries between good and bad that she drew before do not actually exist as self and other, and that the good and the bad are also mixed. However, Sarah's use of the phrase the *developing world* while she was looking at Little Bee, is an indication of the fact that Sarah and Lawrence are not aware that the gap (as the entire novel and especially the plot's outcome will indicate) cannot be closed. They think that if they can move to this understanding, then they can free themselves from the feeling of guilt. This is especially true of Lawrence. Through Sarah's statement, the novel suggests that though the dominating understating of the whole world can be changing, it is changing within the limitations of a white middle class self-affirming perspective. The distance is wider than people like Sarah and Little Bee think. Because of her immigrant situation, Little Bee is better able to see herself through the eyes of the Others than Sarah was: Sarah had only visited Nigerian hotels and beaches, and as a mere tourist interested in self indulgence. Little Bee's contemplation from her new perspective, after two years of life in the detention centre, is more sympathetic to what the Others see than Sarah was. She sees herself and her situation in this way:

And this woman they released from the immigration detention centre, this creature that I am, she is a new breed of human. There is nothing natural about me. I was born—no, I was reborn—in captivity. I learned my language from your newspapers, my clothes are your castoffs, and it is your pound

that makes my pockets ache with its absence. Imagine a young woman cut out from a smiling Save the Children magazine advertisement, who dresses herself in threadbare pink clothes from the recycling bin in your local supermarket car park and speaks English like the leader column of The Times, if you please. I would cross the street to avoid me. Truly, this is the one thing that people from our country and people from my country agree on. They say, that refugee girl is not one of us. That girl does not belong. That girl is a Halfling, a child of an unnatural mating, an unfamiliar face in the moon.

So, I am a refugee, and I get very lonely. Is it my fault if I do not look like an English girl and I do not talk like a Nigerian? Well, who says an English girl must have skin as pale as the clouds that float across her summers? (*Little Bee* 8)

Little Bee herself here draws attention to the fact that, by contrasting to the abstract developing world that Lawrence and Sarah had been talking about, Little Bee must be an actual outcome of the actual, economically developing world, and the new identity that Little Bee represents should be welcomed and should be seen as normal. The novel suggests that the world should be developing all together and not in separate pieces. That is why Little Bee emphasises the fact that in her own country the way people react to refugees is not different than that of the British people. What Little Bee represents, in this respect, is a unique identity. Being unique and chosen brings together the concept of respect since personal identity needs recognition; however, for recognition to have an affirmative resonance, it should be accompanied by respect. Although respect may sound similar to tolerance, there is a difference between the two: respect tends to evoke positive derivations, while tolerance is a passive term: while tolerance craves for the existence of a power ensemble, respect looks for a way to make human relations possible without degradation; however, that does not mean that tolerance is useless or senseless. Preserving the rights of Others is a key concept in determining civil respect. Compared to the eighteenth century idea that civility can be achieved through tolerance, civility now means fighting for the rights of Others,

including minorities, which abolishes the idea of indifference and self-centeredness.

The ethics of Recognition—be they dignity, respect, fairness or, freedom—are quasi-universal, not because they are abstractly true for all time, nor, like dignity, because they are ends in themselves. Ethical enunciations and rhetorical assertions make a claim to a peculiar “universality-cum-alterity” (if I may be allowed one more invocation of “the same and other”) only because we return to them repeatedly, translate them ceaselessly, and extend them proleptically. They are a crucial part of our democratic iterations. At the same time, it is enunciation—the performance and process of discourse “without guarantees”—that makes possible the paradoxical aspirations of neighbourliness and hospitality. (Bhabha, *Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 4-5)

This novel shows that racial or ethnic conflict is universal, and that the solution should be sought on universal grounds, as can be seen in Little Bee’s statement here: “I think everyone was killing everyone else and listening to the same music. Do you know what? The first week I was in the detention centre, U2 were number one here too. That is a good trick about this world, Sarah. No one likes each other, but everyone likes U2” (*Little Bee* 134). Popular music is one of the common features that the world population shares, and the solution to the problem of Othering may lie in finding these common features and building an understanding that the world will take part in. The closing scene of the novel presents the picture of an ideal world of racial harmony, which nevertheless seems little more than a dream. This ideal picture is narrated by Little Bee in this way: “I smiled and I watched Charlie running away with the children, with his head down and his happy arms spinning like propellers, and I cried with joy when the children all began to play together in the sparkling foam of the waves that broke between worlds at the point” (*Little Bee* 266).

Chris Cleave’s latest novel, *Everyone Brave is Forgiven*, which is centred in London at the time of Second World War, presents the issue of

racial discrimination through the African American character Zachary. As a member of an African American family who have come to England from USA, Zachary struggles to be accepted by the British community at school and in his daily life. The way Zachary and his skin colour are perceived by the other members of the British community is reflected in the novel through the reaction of Mary who is the white skinned protagonist of the novel: “He was the first negro she had seen up close—if one didn’t count the posters advertising minstrelsy and coon shows—and she still struggled not to gawk” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 10). Mary never gets used to Zachary’s skin colour, as is said here: “Zachary poked his head up through the straw. It still amazed Mary to see his brown skin, his chestnut eyes” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 10).

Through the character of Mary, Cleave envisages how someone like Zachary was seen by Londoners in general at the time of Second World War. Mary, however, differs in a particular way from the other Londoners in the novel: she chooses to get closer to Zachary. “She knelt in the straw, took his hands—it still amazed her that they were no hotter than white hands—and showed him to count forwards seven more, starting from seven” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 11). Mary was expecting to find a warmer hand, even a burning skin. A similar reaction to Zachary’s colour is given by another character, the little girl Simone. Simone’s first thought about Zachary’s skin colour is that his skin must be hurting him on the inside. She asks him if his skin hurts him:

‘Show me behind your ears,’ she said straight away.  
He angled his head for her and she folded each ear forward to look behind it. ‘It’s not done by the sun, then. Or else you’d be paler here.’  
It’s the same all over.’  
‘Did you start off normal and go that colour?’  
‘No. I was like this since I was born.’  
She gave a sympathetic nod. ‘Then it’s your parents’ fault.’  
‘I don’t think—’  
‘Shh. Does it hurt?’



'Does what hurt?'  
 'Your skin.'  
 'No, it doesn't hurt.'  
 'It doesn't feel burned at all?'  
 'No.'  
 'I don't mean like agony, like arrrrrgh! I mean like when you get too close to the fire and your hairs curl up and it's sore.'  
 'It's not sore.'  
 'And it's your father who's cannibal?'  
 'He's a musician.'  
 'Then it's your mother?'  
 'She's dead, but she was a singer.'  
 Simone folded her arms. 'It has to be either the mother or the father.'  
 'Who what?'  
 'Who eats people. Otherwise the baby comes out white.'  
 He couldn't think what to say. 'We came from America.'  
 Simone looked skeptical. 'And are all the others ignorant like you?'  
 'All the other what?'  
 'All the other coloreds.' (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 112)

Simone's reaction reflects the prejudices and ignorance of the adults in her society and is, although childish, similar to that of Mary. Just as Mary chose to get closer to Zachary, Simone also did not try to keep away from him, and while Simone assumes that Zachary's skin colour must have a burning effect on him, Mary knows it does not, but still cannot stop herself from thinking about the prejudice that somehow skin of a different colour will feel different. Simone assumes that he or his parents must have gone through a painful or abnormal event, and that's why his skin is dark as if it is burnt. The novel puts emphasis upon the idea that Zachary will not be accepted by the British at a time when they saw very few coloured people in their communities. When Zachary claims that he will not be able to fit in the countryside and talks about his expectation that they will treat him harshly there, Mary makes a comparison that shows how hopeless Zachary's situation is, in fact: it seems that the most comforting thing she can think of is to say that that British folk will prefer him to their most hated enemies, the Germans.

‘They’ll hate me.’  
‘Nonsense. Was it minstrels who invaded Poland? Was it a troupe of theatre negroes who occupied the Sudetenland?’  
He gave her a patient look.  
‘See?’ said Mary. ‘The countryside will prefer you to the Germans.’ (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 13)

Depicting Zachary as preferable to the Germans is not a promising image. Mary herself is aware of how bad the situation is, and that’s why she says this: bleak though it is, it is the only comfort she can give him.

In contrast to Simone and Mary, the novel presents Hilda, a character who represents those who do not attempt to approach or understand the black skinned Other. Hilda has negative thoughts about Zachary and his skin colour. After Zachary is sent to the countryside, Hilda opposes Mary and Zachary’s writing to each other and cannot understand why Mary is trying to create a bond with a black boy, although she cannot give any very clear reason for her stance:

‘Oh!’ said Mary. ‘Here’s another one from Zachary.’  
‘But look here,’ said Hilda, ‘you are hardly the nigger’s mother.’  
‘No, I daresay I would have noticed. . . . The negroes are no viler than we, you know. In faculty, fitness and faith they are our perfect equal.’  
‘Hardly!’ said Hilda. ‘But I’ve nothing against them. I might even prefer them to other foreigners—since at least one knows where one stands.’  
‘Does one?’  
‘Well, one really oughtn’t to write to one.’ (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 71-72)

Hilda’s assertion that a coloured boy might be preferable to “other foreigners” works to prove Mary right in finding only the bleakest of comforts for Zachary’s estrangement. Hilda adds, however, a question that reveals her willful or affected ignorance just as much as Simone’s question about cannibals did: “And is it him writing with his fingers, or his toes? Only I’ve heard they have equal facility with both” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 72).

Even though Hilda says she “might even prefer them to other foreigners”, her prejudice and ignorance, and her strict observation that “one” should not stand on any terms of intimacy with them shows that a true welcome will never be possible for any foreigner in Hilda’s England. This novel draws more attention to the long way that British society needs to travel in order to reach a better understanding and acceptance of the differences between different groups of people. Hilda cannot understand why anyone should wish to reach out in friendship across that barrier, and even assumes that the black Other belongs to a different “species”—that they are not humans:

‘You’re not his family, or even his species. You can’t give him a home—that’s his people’s job. And you shan’t tell me he doesn’t have people, because there were dozens and dozens at that theatre, conveniently colour-coded.’  
The negroes aren’t all related, you know.’ (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 228)

This novel shows that for the people such as Hilda it is really hard to demolish the walls they have created between their world and the world of Others. For them, the world is divided into two: their world and the world of Other, as Bhabha says in *The Location of Culture*: “The compulsive, fantasmatic identification with a persecutory ‘they’ is accompanied, even undermined, by an emptying, an evacuation of the racist ‘I’ who projects” (61) This idea draws attention to the issue of multiculturalism which involves the question of some cultural features being imposed within a society, and the probable sense of superiority which this imposition might create among those in possession of these valued cultural assets.

Western liberal societies are thought to be supremely guilty in this regard, partly because of their colonial past, and partly because of their marginalization of segments of their populations that stem from other cultures. It is in this context that the reply “this is how we do things here” can seem crude and insensitive. Even if, in the nature of things, compromise is close to impossible here—one either forbids murder or allows it—the attitude presumed by the

reply is seen as one of contempt. (*Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* 66)

In the light of what Taylor suggests above, Hilda demonstrates the most evident traits of the ignorant racist; seeing black skinned people as all the same, and believing in some sort of behavioural segregation, she does not think they have the same intelligence as white people or even that they are fully human. When she realizes that Mary cannot be convinced to stay away from the black boy's family, this conversation occurs:

'So you are planning to walk into a negro family's house—'  
'I was planning to knock.'  
'—and tell them what they should do with their child.'  
'What they could usefully do, yes.'  
'Notwithstanding your belief that they are as intelligent as us.'  
(*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 74)

Hilda reflects the grossest of prejudices based on and repeating Victorian colonialist music hall stereotype caricatures of the coloured Other. While Mary reminds her that Zachary is a human being and his father a civilized man. Hilda jeers and mimics in response:

'I write to Zachary because he is a human being.' . . .  
'Did he look at you like this?' said Hilda, making a rubbery grimace and widening her eyes to make saucers of incomprehension.  
'He wore a coat and tie like any man, and received me very civilly.'  
'Did you make him presents of coloured glass beads?'  
(*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 86)

Hilda is not the only character in the novel who has this sort of negative notion of the black people. The novel gives another example through an old lady who is passing by Mary and Zachary. When Mary and Zachary are joking and laughing out loud on the road, an old English woman comes up and hits Mary in the face very hard.

Both of them laughed, and then a woman passing in the opposite direction lifted a blue-gloved hand and slapped Mary full in the face... He looked as if he might cry.

'Don't,' she said. 'It's not your fault.' (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 339)

The comparison between Hilda's understanding and that of Mary's is worth attention. While Hilda is the one who blames Zachary's skin colour for the treatment he gets from society, when Mary is herself hit in the face in the scene above, she tries to soothe Zachary by claiming that this incident has nothing to do with Zachary himself as a person and that it is about his skin colour. She means that it has to do with the old woman's prejudices and that the woman is angry with Mary for mixing, not with Zachary for being there. Another example from daily life, is when a taxi driver forces them to get out of the taxi after Mary comments on the way the driver looks at Molly, who is also one of Mary's pupils, and Zachary:

Molly put her head on Zachary's shoulder and fell asleep. He looked out at the city. The driver watched them in the rear view mirror with an expression of perfect disgust. When it became tedious, Mary gave the man a bright smile and said, 'They are from Timbuktu, you know. I got them for six strings of coloured beads and a daguerreotype of the king. Didn't I do well?'

The driver reddened. 'I would of kept the beads.'

'I would *have* kept the beads,' said Mary, and now the man made them get out and walk the last half-mile.

'I thought I was the stupid one,' said Zachary.

Mary gave him a wounded look. 'Yes, but it is absolutely your fault for being as black as pitch, don't you see?'

He smiled, for the first time that day. (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 325)

Through using a third person omniscient narrator, Cleave wants to make his readers think that the taxi driver was really giving Molly and Zachary a nasty look, and this was not purely Mary's assumption. In the quotation given above, Mary herself comments on Zachary's black skin. The amused reaction that Zachary gives shows that he understands that it is sometimes not the

words that are used but the attitude behind them is the important factor in identifying negative racial discrimination. The novel shows here that a gaze upon the Other might have a more negative impact than words.

Alongside Mary, who sees Zachary as a human, and characters who possess negative ideas about black people, the novel presents another character, Tom, who is situated in between these. Tom is not as welcoming as Mary and Simone are, but he is not as harsh as Hilda, the old lady and the taxi driver. Tom seems to be positioning himself above the black skinned boy and the black people in general because he is upset by the fact that Mary dances with Zachary, a black schoolboy, and this conversation occurs between the two:

‘Don’t you think one crosses a line, slightly, when one actually dances with a nigger?’

‘Must you bring it up again? And don’t use that word. It’s cheap.’

‘Well it’s only an endearment, isn’t it? Like “Taffy” or “Jock”. If the child were Welsh and I called him “Taffy”, you wouldn’t blink.’

‘But the child is American. His father moved them here ages ago. Call him a Yank if you must.’

‘And that would be better because?’

‘Because “Yank” is proper noun and it takes a capital and America has a capital too, whereas “nigger” has neither. The day we allow the child his own country and lodge our ambassador in its principal city is the day I shall let you call him “Nigger”, and even then I shall jolly well expect to hear the capital N when you enunciate.’ (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 132-133)

This suggests that the actual differences between the ways people think occurs through the effort of questioning one’s own process of thinking. In order to “develop values of mutuality, inclusion, and responsibility, it is necessary to bridge distance or extend the scope of recognition” (Bennett 4). Bhabha suggests how this can be done: “Recognition . . . is the capacity to represent and regulate the ambivalence that arises when what is presented as fatedly ‘objective’, material, conditional—injustice, discrimination, poverty—is capable of

producing, in the interstices, an agency of empowerment, resistance, transformation” (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 13). Tom becomes the embodiment of this type of recognition. When he is compared to Hilda, he shows an effort to question his own fashion of thought. He has milder inclinations than Hilda’s on the subject of ethnicity, and thus the story shows us that the thinking towards ethnicity might change from person to person in the British community. In this scene, Mary is not the only one who questions black people’s being called niggers, but Tom also joins in the questioning process. This brings the opposing perspectives closer. Tom questions whether it would be better if he called Zachary by another name, and in this way shows how name calling is understood or excused by people. What Mary tries to point out is that if the black person is called a certain name with the purpose of defining his being, such as using the generic term “nigger”, this means that the white person has a degree of control over the black one, the power to define and to describe who the other party is. If a name such as Yank, taffy, jock, or even the word nigger itself is used as the name of recognized political identities with their own powerbase or, as she puts it, with the capital letter, to refer to an autonomous political or national affiliation, this means that the person is recognizing the other person’s equal right to a political (and independent) existence; and this lessens the white person’s sense of power over the Other, and only then can it be acceptable.

For a foreigner in a foreign land, the formation of identity is imposed by the nation’s predetermined values and ideal concepts, and members of the culturally power-holding groups define themselves in contradistinction to those who do not display these same tokens of cultural power (immigrants of different appearance or from very different cultures, for instance). As Bhabha notes, in a postcolonial context, “[t]he ambivalent identification of the racist world - moving on two planes without being in the least embarrassed by it, . . . - turns on the idea of man as his alienated image; not Self and Other but the otherness of the Self inscribed in the perverse palimpsest of colonial identity”

(*The Location of Culture* 44). Therefore, the outsider involuntarily needs to build a connection with the nation itself. At this point the nation is portrayed as the victim and any other factor that comes from the outside of its borders functions as an intruder that creates damage within the body of the nation. As the racial conflict within the whole novel is introduced through and centred on the character Zachary, it is important to have a look at how Zachary himself perceives his own situation. Even though he is a child, he is aware that the white people see him as the intruder of the “victimized nation”. He creates a wall between his world and that of the Others, as can be seen in this dialogue between Mary and Zachary:

The boy refused to smile. ‘They won’t want me in the countryside.’

‘Why on earth wouldn’t they?’

The pained expression children had, when one was irredeemably obtuse.

‘Oh, I see. Well, I daresay they will just be awfully curious. I suppose you can expect to be poked and prodded at first, but once they understand that it won’t wash off I’m sure they won’t hold it against you. People are jolly fair, you know.’

(*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 12-13)

No matter how promising Mary’s words are, Zachary’s worries do not seem to be brushed off completely when he goes to the countryside, because as Bhabha states, he lives in a “paradoxical community”

that is caught in a historical temporality of partial and double identifications that exist side-by-side in Ethical and Political life—at once “same and other”; at once indigenous and foreign; at once citizen and alien; at once *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli*. Such alternating and iterative aspects of civil society do not represent equivalent choices of life or structures of community. (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 2)

Within this paradoxical community, he cannot see himself as the citizen, he can only be the alien. When Simone and he crash into each other accidentally while they were walking, his first expectation is to be beaten up or being



scolded at. When however, he sees Simone's reaction to him, he is completely surprised.

He had been alone since September, until a week ago when Simone had brushed past him. He braced himself for the scratch or the slap, but instead she had turned and given him a quick half-smile—right there in the classroom, where anyone might notice.

The next day she had touched his hand at morning break.

'Zachary? Don't be sad.'

He was surprised three ways. One, to realize he was sad. Two, that someone had noticed it before he did. And three, that someone talked to him. He had stood there, perfectly still, watching her walk away. (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 109)

Recognition is the key factor determining whether a person can transform from an outsider to an insider, for Bhabha. "Is this an existential anxiety in the face of what seems alien or foreign? Or does such an affect of alienation mask the annihilatory strategy of the Imperialist? Is it self-protection or self-projection" (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 8)? However this does not mean that the right to be an insider is not earned through looking down on others; it rather means to be chosen.

The thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being. (*Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* 25)

Zachary acquires his identity through the recognition of the others around him or the absence of this recognition. Zachary realises that he is sad only after Simone points it out. Cleave shows the white people's inclination to impose the image of sadness upon the black ones. Simone in this scene is the representation of the people who claim that the black skinned people are

coming from a source of agony, and that black people must be sad because of this. This is an example of the misrecognition that Taylor mentions in the quotation above; as it imprisons Zachary in a “false, distorted, and reduced mode of being”. This misrecognition is the reason why the reasons of his surprise are presented in this order. Before getting surprised by the fact that someone was talking to him, Zachary’s main concern is that another person makes him realise that he is sad. A white person’s realising that he is sad before he himself does suggests that the black identities are shaped according to the gaze and the rendering of the white person. This indicates that black people’s feelings and thoughts are interpreted or even shaped by white people’s perspectives. The fact that Simone is presented as the one with the whitest skin in the countryside is another tool used to enhance the power of Simone on Zachary and her influence on him. The whiter she is, the more defining power she gets. This is how Zachary sees Simone: “He thought about her now: her dirty brown hair and chipped teeth. Her skin, lighter than other children’s. . . . He let his thoughts go away with it for a while: imagining being so white that people teased you” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 110). Zachary is having a hard time imagining that people can get teased because of their whiteness just as Mary teased him for being “black as pitch”, and he struggled to see them in this way, just as people like Hilda can scarcely see the black people as fellow human beings. There are an I and a they in his mind, but the ingredients of those two separate halves cannot change places. How his world is divided into two hemispheres, I and Others, is shown at the scene when Simone wants to kiss him:

She said, ‘should I kiss you?’  
He pulled his hand away. ‘No.’  
‘But why?’  
‘You don’t know what they’d do, the others.’ (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 113)

As is depicted in the quotation above, what Zachary is actually afraid of is being seen by those ones that he calls as Others. He is not afraid of the action

itself but of the possibility that the action might be seen by the Others. This suggests that what he is actually afraid of is the gaze of the Other and being judged and defined by those Other ones. Zachary thinks that the walls between his world and that of the Others can protect him from the gaze of the white people. His father also thinks that if the black people are invisible to the eyes of these whites, they will not be bothered by them as he states here: “We are forgiven our skins, you see, so long as no one – officially – notices” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 396). Recognition in this sense is itself problematic. Though the foreigner feels guilt and that he is unwanted, his demand for recognition might connote that he demands to empower his identity, as Bhabha states:

The recognition of the subject as ‘same and other’ complicates Ethical Life with the recognition of ‘the rights of others—aliens, residents and citizens,’ and, as such, is incompatible with the representation of the nation’s people as *e pluribus unum*. Recognition, in the realm of minorities, is most often a claim to authority for an emergent subject, or a group that seeks to empower its new collective identity. (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 2-4).

However, in both Zachary’s and his father’s reactions to their own situations, neither of them has any expectation to be fully accepted by the British society they are in. They both want to be invisible to the gaze of the Others.

In the novel, there’s only one character who has the desire to not only observe but also help those who are not accepted by society. This character is Mary. No matter what she is told by the people around her, she believes that she has a mission. This is why she does not leave Zachary alone and writes those letters to him in the first place. She says: “Oh, I hope I don’t teach. Because look what we did: we saved the zoo animals and the nice children, and we damned the afflicted and the blacks. You know what I do every day in that classroom? I do everything in my power to make sure those poor souls won’t learn the obvious lesson” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 135). As it can

be seen here, what she is trying to do is to create a fake environment for those who are rejected by the British community. The novel, however, shows that what Mary is trying to do might be a futile attempt. It makes the reader question whether Mary's attempt is genuine and whether it can actually change Zachary's and the other kids' lives. The answers may be negative as Hilda suggests the possible outcome: "You'd make the boy an exile from his people, and you pariah among yours. It would be miserable for both of you" (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 229). Mary is not aware of the possibility that while she attempts to change Zachary's life, she herself can end up being bothered and disrespected by the society. This can make her lose all of powerful instruments she possesses such as social status and money, and thus, in turn, deprive her of the ability to actually make a change in the children's lives. The story thus raises the question of whether it is really useful to start working from the individual basis to resolve racial conflict within the British community. The question is whether improvement in behaviour should start from the general and move to the personal or vice versa in order to solve the racial conflict. Mary defends her decision to help individuals, even if Hilda calls them "no hoppers", because, as she says: "I want a better world, you want better hair" (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 84). Mary might be a delusional idealist who does not understand how deeply ingrained and wide spread discrimination is in the world (the "no-hoppers" she is teaching are physically and mentally damaged children), and she may not know the place to start, but she believes in progress. In the relationship between Mary and Zachary; and just as it was in the relationship between Sarah and Little Bee, changing the world may not be that easy, however, the novels strongly indicate that these individuals' efforts are doomed.

Though in *Incendiary* there's no conflict centred around a black character, the novel nevertheless focuses on the ethnic conflict and lack of understanding between the two different communities: Islamic societies and the white non-Muslim British community around which the plot is situated in

the novel. The unnamed protagonist writes letters to Osama bin Laden after his followers bombed people at a football stadium. Cleave chose to give the story through a first person narrator who is also the protagonist of the novel. The protagonist criticizes the society she lives in, and the biggest conflict she experiences is concerned with the problem of class in British community which I will analyse in the chapter of class. In this chapter, I will look at the perspective and experiences of the narrator/protagonist which are related to ethnic differences.

In her unsent letters, the protagonist creates an imagined bond with Osama bin Laden by speaking to him with familiarity. At the beginning of the novel she states that she is not going to blame only him for the terrorist attack. She says that if there is a crime and if there will be someone to be found guilty, then this guilt should be shared by both the Western and the Eastern communities; by both the non-Muslim world and the Muslim world. She says: "I know you can love my boy Osama. The sun says you are an evil monster but I don't believe in evil I know it takes 2 to tango. I know you're vexed at the leaders of Western imperialism. Well I'll be writing to them too" (*Incendiary* 4).

For Bhabha, society is divided into groups and then into individuals and the individuality of the people forms groups and the groups form society. Bhabha claims that the distance in-between needs to be unbridgeable and the differences should remain unruffled, yet this does not mean that one should be indifferent to those differences; it rather suggests that they should be underlined. "There emerges the challenge to see what is invisible, the look that cannot 'see me', a certain problem of the object of the gaze that constitutes a problematic referent for the language of the Self" (*The Location of Culture* 47). In *Incendiary*, the protagonist seeks to find and underline these referents to the invisible that constitute the language of the Self. The protagonist defends the idea that the terrorist attack in which her husband and son were killed might have its roots in imperialism, which affect both the

Eastern and the Western worlds. Her anger is not entirely focused on the Muslim world. When she looks at the British civilization and how British people see the May Day bomb victims, she says: “My husband was what the sun would call a QUIET HERO its funny how none of them are NOISY I suppose that wouldn’t be very British” (*Incendiary* 11). The words that British nationalist press would typically use to describe her dead husband bother her. In the language of stereotypical British nationalism, being quiet is a virtue whereas openly expressing one’s feelings and making one’s voice heard are seen as unheroic or unBritish. This is something the protagonist finds hard to accept. The fact that the plot line and the letter written by the protagonist start right after the attack makes the readers know the narrator only after the attack. What the readers see, then, is a protagonist who is defined by a loss in her recent past. She represents working class Londoners, and she has a critical mind. As the typical stereotype of the cockney, she is a very clever and logical but uneducated and witty person. The dialogue between Jasper and her shows that she represents not only Londoners but also post-bomb London itself:

- Where to Jasper?
- I don’t know. Anywhere that isn’t London. Jasper stroked my cheek.
- Everywhere is London, he said. For us. Don’t you see? We are London. Anywhere we could go you’d always be grieving and I’d always be. Well. (*Incendiary* 305)

Throughout the novel, the protagonist possesses the idea that welcoming each other totally is nothing but a utopia as she says here:

Your twin towers attack or just 2 blokes arguing over a cab fare it’s all the same. All the violence in the world is connected it’s just like the sea. When I see a woman shouting at her kid in Asda car park I see bulldozers flattening refugee camps. I see those little African boys with scars across the tops of their skulls like headphones. I see all the lost tempers of the world I see HELL ON EARTH. (*Incendiary* 13)

The protagonist/narrator is a character who is deeply critical of the “developed” society. Her trauma has opened up her previously ego-centred anxieties to include the whole planet. The novel focuses on criticising the unquestioning nature of those who do not share her vision. The nameless protagonist becomes both the embodiment of the common British populace and its critic, as she speaks against the unthinking mentality of the British world; as she says: “Well Osama I sometimes think we deserve whatever you do to us. Maybe you are right maybe we are infidels. Even when you blow us into chunks we don’t stop fighting each other” (*Incendiary* 71). The “we” she refers to is the British.

In the novel, Jasper, Petra, the protagonist and Terrence Butcher are all white, though they are of different classes. Apart from Osama bin Laden, the only Muslim character whom the protagonist talks about/knows is Mena who is her nurse in the hospital. She says: “Mena was my favourite nurse. She was a nice girl. She lived in Peckham but her family was from the East. Kazakhstan or Uzbekistan or one of those Stans anyway” (*Incendiary* 86). The fact that she cannot recognize or even feel the need to make a difference between the ex-Soviet countries is important. The countries whose names end with -stan might possess very different features and differ within each other culturally.

They say you are a FIEND Osama but like I say I don’t believe a word of it. I’ve seen you in your videos. You give me the shivers and you look like a gentleman... They say you believe in paradise. They say you believe that if your people kill anyone innocent then you’re doing them a favour because they will go to be with Allah. I wouldn’t know about that. (*Incendiary* 27)

Who those people that she refers to as *they* are, and how credible what they say are questionable matters. The narrator shows that the information people have about each other’s religion and culture is based upon the things that they hear, and these rumours are unreliable, maybe even misleading. However, in the novel

none of these characters show an attempt to better know and acknowledge the different cultures within their own society, not even the journalists. This example from the novel can be read in the light of what is suggested by Bhabha: the society should diminish the borders between the self and the other; it should not seek to abolish them first. It also shows the hypocrisy of the host nation. While the nation presents the ethnic Other an invitation, it also requires conditions which he should abide by. “The law of hospitality is anxiously driven between the ethics of unconditional invitation and the politics of conditional interdiction—visas; entry permits; refugee tribunals; the border-police” (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 5). How, after May Day, Mena and all the British Muslims become subject to harsh treatment because of their religion is an example of this. Mena explains this to the protagonist:

- It matters if you’re Asian, said Mena.
- You what?
- Look, she said. My family is Muslim right. Do you have any idea what it’s been like for us? I don’t think you can imagine how it feels for me just to walk to work since May Day. To see the hate in people’s eyes when they look at me. I have become the enemy number one. There’s this one cafe I walk past on my way here. The builders and the market traders go there. This morning I saw this old man in there. He must have been 80. He was reading the paper and the headline on the paper was the CRUELTY OF ISLAM. He looked up when I walked past and he sneered at me. He actually curled his lips. That is the nature of this madness. It fills the sky with barrage balloons and people’s eyes with hate. (*Incendiary* 90)

After this conversation, Mena and all Muslim public sector workers are fired. The protagonist reacts to this very harshly:

- Hello. What happened to Mena?
- They stopped her working didn’t they? said the new nurse.
- Come again?
- Muslim wasn’t she? Security risk. They suspended all of them from working as of midnight. This country’s finally starting to get it. Don’t get me wrong. I’m sure 99% of the



Muslims are fine but if you can't trust some of them you can't trust any of them can you? (*Incendiary* 91)

What the new nurse says is important. Her statement is illogical in its core but representative of hard-core nationalism everywhere. This statement has no difference than saying that one percent of the women are cheating on their husbands, so husbands should not trust their wives.

The concept of the Otherness bears two different and yet parallel meanings in itself: the first is that it uses enforcement on the person to inseparably belong to a group; and the second is that it puts emphasis upon the inevitable detachment of the person from the group. "The realm of the paradoxical . . . belongs neither to the one nor the Other. It is an interstitial realm of the in-between—a space and time of 'thirdness'" (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 6). The same can be claimed for smaller groups of people mingling with larger groups. *Incendiary* has a protagonist who becomes aware of the wrong perceptions dominant in the British society, and it shows how this protagonist's response to grief and trauma is a need to understand which, in a society where ignorance has become evident, means that she turns to creating an imaginary bond with Osama bin Laden himself. The actual reason that causes this detachment is the force and the pressure used by the community upon the person to be a part of some larger unit. The impossibility of existing as an individual in a single unit, conforming thoroughly to the communal unit, is responsible for the creation of the Other. The isolation that is brought up by such enforcement creates an infinite circle where the person is left alone seeking a ground parallel to the unit's to stand on. She says: "It sounds silly Osama but sometimes I'm pleased your people blew them up together" (*Incendiary* 29). Regarding the questions she has in her mind, there is no one who can provide her with satisfying answers, and this leads her to conduct a mental conversation with Osama bin Laden rather than anyone from her own society despite the fact that what she does is bound to fail. The balance that she seeks is not easy to accomplish, since the more the person tries, the more

the possibility of failure is. Given the circumstance that the search for those parallel grounds is bound to fail, and the possibility of success should remain a utopia as Bhabha states: “Recognition—without which it would be difficult to take responsibility for hospitality in either of its modalities—is a problem of negotiating Alterity, not a matter of accommodating diverse cultures or multiple identities” (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 7). The conversation between her and Terence Butcher is also important because it shows how her serious questions are answered rather simplistically and in a mocking manner, by someone from her own world.

– You really think it was Islam that killed my husband and my boy?

Terence Butcher stopped smiling.

– Well, he said. It wasn’t the Easter Bunny. (*Incendiary* 136)

Through her seeking a bond with Osama bin Laden, she continually puts an emphasis upon the importance of true understanding that creates the backbone of the novel. At the end of the novel, she tells Osama:

I’ve told you all about the sadness of bombs so now you must give them up. I know you are a clever man Osama much brighter than me and I know you have a lot of things to get done but you ought to be able to get it done with love that’s my whole point. . . . Come to me Osama. Come to me and we will blow the world back together with INCREDIBLE NOISE AND FURY. (*Incendiary* 338)

In this already structured and bordered world, however, the possibility of a healthy interaction becomes questionable. The economic and behavioural solutions are useless: “Money, it is true, neutralizes cultural differences, but it does so by enforcing inequality. Politeness and civility sound like rather feeble and old-fashioned tools when it comes to containing the growing global pressure of cultural differences” (Assman 73). Rather than rubbing off the edges, the recognition of those edges is desired as those edges are depicted as fundamental elements of the person’s identity:

In detail this means to conceive of a “polytopic and supple society” that resists the sovereignty of the nation-form without repudiating its regulatory and administrative authority, provides a useful perspective on the “drama of recognition” as it is staged in the social and institutional conditions of alterity—the strangeness, the foreignness—that shape the alienating real of migrant or minority settlement, the habitus of the homeless. (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 2-3)

This perspective of Bhabha gives the nation a different empowerment than that of the one that seeks to control the minorities and the migrant populace within. In this respect, the nation should be devoid of its higher and controlling position and should not seek to administrate or to regulate the minorities. This is the most significant idea of *Incendiary*. The novel shows that communication and understanding can be solutions to the problem of Othering on universal grounds. Thus Cleave indirectly advises the readers and individuals and society that they should be empathetic of each other and understand each other’s pains, as the protagonist says:

In my dream Osama I wrote you this letter and you read it and then you went off behind a rock where your men couldn’t see you and you cried and you wished you hadn’t killed my boy. It made you too sad now. You didn’t feel angry any more you just felt very tired. . . . So all you men just told your people to pack it in and go home. And that was it. It was over. There was just a load of old fox holes filling up with the rain and empty basements with the jihad graffiti slowly going back with mildew. (*Incendiary* 297)

The novel suggests that being empathetic of each other’s sorrows and what the Others feel is the key point in solving the issue of Othering. It is, however, presented merely as a dream in the quotation given above. It is ideal, but it is still a dream, just like Little Bee’s fleeting vision of children playing in the waves or Mary’s attempts to change the world. This means that it is still very far from being a reality and perhaps never can be a reality.

To conclude this chapter, in his three novels that are studied in this chapter, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee*, and *Everyone Brave is Forgiven*, Cleave shows

his readers that there will always be a gap between different cultures, ethnicities and colours. Cleave questions and analyses different potential ways to close this gap in his three novels. In *Incendiary*, he suggests the path of communication and understanding; however he also shows that this is only a dream not the reality yet. In *Everyone Brave is Forgiven*, he questions whether the person should start from the personal level or from the general grounds, and in which case the person can be more functional in the mission of solving the problem of Othering. In *Little Bee*, he presents fleeting image of the ideal world in an almost Blakean vision of black and white children frolicking in the waves, suggesting, perhaps, that the future is our best hope.

## CHAPTER 3

### ENGLISH SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIAL CLASS OTHERING

Cleave's three novels *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* and *Everyone Brave is Forgiven* make commentaries on the social class problems in England. In this chapter I will seek to identify some of the social class issues raised in the three novels in the light of Karl Marx's and Terry Eagleton's works. I will start with *Incendiary*, the earliest of three novels, because class is a major theme in this novel, more so than in the other two. The novels show some of the class divisions in England, illustrating a gap between different groups of people who belong to different social classes, and demonstrate that people are subject to Othering because of their class. Through scenes that provide very clear, even extreme examples of class divisions, the novels show that class attitudes are not easy to change, and that a person's first attempt should be not to change things, but to question the shortcomings and advantages that the class system might own and exhibit.

For Marx, the history of societies consists of class struggles. In his *Communist Manifesto* he writes: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (SW 35), and the reason why the classes are in conflict in the post-feudal world is because of the history of material production. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, he states that the very definition of a class relies upon its being distinguished from other classes: "In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class" (SW 172). *Incendiary* provides an examination and comparison of the working class and the professional middle classes in London at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Alongside the ethnic Othering that is shown as dominant in the lives of the English people in London after a terrorist attack, the protagonist of the novel observes and

narrates characteristics and differences between the social classes and the Othering that she and the other characters experience. The protagonist is an ill-educated East-End London housewife who is widowed by the attack, and throughout the novel she shows that it is wrong for non-Europeans to envy or loathe the lives of the English people because they do not know what life is really like in England: it is wrong for non-Europeans to assume that people who live in London live better lives than those who live in developing countries, for instance. The protagonist shows that many Londoners have poor living conditions, and that they do not have lives to be envious of. In her letter to Osama bin Laden, the protagonist tries to change his perspective, and tells him that London is not a place of luxury which he should despise. At the beginning of the novel, in her letter to Osama, the protagonist says:

London looks like a rich place from the outside but we are most of us very poor here. I saw the video you made Osama where you said the west was decadent. Maybe you meant the west end? We aren't all like that. London is a smiling liar his front teeth are very nice but you can smell his back teeth rotten and stinking.

My family was never rotten poor we were hard up there's a difference. We were respectable we kept ourselves presentable but it was a struggle I don't mind telling you. We were not the nice front teeth or the rotten back teeth of London and there are millions of us just like that. The middle classes put up web sites about us. If you're interested Osama just put down Kalashnikov for a second and look up chav pikey ned or townie in Google. Like I say there are millions of us but now there's a lot less than there were of course. I miss them so bad my husband and my boy especially. (*Incendiary* 5)

In the quotation given above, the protagonist points out that in her experience London constituted of at least 4 economic classes—the “rotten poor,” the “poor,” “the middle classes” and, by implication, “the rich”. She is identified by her language and self-description as “poor” and working class. As stated in the quotation above, there are two different sides of London: the west end and the east end, with the west end referring to certain districts west of Westminster that are traditionally associated with wealthier people. The protagonist belongs to the

east end, which means that she comes from East of Westminster where people of lower income traditionally live although she recognizes that the middle classes have started to buy property in this district, too. The novel clearly identifies the middle class-ization or “gentrification” of previously poorer streets. She states that if Osama bin Laden wanted to bomb the east end of London, then he was wrong in his thinking. The reason behind this is suggested by the protagonist as the fact that people from this part of London do not live in great conditions, and they do not have any different life styles than that of a person who lives in one of the developing countries. The resemblance she makes in the quotation above is worthy of attention. She states that as people of working class, she and her family belong neither to the nice front teeth nor the rotten back teeth of London. The shiny and white teeth represent the upper or middle class English society, and they are few in number. Like shiny front teeth, they serve a beautiful image which may hide the reality of poverty and bad living conditions that others experience. She states that she and her family do not belong to the poorest groups that are mentioned as rotten teeth. The rotten teeth connote a bad image as well as a bad smell; her identification of her family as “respectable” implies that the “rotten” section of society is not respectable as well as poor. This passage suggests that the poorest people in London are kept hidden from the media and the tourists; they are kept out of the travel brochures that advertise London as an attractive place to visit. The metaphor implies that the poorest people can be detected by their bad smell, showing a form of class discrimination even within the classes.

The novel analyzes in detail possible relations between a psychologically damaged working class girl and a pair of middle class journalists. One of the first things that the protagonist narrates in the novel is her living space. She lives in Barnet Grove, and she describes her district in this way:

There are 2 kinds of places on Barnet Grove. . . . The second kind of places are places like ours. They are flats in dirty brick tower blocks they smell of chip fat inside. All the flats in each block are

the same except that the front doors don't match on account of they get kicked in as often as they get opened nicely. They built our tower blocks in the fifties. They built them in the gaps where the Georgian gems had incendiaries dropped on them by Adolf Hitler. . . . I suppose it was thanks to him we could afford to live Within A Stone's Throw Of The Prestigious Columbia Road Flower Market so maybe Adolf Hitler was not all bad in the long run. (*Incendiary* 5-6)

The aim behind this action can be seen as an attempt to cover the historical past of the city. Her apartment was one of those with a low prestige in the district. The protagonist also comments on the lack of aesthetics in the building she lives in. This is a socially deprived area where crime and hooliganism is rampant—that is the implication. Doors in expensive parts of town are rarely kicked in. Compared to her deceased husband's reaction to the place they live in, and to her ownership of the property, she seems to possess a more positive response to that neighbourhood. She says: "It used to drive my husband crazy but at least our flat was warm and clean and it was ours. It was an ex-council flat which is to say we owned it. Which is to say we didn't have to struggle to pay the rent. We struggled to pay the mortgage each month instead there is a difference and that difference is called EMPOWERMENT" (*Incendiary* 6-7). They feel that they are acting on their own authority, and they feel more autonomous. They do legally own it while they pay, and once they have finished paying. Having their own choice and will, and being able to pay the mortgage gives them empowerment. This suggests the idea that empowerment makes the protagonist and the social class she represents in the novel feel that they are investing their money according to their own will and demand. The class divisions in London are literally concretized in the houses that people live in. The following commentary of the protagonist on the comparison which she makes between her living space and that of the middle class journalist Jasper Black, who lives in one of the gentrified "Georgian gems" on the other side of the road, is worthy of attention:

-Where are you living? he said.



-On the Wellington Estate on the corner of Wellington Row. With my husband.  
-That's funny, said Jasper Black. You live right across the road from me. I see the Wellington Estate from my window.  
-Bet that hasn't done anything for your house price.  
-I'm sure its nice inside, he said.  
-It's alright. At least we don't have a view of the Wellington Estate. (*Incendiary* 23)

Her tower block does not have any visual appeal, even though she is house-proud and feels at home in her own flat. In contrast the wealthier Jasper's house "was one of those Georgian gems. It was very nice and tidy inside I suppose he must have had a cleaner" (*Incendiary* 25). It should be noted that the beautiful Georgian buildings are appreciated by the narrator, just as she knows that her building is ugly, and as well as the evident "symbolism" of these two contrasting buildings being in the same street and within line of sight of each other.

For Eagleton, the social being is formed through relations. Humans exist in a "set of relations, material conditions, social institutions" (*Marx and Freedom* 6), and this is reflected in the protagonist/narrator in *Incendiary* relating her own social standing to the material realms within which she exists. After giving details about her living space, she moves to talking about the car she and her husband owned to define further the social class she belongs to. She says: "We mostly had Vauxhall Astras they never let us down. They used to sell off the old police Astras you see. They'd give them a respray but if the light was right you could always see POLICE showing out from under the paint job. I suppose a thing can never really change its nature Osama" (*Incendiary* 8). She suggests that the class the person belongs to will not change no matter of the clothing and of the painting the surface provides, just as she will try to change herself into Petra Sutherland in the following pages of the novel, but then reject the complete change of her class identity that this is leading to. The early description of their cars foreshadow what she will go through when she pretends to be a Petra Sutherland (Jasper's Partner) though her heart is never in it. Her endeavour to be a Petra Sutherland and her rejection of that endeavour are parts of a process of a

new “self-understanding”. Eagleton defines this as “the kind of understanding of one’s own situation that a group or individual needs in order to change that situation. . . . But to know yourself in a new way is to alter yourself in that very act; so we have here a peculiar form of cognition in which the act of knowing alters what it contemplates” (*Marx and Freedom* 4). In her becoming conscious of and experimenting with her class standing, she alters herself within and through this act of knowing. She says, looking at the mirror imitating Petra:

Dear Osama I could have been Petra Sutherland.

I looked at myself in Petra’s dressing table mirror. I was putting her Sisley’s Lychee Glossy Gloss on my lips. I pressed my lips together mmm mmm. I am Petra Sutherland I said. I wouldn’t need to work if I didn’t simply adore my job. I can do whatever the hell I please. (*Incendiary* 239)

As Eagleton puts it, humans are endeavouring to turn themselves into a reality other than the person that they already are. Thus, it can be said that the subject is in a constant movement of becoming. This makes the human productive and makes him utilise his powers to change the world: “In developing my own individual personality through fashioning a world, I am also realizing what it is that I have most deeply in common with others, so that individual and species-being are ultimately one. My product is my existence for the other, and presupposes the other’s existence for me” (*Marx and Freedom* 27). However, in the protagonist/narrator’s case, this is not so. She is not trying to develop or change her personal reality. Putting on expensive make up and imitating the way Petra talks and dresses is just a moment’s make-believe, it does not mean that she can be a Petra, even though both Jasper and Petra believe she must want to be. The only material conduct that she puts forward is her physical appearance, which closely resembles Petra’s. The reason for this can be because she does not relate herself to an ordinary Other; she relates herself to Petra who resembles her physically. In this respect, she fails in Marx’s discourse of class identification because for Marx, when the subjects try to understand themselves, they lose their identicalness to themselves. Once the person goes through the process of

understanding, the self, which makes the act of understanding, is different from what it was before. The protagonist, however, cannot experience this. She is that nameless east ender woman, who, like the police cars whose original identities are visible through a new coat of paint, will not be able to hide her original identity. What Petra's world consists of is presented in the quotation below:

- You're having a laugh aren't you? I haven't got the money to shop at Harvey Nichols I'm an Asda girl.
- It's not a problem said Petra. I have money. It'll be my treat. . . . Then think of it this way, she said. I am Petra Sutherland. I can do whatever the hell I please. (*Incendiary* 218)

In the quotation given, they are going to shop at Harvey Nichols as Petra suggests that she will guide the narrator in renewing her wardrobe. When Petra offers to pay for the clothes, the narrator says that she will not be able to accept Petra's offer. Petra, however, answers her saying that she can do whatever she pleases. Petra, as a person who lives within a social structure, nevertheless has to follow its rules, and it is probable that, due to the social restrictions of her society she will not, in fact, be able to do whatever she desires. The confident response she gives to the protagonist, however, shows that she holds a certain social power, and this power puts her in a higher position than the protagonist. This power is not only due to her higher income, as can be observed in a later conversation between the two women in which Petra refers to social or economic position, which the narrator purposely reinterprets in a more personal and human or individualised sense:

- Oh come on, said Petra. Don't tell me a woman in your position can turn down that kind of money.
- Listen Petra a woman in my position could wallpaper her flat with money it wouldn't make a difference. It's all just pictures of the queen to me. Without my boy to spend it on that's all your precious money is Petra. Crappy little pictures of the Queen. (*Incendiary* 281)

As is suggested in this quotation, the money that will be given to the protagonist will not enable her to reach the confidence that Petra possesses because she has

been emotionally destroyed, and also because—according to Marx—labour is what creates class divisions, not money. For Marx, the object that is produced by labour is alien to its producer. The labour itself is alienated, and this: “(1) estranges nature from man and (2) estranges man from himself, from his own active function, from his vital activity; because of this it also estranges man from his species. It turns his species-life into a means for his individual life. Thus, the separation of the individual from the communal whole happens” (*Early Writings* 328); therefore, the money will not be enough to change the protagonist’s situation. The fact that her child was killed at the stadium by the bombers will not be changed however much money she has. Covering the walls with the wallpapers made of money resembles the example of the cars that show the *Police* label underneath the paint. She is saying that “money” is crappy to her now because it cannot give her what she needs—her son and her husband. This has nothing to do with social position.

*Incendiary* focuses on the issue of freedom of the different classes within the English society. For Marx, though the person should feel free when he produces freely, the material need that the person wishes to satisfy is what hinders his freedom. “We are most human and least like the other animals when we produce freely, gratuitously, independent of any immediate material need. Freedom, for Marx, is a kind of creative superabundance over what is materially essential, that which overflows the measure and becomes its own yard-stick” (*Marx and Freedom* 6). The novel suggests that it would be pretentious to assume that there is a “class war”. It is not so confrontational, nor is it binary; and yet to assume that the different classes are completely free in the sense of making their own choices and that their problems are recognized would be wrong. This can be observed in the following conversation between the protagonist, Petra and Jasper:

- Jasper’s right. The government doesn’t give a monkeys about people like my husband and my boy.
- Petra shook her head.
- That’s just paranoid I’m working class there’s a difference.

- Oh please Petra. Don't make this into a class war. It's the war against terror.

- Yeah and it's no different from any other war. You ever wondered why an East End girl like me hasn't got much in the way of family? Well here's the reasons Petra. World War I. World War 2. Falklands War. Gulf War I. Gulf War 2 and the War on Drugs. You can take your pick because I lost whole bloody chunks of my family in all of them. That's war Petra. This one's no different. The people who die are people like me. And the people who survive. Well I'm sorry Petra but the people who survive are people like you. And you're so used to surviving you don't even notice you were bloody well doing it. (*Incendiary* 267-268)

She suggests that the people from the poorer section of society cannot experience freedom. There is obviously some sense in which the narrator means that the poorer people are less likely to survive, but she can't mean that the middle classes didn't die since everyone knows they did. Perhaps by "people like me" she means damaged people, and "people like you" means people with super-confident personalities. She learnt that the government knew that the bombing was going to be done, and that they did not do anything to stop it letting those people be killed to prevent another probable bombing which may not be detected beforehand. This led her to think that some people are sacrificed, and that those people who are sacrificed in order to prevent the others from being hurt. She points out that her social class will always be the ones who are sacrificed. Through the protagonist's perspective, the novel suggests that changing the class system will take time by showing that even on a personal level the protagonist cannot benefit from what the money will provide her.

The society provides a privilege for those of the upper classes. Though this is not seen negatively by Marx, this should be true only when the society has overcome its material need. That is to say, as Eagleton points out: "Only when a society has achieved a certain economic surplus over material necessity, releasing a minority of its members from the demands of productive labour into the privilege of becoming full time politicians, academics, cultural producers and so on, can philosophy in its fullest sense flower into being" (*Marx and Freedom*

7). The distance that exists between the upper class and the working class is apparent in *Incendiary*. In order to make the contrast between the upper and the lower social classes more visible to the readers, *Incendiary* makes the protagonist have contact with the royal family, considering that the highest part of the English society is the English royal family. She meets Prince William at the hospital. Prince William visits the injured ones who stay at the hospital, and everybody around her at the hospital tries to make the protagonist presentable to the eye of the royal family member:

- Please can you get this one some makeup? He [the photographer] said.
- There, she said. You look lovely. Fit for a prince. (*Incendiary* 80)

As the expression *fit for a prince* that is used in the quotation given above indicates, the protagonist is seen as an object to please the eye of the people from the upper class on this occasion. She and the social class she represents are expected not to disturb the members of the upper class, which means that they should not produce a bad smell just as rotten teeth gives as I presented in the earlier pages of this chapter. If she has to be made more attractive just to be gazed at by a visitor, this makes her like a tourist attraction—like the London that Bin Laden thinks is “decadent”—so Prince William is seen as a foreigner or a tourist, who does not want to see the less attractive sides: or, rather, the hospital does not want to let him see the reality. She is lessened only to an image or an item. In this scene above, she is seen less than a person as the news report which is written after Prince William completes his visit indicates: “He was smiling. He was RELAXED BUT SINCERE. Well that’s what it said in the sun the next day. In the caption underneath the photo the photographer was taking from the end of my bed” (*Incendiary* 83). Though this was the image that was presented in the newspaper, the reality was not that positive in the protagonist’s confrontation with the prince.

Prince William stared at me while one of his men wiped my puke off his shoes. He had this strange expression on. It wasn't cross. It was far away and sad. You could see him thinking to himself well I suppose I am the prince of all this then. I am the prince of this poor blown-up kingdom and one day all these blown-up people will be my subjects and I'll be able to do nothing for them. I'll live in palaces pinning medals onto lawyers and architects while these people watch their tired faces get older each morning in dirty bathroom mirrors. It was that sort of an expression. (*Incendiary* 84)

In the quotation given above, the narrator imagines what Prince William's thoughts were, based upon her reading the expression on his face. As the protagonist is a member of the lower social class, it is important to note the way she pictures how the world of her social class is seen by the royalty. She pictures Prince William imagining the lower class people looking at their faces on dirty mirrors. As this passage is presented to the reader with a first person narrator, it can be claimed that the person who sees her class dirty is the protagonist herself not the prince. There are mentions of the royal family members through the rest of the novel. It is important to note the resemblance the narrator makes in the scene where, after the May Day attack, she and Jasper Black are going to the stadium together:

It was like this when Charles and Di got married. . . . The empty streets. The Royal Wedding. I was only a little girl but I remember the streets were empty like this. Everyone was inside watching it on telly weren't they? I went out in the middle of it to get sweets and it was just like this. It was like the world had stopped. (*Incendiary* 61-62)

The royal wedding was an important media event in England. In this passage, the protagonist likens a terrorist attack to the wedding day, because they both made people sit and watch the news from their house on televisions. Both events got everybody's attention. The interest that people show to the royal wedding is the same with their interest in the bombing which is seen as a phenomenon to be watched from their comfortable and safe houses. People choose to watch the phenomenon from a distance, to detach themselves from the painful reality, and

to lessen this painful event to merely an image to be looked at. Later on the same day of the attack, the protagonist makes another comparison between May Day and the day Princess Diana died. She says: “It can’t be as bad as when Diana died. And we all got through that didn’t we” (*Incendiary* 62)? The death of the thousands including her own son and husband is compared to the death of a single person. The pronoun *we* in the quotation given symbolises the English society in general.

For Marx, the thought of freedom lies at the idea that the consciousness of the person is the core of the material need. The material need, in this sense, works as a hindrance against freedom of the working class. As I have pointed out earlier in this chapter, the protagonist in *Incendiary*, however, does not want to be freed of her working class standing. She does not desire a higher income. She does not have any place to use it. She only desires to be a bystander who is immune to the gaze of the people who are from higher classes and of those who have the potential to look down on her. When Petra takes her out to shopping, they get a cab, and this scene occurs:

I’d never seen a meter go past 50 before. It made me feel poorly Petra didn’t seem bothered. While she paid I stood on the pavement trying not to get in anyone’s way. . . . I stuck out like a sore thumb Osama. I was thinking you would of done too. Even if you weren’t wearing the beard and the AK47 I mean you’d still of been the only chap not wearing brogues and a Hermés jumper. (*Incendiary* 219-220)

She wants to disappear in the middle of the street. She points out that although Osama would get rid of his beard, his gun, and his belt of bullets, he would still not belong, which means that no matter of the ethnic differences as a foreigner from a different ethnicity Osama would not belong to the dominant social class in the neighbourhood, though he actually was an upper class Saudi; but he was not English upper or middle class.

Other than what the protagonist experiences in the novel, another example of class Othering is presented through the character Terrence Butcher.



His wedding ceremony and what he experienced on his wedding day are important to note. He narrates his wedding day in this way:

On my side of the congregation there were all my mates from the Force plus all their wives and girlfriends. They were a nice enough bunch but you could tell the suits were on hire if you know what I mean. Whereas on Tessa's side. The bride's side I mean. There were lawyers. Stockbrokers. An unbelievable number of ladies in hats. Their own hats I'm reasonably sure. . . . It looked less a congregation and more like the two sides lining up for the English civil war. I looked back at Tessa and I saw her looking out over the church too. She was trying to be brave but I could tell she'd just seen the same thing I'd seen. There it was. All laid out before us. (*Incendiary* 183-184)

The difference between the people from the working classes and the people from the middle classes are apparent in the way the bride and the groom perceive themselves and their guests. The fact that Cleave chose the word *brave* to describe what the bride is trying to be is worthy of notice. The usage of the word *brave* works as a foreshadowing of the fact that the clash of the two different classes in their marriage will affect the two characters in such a challenging way that they will find themselves fighting against the class system, and in their struggle what they will need is bravery. Their wedding is a production itself as Marx handles production as not merely a concept used in its economic sense: "Production for him is a richly capacious concept, equivalent to 'self-actualization', and to this extent savouring a peach or enjoying a string quartet are aspects of our self-actualization as much as building dams or churning out coat-hangers" (*Marx and Freedom* 26). The wedding scene, thus, works as the couple's self-actualization. In this wedding scene, it is also important to note that the couple is standing separately and distanced from the crowd of the guests. This suggests that the couple and the society are separated from each other at this stage which is the start of their fight against class Othering. This scene indicates individuals of any class may stand against class Othering.

Eagleton points out that culture is constructed upon only one thing: labour. Labour means exploitation for Marx. The society that is based on class

consciousness tends to deny this idea and claims that the society itself is a legacy of a previous culture. As Eagleton states, Marxism emerges out of capitalism as it already exists inherently within the capitalism itself. “*The Communist Manifesto* is prodigal in its praise of the great revolutionary middle class, and of that mighty unshackling of human potential which we know as capitalism” (*Marx and Freedom* 9). The scene where the protagonist, at the end of the novel, decides that she should find a job that suits her own class works as an example of Marx’s idea that labour defines and categorizes the society. After she gets out of the jail and starts work at Tesco’s to make a living. Her experience of finding the job, and what her response is to her new job can be read in the quotation below:

I got myself a job stacking shelves at the Tesco Metro on Bethnal Green Road.

I had to fill in an application form to get the job. It asked why I specially wanted to work at Tesco’s and I wrote BECAUSE MY HUSBAND AND MY BOY WERE RECENTLY BLOWN UP BY ISLAMIC TERRORISTS AND THIS HAD CAUSED A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS FOR ME BUT THE MOST URGENT NOW IS MONEY AND THAT IS WHY I WANT TO WORK AT TESCO’S ALSO BECAUSE IT IS CLOSE TO MY FLAT AND I WOULD MUCH RATHER STACK YOUR SHELVES FOR MONEY THAN GO ON THE GAME and then I threw that application form away and I took another one and wrote BACAUSE I AM A TEAM PLAYER AND I BELIEVE TESCO’S IS AN EXCELLENT COMPANY THAT RESPECTS TEAM WORK and they gave the job just like that. (*Incendiary* 324-325)

The contrast between the two different perspectives; which are what she actually thinks and what she writes to please the people who will hire her is worthy of attention. While the latter one means being a functioning but not a questioning part of the English society, the former one suggests being a person who questions the way the social structure works. What the novel suggests through the protagonist’s perspective is that to have a peaceful life, to make a living and to fit in the social structure, the person needs to conform to the notion of being a

part of a team which is the idea the protagonist puts emphasis upon in the latter version of the application form she presents to the firm.

Marx points out that “the bourgeoisie wherever it can, freed the man from his ties to the hierarchy which is conceptualized through the natural superiority of the other to the man. This superiority might be said to have existed and functioned through patriarchal, feudal relations. The bourgeoisie, thus, places money to the centre, and thus enabled money to have a more direct effect” (qtd. in *Marx and Freedom* 10). Relying on Marx’s presupposition that money has a direct effect on the social structure, it can be claimed that though *Incendiary* presents that the English society in London is divided into income, upbringing, and general cultural groups that coincide with social class, the novel shows that the income has a direct effect on the lives of poorer communities in London. This novel shows that the poor communities in London suffer from discrimination and Othering; and they have to live in relatively bad conditions. The following quotation can serve as a summary of what the novel shows through the protagonist’s perspective:

Were you amazed how cheap girls sell themselves in London?  
They’ll let you do them for the price of a happy meal for their kids  
most of them. Does it worry you like it worries me?

So if you saw both Londons Osama then tell me this.  
Which London is it that Allah especially hates? I’m asking  
because I don’t see how a tourist could hate both Londons. THE  
SNEERING TOFFS London and the EVIL CRACK MUMS  
London I mean. Sorry Osama for calling you a tourist I don’t  
mean to cause offence I’m just saying I don’t see how you can  
hate the whole of London unless you actually live here on less  
than 500 quid a week.

One thing you start to hate when you live in London is the  
way rich people live right next to you. They’ll suddenly plonk  
themselves right next door and the next thing you know your old  
street Is An Upcoming Bohemian Melting Pot With Excellent  
Transport Links which means there are posh motors boxing in  
your Vauxhall Astra every morning. (*Incendiary* 38-39)

*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* puts more emphasis upon class issues in English society, through the depiction of Londoners, but in an earlier era. There

is again a background of armed conflict and violence. The protagonist of the novel, Mary, is from an upper class family. When the Second World War breaks, Mary sees this as an opportunity to mix among the common people and to break away from the society she grew up in. In the process where the social life becomes complicated, the producers of labour create a more diverse version of labour, and thus, different forms of labour emerge and this process and its result are called the division of labour, for Marx. The problem in this concept, for Marx, lies, at the thought that it makes the person seem as if he has only one powerful talent rather than being the possessor of many different and diverse talents. As a result, the person is alienated even to himself. Therefore, the person loses his touch with the universal and exists only within the individual, peripheral realm. Mary, in *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, is an example of this loss of touch with the universal. As the daughter of an important upper class family, Mary needed to attend tea and lunch gatherings, which Mary saw as a sort of war itself:

The true art of war was small talk, in which Mary was wonderfully expert. War was declared at 11.15 and Mary North signed up at noon. She did it at lunch, before telegrams came, in case her mother said no. She left finishing school unfinished. Skiing down from Mont-Choisi, she ditched her equipment at the foot of the slope and telegraphed the war office from Lausanne” (*Everyone Brave is Forgiven* 3).

Her class consciousness continues even when she applies to the war office. She assumes that they will give her a position of a high status as Marx states: “Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life” (*German Ideology* 11). Her consciousness is shaped by the conditions of her class and thus her life pattern. What she expects can be seen in this quotation: “They would make her a liaison, or an attaché to a general’s staff. All the speaking parts went to girls of good family. It was even rumoured that they needed spies, which appealed most of all since one might be oneself twice over” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 4). She thinks that war is something positive as it creates chaos, and that it can erase

the boundaries between the classes which Mary questions; “One could say what one liked about the war but it had got her out of Mont-Choisi ahead of an afternoon of double French, and might yet have more mercies in store” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 9). She manages to convince her mother to join the war. After she is given a teaching position at a school for children, at the school she works, the headmistress questions her choice of working as a teacher considering the social class she is coming from. Such a conversation occurs between the two:

‘What inspired you to volunteer as a schoolmistress, Mary?’ . . .

‘I thought I might be good at teaching,’ she said.

‘I am sorry. It is just that young women of your background usually wouldn’t consider the profession.’

‘Oh, I shouldn’t necessarily see it like that. Surely if one had to pick a fault with women of my background, it might be that they don’t consider work very much at all.’

‘And, dear, why did you?’

‘I hoped it might be less exhausting than the constant rest.’

‘But is there no war work which seems to you more glamorous?’  
(*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 16)

This might be because the rest allows her enough time to think upon the class matters, and she may want a distraction from this thinking process. As the headmistress suggests, Mary as a member of the upper class is not seen fit for a non-glamorous job as teaching. Stating that a more glamorous job is fit for Mary, the headmistress suggests that Mary will not be able to fit in the requirements and the conditions of being a teacher at a school. The headmistress claims Mary will not be able to understand social status of the job as it is seen in this statement of her: “You have been doing the job for four days, and you think you understand. The error is a common one, and harder to correct in young women who have no urgent use for the two pounds and seventeen shillings per week” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 17). For the headmistress, the fashion of thinking that Mary possesses is a wrong one, and it will be hard to change Mary’s way of thinking. The headmistress suggests that Mary will fail in being a good teacher because Mary will not pay the same respect to the job as someone from a lower class will

do, and because Mary does not need either the job itself or the income it will provide her. This supports Eagleton's statement: "For Marx, what we say or think is ultimately determined by what we do" (*Marx and Freedom* 11).

In class societies, as Eagleton puts it, "the base of social relations is unjust, and contradictory" (*Marx and Freedom* 13) as it can be observed in the relationship between Mary and Tom; however, the war enables Mary, and it gives her the opportunity to take action following her ideas. Due to the war, she meets Tom and starts a relationship with him. Both Mary and Tom are aware that they experience something extraordinary, something that would not be possible if it was not for the war. As an education administrator Tom is from middle class. As Mary is from upper class, without war, the chance of their meeting and of getting into a relationship is low. This can be seen in what Tom says to Alistair:

The thing is, Alistair, I am keener on her than she is on me. I know she wants me to give her a job, and I fear that as soon as she realises I have no job to give her then she will be off. And then of course there is the issue of her social standing—since she is of an entirely different social class, and I cannot help but think that her interest in me might have more to do with what her family will think than with what she feels. But perhaps I am underestimating her. Perhaps you are thinking that I simply ought to take my courage in both hands and—(*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 70)

As the quotation above indicates, the rebellious ideas of Mary are noticed by her boyfriend Tom as well as the headmistress and her mother. Tom is suspicious that Mary might be willing to go out with him not because of how she feels but as a mere act of rebellion against her family. As I mentioned in the earlier pages of this chapter, in the wedding scene of Terrence Butcher and his wife, in *Incendiary*, the couple each of whom came from different social classes was depicted to be needing bravery to put up a struggle against the class awareness of the society they lived in. *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* shows the same concerns about class awareness in relationships. Both Tom and Mary need to possess bravery to face the social class conflict. The novel depicts that class Othering is

hard to be resolved so easily, and that a man and a woman who want to form a relationship between each other regardless of the fact that they are from different classes cannot escape hardships. The novel claims that there is still a long way to go before resolving the class problem. Mary also knows that war enabled them to be together:

She blew a smoke ring. ‘This war is amazing. Is that terrible to say?’ . . .

He said, ‘You’d have found something terrific, even without the war.’

‘You and I wouldn’t have been thrown together. Thinking about it makes my head spin. Imagine how many there are like us, at this moment, lying in bed because the war has brought them close. In Cairo. In Paris.’ (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 89-90)

Her resembling themselves to other couples in other places suggests that Mary is an international character who not only represents the English people, but also other people who live in other territories. The novel here draws attention to the fact that class Othering is not a problem which is specific to English society, and divisions between people exist in other countries, too.

In Marxist ideology, the value of the material good determines the value of ideas. The material good enables the intellectual good to be more prestigious: “The class which is the ruling material force of the society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it” (*German Ideology* 13). Therefore, it is not surprising that Mary is depicted as a character who is aware of her class. She has class consciousness. Her consciousness of her own class can be observed even in small details of her daily life, such as the way she thinks about rain. She likens the rain to champagne: “The raindrops were champagne bubbles bursting on her skin (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 76). This indicates that she is familiar with the luxury item, and it springs quite naturally to mind, and it also shows that an ordinary phenomenon such as rain takes the shape of luxurious material such as

champagne when it touches her skin. The pattern in which the individual relates himself to the nature and to one another is a legacy that passes from one generation to the next as Marx states in *German Ideology*. This generational legacy consists of “mass of productive forces, capital funds and conditions, which, on the one hand, is indeed modified by the new generation, but also on the other, prescribes for it its conditions of life and gives it a definite development, a special character. It shows that circumstances make men just as much as men make circumstances” (*German Ideology* 59). For Marx, the private property enables the individual to free his human senses and these senses “relate to the thing for its own sake, but the thing itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man, and vice versa. Need or enjoyment have therefore lost their *egoistic* nature, and nature has lost its mere *utility* in the sense that its use has become *human use*” (*Early Writings* 352) as in *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, Mary wants to adhere herself more to her social class, than to her human nature. Mary possesses not revolutionary ideas on the issue of class Othering, and she does not want to break free from her social class. She wants to use the advantage of her social standing. She thinks that being a member of upper class provides her with power, and she is aware of the power she holds. Her desire to take advantage of the power of her social standing can be observed in the following quotation where she reacts against the way Zachary and his skin colour are seen by English people:

‘You shouldn’t damn the whole England, you know, over what happened to one boy.’  
‘I shall damn as I please. What is the use of coming from a good family, if one cannot damn as the need arises?’ (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 132)

As it can be seen in the quotation given above, she knows that being from a good family provides her with a privileged situation within the society, and she thinks she might as well use them for the good. The novel shows that the upper class in English society have the notion that their not approvable behaviour or words should be excused by the society they live in, and that the lower class people



should live according to the set of values which are determined by the upper class people. She makes use of the power of her social status in the Ritz scene when she takes Zachary and Molly to the Ritz Restaurant which is, as it is depicted in the novel, an expensive place to eat, and usually people from higher class frequent to:

At the Ritz her father's name was good enough for a table, despite the unconcealed anguish of the staff from the head waiter down. Mary and the children were seated for lunch as far from the other guests as the great dining room permitted, but even so a couple objected and required to be moved to a more distant table. Mary gave them a wave.

'They're mine,' she explained loudly. 'From different fathers I think—one loses track.' (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 325)

The Ritz scene occurred after Mary found out Zachary and Molly had not been able to eat anything proper other than cookies for a long time. She brings them to the Ritz to make them eat; however, it does not seem to be a necessary action for her to bring the kids to a place like the Ritz. She could have brought the kids to another place that served the food she was looking for such as fruit, eggs and meat as this was her fundamental inquiry when she met the children in the first place: "When was the last time you ate eggs, meat, or fruit" (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 323)? This suggests that Mary's main concern is not to help the kids, but it is to make a point in front of the upper class public she will find at the Ritz. As Marx suggests, this shows that the individual is imprisoned within the logic of utilitarianism. Mary focuses on her action's befitting to her class standing rather than on its profit or benefit. "Under capitalism, our very senses are tuned into commodities, so that only with the abolition of private property would the human body be liberated and the human senses come into their own" (*Marx and Freedom* 23). This brings into mind Tom's statement in the quotation I presented earlier, in which he claimed that Mary's main concern is not to be in a compassionate relationship with him but it is about proving a point against her family who represent upper class society. She knew that her bringing the children to the Ritz would cause a problem for her. She knew that the people

would talk about the incident, and that her parents would hear of the incident. The novel suggests that this would help to her prove a point against her family. The reaction that she gives to the people's gaze which is addressed to the children is ironic. When a couple objects her being at the restaurant with the children, she says to them that the kids are hers, but probably as the kids are of different colours, she suggests that she conceived them from different fathers. Instead of saying this, she could have told them that she needs to give these children some food as she feels responsible for the malnutrition they suffer from. Considering that this scene occurs at the time of war, her explaining of the situation could have made people react in another and a more positive way. She was supposed to act in the way I mentioned if what she wanted to achieve was to change the negative perspective of the people who represent the upper class people at the restaurant. As she chooses to react in this way, she seems to be trying to make a scene to show that she is acting as a rebel against her family. After the news of this scene reaches her family, Mrs. North says to Mary: "You do understand that you cannot make a scene. Your father is this close to being called up to cabinet—he may return anytime and perhaps with a visitor. We are being careful not to display the wrong sort of periodicals, let alone . . . Well, there is no need to elaborate" (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 380). Here, Mrs. North cannot mention the scene at the Ritz. As this quotation indicates Mrs. North is aware that Mary is acting with the consciousness to act against her family and to prove a point. Though in the quotation I will present below the people Mrs. North refers to are black skinned people, this quotation can be studied in relation to the issue of class. The conversation below occurs between Mrs. North and Mary about Mary's relationship with the black skinned children:

'But then why? Of all the people a girl might consort with.'

'I am not consorting. I'm teaching.'

'Well it kills me that you are doing so on my shilling. At least their parents ought to pay you a wage. Or do they even have parents? One hears that the fathers in particular have no more

domestic feeling than do fishes.’ (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 382)

Mrs. North puts an emphasis upon the fact that Mary is financially and socially supported by her parents as Mrs. North says that what she actually opposes is that Mary is doing this on the money that her parents are providing. Mrs. North states that if Mary wants to continue her relationship with the black skinned children or teaching them, then she should be paid by those lower class people she deals with. In the subtext of this quotation, the novel shows that the upper class people might have the notion that they should be appreciated about the help they provide for the lower class people. The money is a metaphor for the appreciation or respect that the upper class people expect for any sort of connection that they make with the lower class people. Any sort of connection or help that come from an upper class person is seen as a blessing which should be celebrated in the perspective of the upper class societies. The realisation of the individual of his own powers, what kind of powers they are, how the individual actualises these powers, is directly related to Marx’s idea that the person is human as long as he shares a common feature with those other humans:

The *human* essence of nature exists only for *social* man; for only here does nature exist for him as a *bond* with other *men*, as his existence for others and their existence for him, as the vital element of human reality; only here does it exist as the basis of his own human *existence*. Only here has his *natural* existence becomes his *human* existence and nature becomes man for him. (*Early Writings* 350)

Mary desires to exert her powers through warning Zachary’s father about his right to bring Zachary his son back to central London. She says: “Surely it is my duty to tell him that he *could*. This is the thing, you see: unless one more or less lives with the authorities, as I do, one probably doesn’t understand that one can simply say ‘no thank you’” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 73). She thinks that she has a mission however this mission is not to help but to show her perspective on

the matter and to prove a point. This again shows the advantageous and more prestigious social standing that she has compared to Zachary and his father.

After Tom, Mary gets into a relationship with Alistair. In their relationship, the class distinction and class Othering are observable. In a conversation that Mary and Alistair make, Alistair questions whether Mary had doubts about what sort of difficulties their class difference would bring into their relationship.

‘When we first met, you considered me too common to live.’  
‘Perhaps I have come to see some low merit in the lower orders.’  
‘This helpful war. It makes us better people and then it tries to kill us.’ (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 335)

What Alistair puts emphasis upon is the idea that the middle class people are more inclined to be injured or killed in the war. This suggests that if he wants to live, he needs to belong to the upper class. He says: “As usual you are delusional. The uniform is far worse than the civilian wardrobe—even mine. This you would see if you were not blinded by the sheer glamour of this war” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 282). The war brought the two together, and the uniform enables the person to be disguised within the community as the clothes indicate the income and thus the social class a person owns.

Through the character of Mary, the novel protests against the lower class people’s being more inclined to be killed or injured when compared to higher class people which this quotation indicates: “They are blind to what’s wrong. I see the wealthy untouched by this war and the poor bombed out by it, and yet rich and poor alike make not a murmur. I see negro children cowering in basements while white children sojourn in the country, and yet both amps beg me not to rock the boat. Look at us, won’t you? We are a nation of glorious cowards, ready to battle any evil but our own” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 387).

In Cleave’s novel *Little Bee*, alongside the fact that the character Little Bee is a black girl, there is a class distinction between her and the English characters she is in contact with such as Sarah and Lawrence. This is why Little

Bee at the beginning of the novel makes this comparison between herself and an English pound coin. As I indicated the importance of the English pound coin for Little Bee in the chapter of race in this thesis, though the English pound coin is of small importance and the things it can buy are little in amount, its being easily accepted by the society is what Little Bee appreciates and envies. The different meanings and connotations that can be given to the English pound coin are emphasised by Little Bee in the quotation below:

Of course a pound coin can be serious too. It can disguise itself as power, or property, and there is nothing more serious when you are a girl who has neither. You must try to catch the pound, and trap it in your pocket, so that it cannot reach a safe country unless it takes you with it. But a pound has all the tricks of a sorcerer. When pursued I have seen it shed its tail like lizard so that you are left holding only pence. And when you finally go to seize it, the English pound can perform the greatest magic of all, and this is to transform itself into not one, but two, identical green American dollar bills. Your fingers will close on empty air, I am telling you.  
*(Little Bee 2)*

This quotation works as a showcase of the important place the money holds in the English society. It also reminds Marx's statement that people turn into commodities, and they make profit out of their labour: "Under market conditions, individuals confront each other as abstract, interchangeable entities; working people become commodities, selling their labour power to the highest bidder; and the capitalist does not care what he produces as long as it makes a profit" (*Marx and Freedom 22*). Although Little Bee is a refugee who lacks in experience related to economical matters in Britain, she has an understanding how the English economy functions and where she stands. She is aware of the fact that she will not be included as a functioning unit within the English economy. In the passage given above, she likens the English pound coin to a sorcerer as it has not only the ability to disappear but also the ability to transform itself into two American dollars. These two abilities which are stated by Little Bee suggest that the English coin holds the power to be out of reach whenever it wants to, which is something that Little Bee does not and cannot have. As

Eagleton puts it, in class society, the individual is after a survival in terms of material reality. For Marx, the objects should have an exchange-value rather than a use-value, for “an object for him is a sensuous thing which we should use and enjoy with respect to its specific qualities; this is what he means by its use-value” (*Marx and Freedom* 21-22). Little Bee is after such a material survival. This further suggests that even if the person is not a refugee and s/he is an English citizen, it is difficult to have an effect on the English economy. The novel suggests that in the relationship between the people and the English currency, the English currency will have power upon the people. Little Bee states that the person needs to have the English pound coin in his or her pocket to be carried to the place where the coin can take him or her with itself and where it can be valuable. This shows the power of the money upon the person within the society. The novel shows that the money can control people and their actions. The human traits are given to the money. Though it is a non-living entity, it has more power than the human beings. This suggests that what controls and changes the social structure in the English society is money. To elaborate on this idea further, it can be claimed that rather than putting emphasis on the fact that upper class people have a certain control upon the lower class people, the novel suggests that the upper class people also lead lives that are shaped by the money.

Little Bee shows an understanding of the way the economical and social systems work within the English society due to the readings she has done before coming to Britain and during her days in the detention centre. She narrates:

One day the detention officers gave all of us a copy of a book called *Life in the United Kingdom*. It explains the history of your country and how to fit in. I planned how I would kill myself in the time of Churchill (stand under bombs), Victoria (throw myself under a horse), and Henry the eighth (marry Henry the eighth). I worked out how to kill myself under Labour and Conservative governments, and why it was important to have a plan for suicide under the liberal democrats. I began to understand how your country worked. (*Little Bee* 49)

She as a little child back in Nigeria was aware that the conflict over financial matters had an effect upon her life. Her village was burned down as the oil company wanted to extract the oil that was in the land the village was situated upon. Cleave presents his readers an extreme situation with the attempt of showing that economy and financial matters not only affect one's life on small scales but they might also endanger one's life. In the quotation given above, Little Bee mentions different periods of English governments, rulers and the different ruling strategies of the English history. She presents three examples; "Churchill (stand under bombs), Victoria (throw myself under a horse), and Henry the eighth (marry Henry the eighth). As examples she presents people who were killed as a result of the decision given by an upper class individual. What the novel puts emphasis upon is the fact that the lower class people may die because of the decisions made about their lives by the people who rule them. Little Bee indicates the fact that the person can be killed by a single decision given by the ones who govern the country.

Little Bee is a Nigerian character who is interested in the English royal family members.

I read a lot about your royal family. . . . Do you know how you would kill yourself during a garden party with Queen Elizabeth the Second on the great lawn of Buckingham Palace in London, just in case you were invited? I do. Me, I would kill myself with a broken champagne glass, or maybe a sharp lobster claw, or even a small piece of cucumber that I could suck down into my windpipe, if the men suddenly came. (*Little Bee* 49)

It is a low chance her to be in the same environment with the Queen of England. As a Nigerian refugee, she cannot have any idea about the life in the Buckingham Palace. The reason why Cleave, however, creates a character like Little Bee is worthy of attention. Little Bee makes a resemblance between her own identity and that of the English Queen. She says:

I often wonder what the Queen would do, if the men suddenly came. You cannot tell me she does not think about it a lot. When I

read in *LIFE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM* about some of the things that have happened to the women in the Queen's job, I understood that she must think about it all of the time. I think that if the Queen and I met then we would have many things in common.

The queen smiles sometimes but if you look at her eyes in her portrait on the back of the five-pound note, you will see she is carrying a heavy cargo too. The Queen and me, we are ready for the worst. In public you will see both of us smiling and sometimes even laughing, but if you were a man who looked at us in a certain way we would both of us make sure we were dead before you could lay a single finger on our bodies. Me and the Queen of England, we would not give the satisfaction. (*Little Bee* 50)

By presenting Little Bee's idea through a first person narrator, the novel suggests that this is only the Little Bee's rendering of the image Queen Elizabeth presents to the world: "Sometimes I feel as lonely as the Queen of England" (*Little Bee* 80). The queen is subject to the threat of being killed by more people in number than a normal person is subject to; however, Little Bee's rendering of the queen's picture and sadness she thinks that it carries is a subjective and not a realistic implication. In this quotation the novel claims that both the upper class people and the lower class people are controlled by the economy. To make its claim stronger the novel presents two extreme examples such as the Queen of England and a Nigerian refugee. One is the person who stands at the top of the English hierarchical social system and the other one is someone who is not recognized by the English government. Instead of criticising the way the upper class people treat the lower class people, the novel moves deeper into the core of the social problem and attempts to extract a solution. If Little Bee was a legal citizen who lived in London, she would be of a lower class person instead of an upper class person. Through the way Little Bee renders the English Queen the novel shows that the lower class people need to understand that the people who belong to the upper class societies are also vulnerable to be controlled by the economical situation they are in. The novel claims that the people from the upper class societies hold an advantaged position, but this does not mean that they might have a positive rendering of their own situations.



*Little Bee* puts emphasis upon the fact that the person grows up within an environment in which the extent he or she can make choices on his or her own is limited, and she or he is forced to live in certain way from which class she or he is from. For Marx, “the individual is the social being. His vital expression—even when it does not appear in the direct form of a communal expression, conceived in association with confirmation of social life. Man’s individual and species-life are not two distinct things” (*Early Writings* 350). This idea is shown through the character Sarah. The character Sarah is the representation of the English middle class society. She is portrayed as the typical upper class Surrey girl. In first person narration she narrates her own childhood in this passage:

As a girl I liked what all girls like: pink plastic bracelets and later silver ones; a few practice boyfriends and then, in no particular hurry, men. England was made of dawn mists that rose to the horse’s shoulder, of cakes cooled on wire trays for the cutting, of soft awakenings. My first real choice was what to take at university. My teachers all said I should study law, so naturally I chose journalism. I met Andrew O’Rourke when we were both working on a London evening paper. Ours seemed to perfectly express the spirit of the city. Thirty-one pages of celebrity goings-on about town, and one page of news from the world which existed beyond London’s orbital motorway—the paper offered it up as a sort of memento mori. (*Little Bee* 123)

Sarah is from the middle class society; however, she puts emphasis upon the fact that she was raised within an environment where she could not make free choices until the moment when she decided what she should study at the university. There is emphasis in the quotation given above on the fact that her first decision was contrary to what the people were expecting from her by stating that she took journalism although everybody insisted on her studying law. Though her upbringing is something she loathes, her husband reminds her of the fact that there is a fault in her upbringing and the social class that she represents in the novel. She says:

I was still furious when I arrived at the Home Office building.  
*Always the Surrey girl, aren’t you?* That had been Andrew’s

parting shot. *What exactly do you require the home office to do about this bloody country, Sarah? Strafe the lowlifes with Spitfires?* Andrew had a gift for deepening the incisions he began. It wasn't our first row since Charlie was born, and he always did this at the end—brought the argument back to my upbringing, which infuriated me as it was the one thing I couldn't help. (*Little Bee* 152)

In the passage given above, Sarah states that her upbringing was not her individual fault. She does not suggest either that it was her parents' fault or the fault of the society she lives in. Her husband accuses her of being the Surrey girl and thus of having a delusional perspective upon the facts of life. He accuses her of her lack of desire and efficiency to make an effort to change the social structure and to work for the benefit of the not represented part of the society in England, for through her husband's point of view, the individuals need society as well as they need propaganda. "When communist workmen gather together, their immediate aim is instruction, proganda etc. but at the same time, they acquire a new need—the need for society" (*Early Writings* 365). The character Andrew presents the idea that the upper and middle classes are insensitive about what would happen to the other members of different classes. Through Sarah, the novel shows that no single class is responsible for such an accusation. Sarah proves Andrew wrong but only after he dies, and he cannot observe the change that Sarah experiences. She wants to write a piece about the refugees, their conditions, their sufferings and the possible solutions to their problems; however, she is aware of the fact that her ideas and her piece will not fit in the magazine which runs pieces about superficial issues, without feeling the need to discuss important issues. This can be seen in this conversation between Clarissa and Sarah:

"I can't seem to use the magazine to make a difference," I said.  
"But that's how it was conceived. It was meant to have an edge. It was never meant to be just another fashion rag."  
"So what's stopping you?"  
"Every time we put in something deep and meaningful, the circulation drops."

“So people’s lives are hard enough. You can see how they might not want to be reminded that everyone else’s lives are shit too.”  
(*Little Bee* 207)

While Clarissa thinks that running a piece that shows the facts and that presents a truthful perspective to the English readers will disturb people as people do not want to be reminded of the facts. They want a delusional or a soothing perspective to distract themselves. Sarah opposes this idea. She wants to run the piece and due to her decision she loses her job. With this example the novel shows the English society’s lack of desire to question the matters on race, gender and class, and the novel claims that they want to be blinded and delusional. The novel shows the person’s struggle against a group of other people in the English society. Sarah’s decision to make some changes in the lives of the lower class people is read by Clarissa in this way: “Everyone wants to make a difference, Sarah, but there’s a time and place. Do you know what you’re doing, honestly, if you throw your toys out of the pram like this? You’re just having a midlife crisis. You’re no different from the middle-aged man who buys a red car and shags the babysitter” (*Little Bee* 233). Sarah’s decision to make some changes in the lives of the other party especially the lower class people who are not represented enough within the society is likened by Clarissa to a midlife crisis which can be read as a superficial thing through which the person cannot achieve to change the system. What the novel shows is that the social structure is not easy to change. The person’s first attempt should not be to change the things, but it should be to question. Clarissa’s statement is factual in her likening Sarah to a middle aged man who changes his car as changing should not be the aim of the person but his or her aim should be to question the shortcomings and the positive aspects of the class system first. For Marx, this is the point where it is necessitated for the man to have the society, through which he would be true to his ultimate point of his human existence. Marx states that in capitalist society, the productive feature of life, which is activity and labour, seems as the means of the satisfaction of a need. This need is specified by Marx as “the need to preserve physical existence.

But productive life is species-life. It is life-producing life. The whole character of a species, its species-character, resides in the nature of its life activity, and free conscious activity constitutes the species-character of man. [In capitalism], life itself appears only as means of life” (*Early Writings* 328). The novel puts emphasis upon the idea that no one is living according his or her choices in the social class system of England. The character Sarah serves as an upper class example which shows the person’s lack of ability to choose.

To conclude this chapter, what the three novels that are studied in this chapter, put emphasis upon is the idea that the person is not born with choices to which class she or he will be born into, and thus blaming one class totally for the negative situations and the sufferings of the lower class is not a favourable idea. The novels suggest that what the person should do or aim at firstly should not be to change the system totally as such a change cannot be done in a short period of time. The first aim of the person should be to question and evaluate the shortcomings and the positive ways that the English class system exhibits and owns, and the person should try to find a path that can work as a solution to class Othering. The novels show that although the English society is divided in to classes, they coexist in space, and especially perhaps in London. London is depicted in the three novels as a space where people with high and low incomes live side by side. What the novels put emphasis on is that the idea of English society being one inseparable community is a mere fantasy. The novels claim that people of the English society, even if there is no ethnic difference among them, cannot escape from experiencing Othering on class basis.

## CHAPTER 4

### GENDER ISSUES AND SEXUAL OTHERING

*Incendiary*, *Little Bee*, and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* show the disadvantaged position that women characters are in and the gendered Othering they suffer from. Through scenes which depict mostly the English society and English female characters, the novels show how and when the women find themselves in a disadvantaged position both in the household and in society, generally. In this chapter I will show how the issue of gender is depicted in the three novels of Cleave in the light of Simone de Beauvoir's and Judith Butler's theoretical works on gender.

Gender is a construct of the society that we live in whereas sex relates to physical differences existing since birth and it is a common and, mostly acceptable form of differentiating system. The word gender relates to the discrimination coming from formed rules and expectations, which are conventions that involve bias. Both men and women encounter such gender-based "rules" or practices which often defy logic and are unfair and unnecessary. In this troubling system, women especially might find themselves struggling to conform to their assigned gender roles. As indicated in the chapters related to issues of class and race, here, with the issue of gender, the differences in the treatment of men and women might be working for the benefit of one party while the same codes and differences might make the other party suffer from Othering. The Cleave novel which responds to gender as a theme is *Incendiary*. In this novel, which will be the first to be discussed at length in this chapter, problems related to the female identity and the encounter of the women with the gendered Othering is given through the two major female characters (the nameless working class narrator and Petra, a middle class woman). In *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, where class is a less prominent theme, the problem of gendered Othering is presented through the experiences of three upper class characters:

Mary, her friend Hilda, and Mary's mother Mrs. North. In *Little Bee*, gendered Othering is a minor theme, and it is found mostly in experiences of the middle class Sarah and Nigerian refugee girl, whose position within the English class system is undefined, although her poverty and lack of social power render her lower class by default.

In the case of gendered Othering in a traditional society means that respect or understanding is always deemed to come from men and not from and within herself: "The prestige she enjoys in the eyes of men comes from them; they kneel before the Other, they worship the Goddess Mother. But as powerful as she may appear, she is defined through notions created by the male consciousness" (*The Second Sex* 107). There seems to be no un-othered or neutral way for a woman to relate to men. No matter how much she tries, she will fail. If she is dressed in a way that attracts male sexual attention, she will be seen as wicked; and if she completely refuses to attract male sexual attention and is dressed like a man, she will be assumed to be deviant and to lack the very defining features that she is supposed to possess as a woman (*The Second Sex* 652).

As Beauvoir points out, not every female human being can be called a woman. To be identified as a woman needs courage and dedication to a cause. The woman tries to find a place for herself within the male dominant society that is ready to reject her: "Be women, stay women, become women. . . . She must take part in this mysterious and endangered reality known as femininity" (*The Second Sex* 23). Through *Little Bee*, the novel shows the women's fear of being controlled and lack of confidence to live their sexual identities fearlessly in British society. The painting of the toe nails and the acts that *Little Bee* performs secretly on her own in her cell suggest that the woman's identity is controlled, imprisoned, and forbidden to come out and is bound to stay under the male control. This shows that the women are being put down and deprived from living their true identities. When the woman needs to resemble the man through her role in the social structure, even if not through her physical appearance, she finds

out that she is bound to fail because even when she manages to act like the man, she is only the object of his desire. This is why Little Bee suggests that no matter how wild and evil she is in the male gaze, she protects and respects her original sexual identity and cherishes it. Little Bee is in peace with her sexual self-identity. She wants to live it in broad daylight and does not enjoy the fact that she has to hide her womanhood in the gendered environment of the detention centre. This is apparent in the scene when the girls manage to escape through the barbed wire of the detention centre; the first thing that Little Bee does is to get rid of the bindings that she has used to keep her breasts tied up under her shirt:

I stood up and I smiled at Yvette. We all took a few steps away from the detention centre buildings. As we walked, when the other girls were not looking, I reached under my Hawaiian shirt and I undid the band of cotton that held my breasts strapped down. I unwound it and threw it on the ground and ground it into the dirt with the heel of my foot. I breathed deeply in the fresh, clean air. (*Little Bee* 20)

Not only does she take them off, but she throws the restraint into the dirt. This indicates that she actually hated the fact that her body was under the control of the male gaze. The minute that she leaves the borders of the detention centre, that she regains her freedom and breathes the free air she needs, her body and her womanhood gain freedom.

When both the man and the woman seek their true identities and functions within patriarchal society, the man becomes the subject while woman remains as the object, the controlled one, the one who is given shape, the passive one, the one whose destiny is enclosed by the subject: “The subject posits itself only in opposition; it asserts itself as the essential and sets up the other as inessential, as the object” (*The Second Sex* 27). In *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, Alistair’s statement shows the woman’s position as object within masculine discourse: “There are two kinds of dinner and two kinds of women. There is only one combination out of four where both will be rotten” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 31). This is a sexist and degrading statement that objectifies the woman

identity. Alistair thinks that the world of women, like that of food, is divided into the good and the “rotten”, which is a distortion based on desire. The statement also includes the idea that there is the possibility that the woman Tom is taking out to dinner might be rotten. The word rotten suggests not only that the woman is not eligible for or worthy of a man’s regard, that she is not valuable and should be rejected entirely. This is a clear illustration of Butler’s assertion that the woman is not given an independent gender role, her role and her existence depending totally on men and on the points where they perceive her to differ from men:

Women are also a “difference” that cannot be understood as the simple negation or “Other” of the always-already-masculine subject. As discussed earlier, they are neither the subject nor its Other, but a difference from the economy of binary opposition, itself a ruse for a monologic elaboration of the masculine. (*Gender Trouble* 18)

These roles that are assigned to the female population are indirectly criticised by *Incendiary*. The fact that the protagonist is left nameless makes her a more universalized character whose characteristics and experiences can be seen as representing those of any woman. The protagonist blames herself for not being the perfect mother and wife:

Now I’ve told you where my boy came from Osama I suppose I ought to tell you a bit more about his mum before you get the idea I was some sort of saint who just sewed fluffy toys and waited up for her husband. I wish I was a saint because it was what my boy deserved but it wasn’t what he got. I wasn’t a perfect wife and mum in fact. I wasn’t even an average one I was what the sun would call a DIRTY LOVE CHEAT. (*Incendiary* 12)

The extreme example that the protagonist sets in the novel is the novel’s deliberate choice of presenting the perspective of a working class English woman. The sexual affair that she had at the age of fourteen with an older person is an unhealthy affair for the child. The protagonist says that the man was a dirty child predator:



And when I get nervous about all the horrible things in the world I just need something very soft and secret and warm to make me forget it for a bit. I didn't even know what it was till I was 14. It was one of my mum's boyfriends who showed me but I won't write his name or he'll get in trouble. I suppose he was a SICK CHILD PREDATOR but I still remember how lovely it felt. Afterwards he took me for a drive through town and I just smiled and looked out at all the hard faces and the homeless drifting past the car windows and they didn't bother me for the moment. I was just smiling and thinking nothing much.

Ever since then whenever I get nervous I'll go with anyone so long as they're gentle. I'm not proud I know it's not an excuse and I've tried so hard to change but I can't. It's deep under my skin like a tat they can never quite remove oh sometimes I feel so tired. (*Incendiary* 13)

Through the perspective of the protagonist, this unhealthy event is presented as something comfortable for the little child who is to be a grown up in the future. This is why in the later days of the protagonist's life as a grown up; she sleeps with other people just because they are gentle to her. The protagonist defends herself by stating that she is not a slut but just weak: "Now I may be weak Osama but I am not a slut. I never asked for Jasper Black to sit down at my table and interrupt me gawping at action replays. I never came on to Jasper Black he came on to me there's a difference" (*Incendiary* 16). The reason why she announces herself as "not a slut" is another thing that needs to be discussed. The reason why the protagonist emphasizes the fact that Jasper Black came to her and not she to him is again a representation of the female person's need to defend herself against the society that will judge her and force her to conform to the borders of the gendered systematical structure.

Even though when the woman is asserted with power, her power is out of the scope of the humanly power. She has always found herself outside of the society, as the unwanted, the not-controlling one. When there is society, then there is politics, and as the woman was outside the society she was also outside the politics, too. She always lacked the ability to choose and to give decisions: "Whether Earth, Mother, or Goddess, she was never a peer for man; her power

asserted itself beyond human rule: she was thus outside of this rule. Society has always been male: political power has always been in men's hands" (*The Second Sex* 105). The female person is, thus, not human and cannot feel sorrow. That is why in the novel Terrence Butcher tells that the protagonist is too beautiful to be crying:

He moved his face closer to mine and he smudged the tears off my cheeks with his thumbs.

-There, he said. You're too pretty for tears. (*Incendiary* 176)

What Terrence Butcher emphasizes is that she should be devoid of sorrow just because of her appearance. If she is beautiful, then she should not be crying; however, this also suggests that if she is not beautiful, then she can cry. The woman is the victim of her appearance. "This is the fundamental characteristic of woman: she is the Other at the heart of a whole whose two components are necessary to each other" (*The Second Sex* 29). She is the object, the Other one about whom the subject, the man can make such decisions. The female person is lessened to a mere picture, either beautiful or ugly. This need for the female person to look beautiful to the eyes of the society is criticized in the novel as it can be seen in the following quotation:

Look at you, she said. You'd scrub up just fine if you took a little more care over what you wore.

-Yeah well when you have kids you give up on wearing anything smart don't you? I mean not if you don't want choc-chip sprayed all up it. (*Incendiary* 212)

How the protagonist answers Petra is important as she points out the fact that due to her duties as a mother she feels carefree of thinking about how she looks and what she wears. It is important to note that such a criticism toward the protagonist comes from yet another female person and not a male person. Petra and the protagonist are in contrast to each other. While Petra cares about clothes to an extensive extent, the protagonist does not.

Your life isn't going anywhere. You need a bit of luck but nothing good is going to happen to you till you can walk out of that front door dressed for it to happen.

-You reckon.

- Darling, said Petra. I don't reckon. I know. If there's one thing I've learned from ten years in fashion it's that good luck adores good shoes. (*Incendiary* 216-217)

While the woman identity is perceived through the body and fights against this perception, the man's identity can coordinate in peace and in total accordance with the body. He can even elevate through his physical being and his body. While the body and the physical being is a hindrance and an imprisonment for the woman, it can be a vessel of opportunities for the man: "This association of the body with the female works along magical relations or reciprocity whereby the female sex becomes restricted to its body, and the male body, fully disavowed, becomes, paradoxically, the incorporeal instrument of an ostensibly radical freedom" (*Gender Trouble* 12). How the woman's physical appearance works is presented through the character Petra in *Incendiary*. For Petra the clothes one wears and the appearance one has bring extra luck to the person's social life. When the protagonist accepts Petra's help of getting her dressed and going shopping together, the protagonist/narrator realises that the two possess identical facial and bodily features:

Here's to turning a new page, she said.

We both just stood there for ages watching the new me. I smiled back at Petra in the mirror. She was so like me especially now we were both dressed classy. It was like we were sisters but you couldn't really tell till we were dressed the same. Petra had thick pink gloss on her lips. It was nice and shiny like the back of a beetle.

The flames started in the ends of Petra's hair and they moved along it like a fuse. They spread to her face quite quickly. Her hair burned yellowy-blue like a gas fire. The lacquer on her lips started to go brown and blister. Her lips started moving but it wasn't Petra's voice that came out it was my boy's. Mummy her lips said help Mummy my hair's on fire it hurts it hurts. (*Incendiary* 225-226)

The protagonist actually does not like looking like Petra. She is aware of the fact that she cannot possess Petra's class, and her attitude towards life; that's why the protagonist's mind rejects the scene she sees in the mirror, and Petra's reflection in the mirror catches fire. Petra's reflection catches fire because the protagonist is burdened and haunted by her past maternal duties. This is why Petra's voice comes out as her son's. Later in the novel, the dislike that the protagonist possesses towards looking like a Petra Sutherland is diminished, and she even pretends that she is Petra Sutherland herself as I have discussed in the class chapter. "Dear Osama I could have been Petra Sutherland. . . . I wouldn't need to work if I didn't simply adore my job. I can do whatever the hell I please" (*Incendiary* 239). Petra Sutherland's image is portrayed by the protagonist as someone who has got power and dominion over the social structure she is in: "I am Petra Sutherland. . . . I set off for the paper at the crack of dawn and I don't come back until late. I find I am happiest in the office up to my neck in fabric swatches and freelancers' copy" (*Incendiary* 241-242). Why Petra Sutherland should be the happiest one in the office needs to be questioned, though. The novel shows the distorted image that the protagonist sees. She sees Petra as a happy person, which is not a realistic assumption. This is why when she looks at her own reflection in the mirror and when she is imitating Petra, the protagonist tries to wear a cheerful smile. She thinks that such a smile would suit Petra Sutherland because in the protagonist's mind Petra Sutherland is someone who would wear a smile on her face no matter what happens to her:

I am Petra Sutherland and my city is protected by spectres and my boyfriend is on a cocaine-fueled downward spiral but I must remain cheerful.

I tried a cheerful smile in the mirror. I almost fooled myself. (*Incendiary* 241)

In three novels, there is emphasis upon how the female body is seen by the society. In *Little Bee*, when Little Bee is in the detention centre, this is one of the things that she notices. She says:

The plain ones and the silent ones, it seems their paperwork is never in order. You say, they get repatriated. We say, sent home early. Like your country is a children's party—something too wonderful to last forever. But the pretty ones and the talkative ones, we are allowed to stay. In this way your country becomes lively and more beautiful. (*Little Bee* 3)

The plain and the silent ones are the ones who are unable to attract the attention of the male members of the society, and they are bound to be the disadvantaged ones. They are sent back and not allowed to stay in England as the country needs to be filled with beauty. Little Bee chooses the talking and not the physical appearance. Little Bee questions whether other girls' choice to look good instead of talking good is a right choice as it can be seen in the following passage:

This small plastic bag is what I was holding in my hand when the detention officer told me to go and stand in the queue for the telephone. The first girl in the queue, she was tall and she was pretty. Her thing was beauty, not talking. I wondered which of us had made the best choice to survive. (*Little Bee* 9)

The detention centre officer's attention is captured by the woman on the magazine, where the woman identity and figure are lessened to merely an image on the paper, which gives the male person the authorization and the ability to control the female identity. His ignorance of the pretty girl that stands in flesh in front of him shows the inclination of the male person toward the one that he can assert a bigger control on, which is in this scene the topless girl on the page he is looking at. Both Little Bee and the girl fail to capture the attention of the detention centre officer. Little Bee cannot make an impression on the officer despite the fact that she talks English good. Although the pretty girl is the first one in the queue, she also fails to capture the attention of the officer with her looks. What is suggested is that both of the choices might be wrong as they are done to affect the male identity and to attract the male gaze. What the novel suggests is an alternative to both of these approaches, and it is to give up the desire and the need to attract the male attention.

The fact that the female body is different from the male body puts forward the issues of power and meaning. The female body speaks a different language, a different dialect than that of the male one. She is not understood, and thus is not given a fair opportunity as that of the male ones. She is bound to lose the battle of power:

Sexual difference—which is at once biological, physiological, and relative to reproduction—is translated by and translates a difference in the relationship of subjects to the symbolic contract which is the social contract: a difference, then, in the relationship to power, language, and meaning. (*Women's Time* 21)

Through the character of Little Bee, the novel makes a commentary on the socially accepted bias of the English society. The novel criticizes how much the English society values the looks and the image of the woman. In Little Bee's story, if she is sent back to Nigeria, this will mean that she will eventually be killed. Even such a life threatening situation is ignored by the authorities. Even pushing it a little bit further, this also suggests that the woman deserves to die if she does not look good. If the woman body's psychical appearance is not beautiful enough, this will mean that it does not make a difference whether she is alive or not. Another commentary made on the way the woman body is acknowledged by the male dominated society is given through this example in the novel:

The detention officer sat behind his desk. . . . He was reading a newspaper. . . . There was a white girl in the newspaper photo and she was topless. . . .

—*Wait. Not even brassiere?*

—*Not even a brassiere.*

—*Weh!*

And then I would start my story again, but those girls back home, they would whisper between them. They would giggle behind their hands.... Nkiruka would say, *Listen, okay? Listen. Just so we are clear. This girl in the newspaper photo. She was a prostitute, yes? A night fighter? Did she look down at the ground from shame?*

—No, she did not look down at the ground from shame. She looked right in the camera and smiled.

—What, in the newspaper?

—Yes.

—Then it is not shameful in Great Britain, to show your bobbis in the newspaper?

—No. it is not shameful. The boys like it and there is no shame. Otherwise the topless girls would not smile like that, do you see?

—So do all the girls over there show them off like that? Walk around with their bobbis bouncing? In the church and in the shop and in the street?

—No, only in the newspapers.

—Why do they not all show their breasts, if the men like it and there is no shame?

—I do not know.

—You lived there more than two years, little miss been-to how come you not know?

—It is like that over there. Much of my life in that country was lived in such confusion. Sometimes I think that even the British do not know the answers to such questions.

—Weh! (Little Bee 5)

The questions that Little Bee poses about the officer in the detention centre are concerned with the way how the woman body is pictured by both the male and female population in England. The officer can be claimed to be the representation of the straight male population in England. While the woman nakedness in the newspaper is something normal and even desired by especially the straight men population, the probable incident of nakedness of a woman in public places such as church, shop, or street is seen as an undesirable act of shame. She is there for both the digestion and the entertainment of the male one. She is an anti-natural creature that does not belong. “She is man’s prey; she is his downfall, she is everything he is not and wants to have, his negation and I raison d’etre” (*The Second Sex* 197). Beauvoir asks whether the world would have existed without the woman, and she asserts that there would always have to be a woman, for the man would still have invented her:

Treasure, prey, game, and risk, muse, guide, judge, mediator, mirror, the woman is the Other in which the subject surpasses himself without being limited, who opposes him without negating

him; she is the Other who lets herself be annexed to him without ceasing to be the Other. And for this she is so necessary to man's joy and his triumph that if she did not exist, men would have to invent her. (*The Second Sex* 239-240)

As someone who is distant to English lifestyle, Little Bee imagines that her sister Nkiruka would find this situation as not understandable and would demand the guy to explain what the real matter is; however, even Little Bee is unable to provide satisfactory answers to Nkiruka's questions. Little Bee concludes by saying that although she is someone who has lived in Britain for two years, she still cannot understand the English society. This is actually very probable. What the novel suggests is the idea that, members of the English society act, think, or are forced to do so in a certain way, which is not their own willing choice, but in a pattern which is forced upon them. This is why Nkiruka pictures the woman on the paper as an ashamed person and as someone who is forced to pose in such a way. For Nkiruka, the woman's nakedness and letting herself be exposed to the gaze of other people cannot be a voluntary choice for the woman on the paper. Little Bee herself finds it intriguing why the officer in that detention centre is so interested in the girls on the newspaper that he holds in his hands and not the girls standing in the queue. "I was thinking, Yes sir, if I was your wife I would keep my brassiere on, thank you. And then I was thinking, Why are you staring at that girl in the newspaper, mister, and not us girls here in the queue for the telephone" (*Little Bee* 6)? At this point these questions can be listed: is he finding the girl on the newspaper more attractive than the girls in the queue just because she is naked? Does the woman body and its nakedness attract more attention toward the woman who is naked and smiling and assumingly more willing to have the sexual intercourse with him? Or is it only because he is more into the woman on the paper, because he has control upon her body as her body is transformed into an image on paper and thus she is diminished to a smaller form and this causes him to have a superior power over the woman? I think all of these questions can be given working affirmative answers. While the woman is in awe when she encounters herself, and she sees herself as an unnatural



phenomenon, the man merely sees the nature in himself. He thinks that he can control and change it: "Facing himself, man encounters Nature; he has a hold on it, he tries to appropriate it for himself" (*The Second Sex* 193). While it is assumed that the man is the hunter and the wild nature itself, woman is only the prey that is presented to mankind to be hunted down and devoured. "She was drawn from the first male's flank. Even her birth was not autonomous; God did not spontaneously choose to create her for herself and to be directly worshipped in turn: he destined her for man; he gave her to Adam to save him from loneliness, her spouse is her origin and her finality; she is his compliment in the inessential mode" (*The Second Sex* 195).

The male gaze over the female body is an issue that *Little Bee* puts emphasis upon frequently. The male gaze is cruel, evil, and harmful for the female identity according to what the novel suggests. That is why the men are pictured as the wolves caged away from women when the night time arrives in the detention centre as stated in the following quotation:

At night they kept the men in a different wing of the detention center. They caged them like wolves when the sun went down, but in the daytime the men walked among us, and ate the same food we did. I thought they still looked hungry. I thought they watched me with ravenous eyes. So when the older girls whispered to me, *To survive you must look good or talk good*, I decided that talking would be safer for me. (*Little Bee* 7)

In this quotation what attracts my attention is the difference between the way Little Bee thinks and what the other girls advise to Little Bee. While Little Bee thinks that the male gaze is potentially harmful to her female identity, the other girls advise her to attract male attention with her beauty or with the way she speaks. Here, it is observed that the woman lacks the notion that she can actually be the subject rather than the object. She gets satisfaction through her role as the object and the Other:

The man who sets the woman up as an *Other* will thus find in her deep complicity. Hence woman makes no claim for herself as

subject because she lacks the concrete means, because she senses the necessary link connecting her to man without positing its reciprocity, and because she often derives satisfaction from her role as *Other*. (*The Second Sex* 30)

As Little Bee thinks that any more attraction of the male gaze will suggest only more potential harm to herself, she chooses the talking. What is suggested here is more than a nearly perfect English. What Little Bee suggests is the wit and cleverness one girl should obtain to escape from the harms of the other sex. Alongside her decision to talk good, she also tries to erase her female features completely and all the gender related connotations her female body might possess. This can be observed in the following passage:

I made myself undesirable. I declined to wash, and let my skin grow oily. Under my clothes I wound a wide strip of cotton around my chest, to make my breasts small and flat. When the charity boxes arrived, full of secondhand clothes and shoes, some of the other girls tried to make themselves pretty but I rummaged through the cartons to find clothes that hid my shape. I wore loose blue jeans and a man's Hawaiian shirt and heavy black boots with the steel toe caps shining through the torn leather. I went to the detention nurse and I made her cut my hair very short with medical scissors. For the whole two years I did not smile or even look in any man's face. I was terrified. Only at night, after they locked the men away, I went back to my detention cell and I unwound the cloth from my breasts and I breathed deeply. Then I took off my heavy boots and I drew my knees up to my chin. Once a week, I sat on the foam mattress of my bed and I painted my toenails. (*Little Bee* 7)

When it is assumed that the individual is made of two parts, the inside and the outside, the female body is the excrement of the woman individual. Within the parameter through which both are expected to become one and to function as one, the two fail to do so. The outer *part* that comes out of the inner *whole* is at the risk of being seen as filth:

What constitutes through division the "inner" and "outer" worlds of the subject is a border and boundary tenuously maintained for the purposes of social regulation and control. The boundary

between the inner and outer is confounded by those excremental passages in which the inner effectively becomes outer, and this excreting function becomes, as it were, the model by which other forms of identity-differentiation are accomplished. In effect, this is the mode by which Others become hit. For inner and outer worlds to remain utterly distinct, the entire surface of the body would have to achieve an impossible impermeability. This sealing of its surfaces would constitute the seamless boundary of the subject; but this enclosure would invariably be exploded by precisely that excremental filth that it fears. (*Gender Trouble* 133-134)

Butler points out that gender comes out as a result of the repetition of certain acts. In other words, the excrement and the outer part are actually the things that create the gender itself and the gendered self. The female body is either beautiful or not beautiful at all as it can be observed in the following quotation from *Incendiary*:

- She won't answer.  
-That's because she's dead I'm afraid, said Jasper Black.  
The girl was so pretty. She was an ASIAN STUNNER. She looked Chinese but she was too pale she could of done with a bit of make-up. I stroked her face and her skin was very soft.  
(*Incendiary* 65)

The shock that the protagonist might be going through while walking over the bombing area makes her dismiss the fact that the girl she is referring to is actually dead. The most important thing about that girl from the protagonist's viewpoint seems to be the fact that she is physically attractive. The protagonist suggests that the dead girl still needs to look beautiful. How the female body is seen by the society is depicted through another scene, in *Incendiary*, when the prince comes to visit the attack survivors at the hospital:

The day they told me my husband and my boy were definitely dead was the day Prince William came to visit. The nurses were excited... A photographer came and he put a gadget up to my face.  
- What's that?  
- It's a light meter madam, he said. You're too pale.  
- My husband and my boy are missing. You'd be pale too.

- The photographer ignored me.
- Please can you get this one some make-up? He said. (*Incendiary* 79-80)

The protagonist is referred to as “this one”, and this suggests that she is just one of those many ordinary ones. She does not hold any particular value about herself. Again as the protagonist has reacted to the Asian woman, at the hospital she herself is treated in the same way by the photographer while the light on her skin is measured by a gadget. In this scene, she only turns into a skin that will be photographed. As she had herself treated the Asian dead girl, and said that she looked so pale, the photographer does the same to her this time and says that she looks so pale. The interesting part is that while the protagonist seemed to ignore the fact that the Asian girl in the bombing area was dead, and this was why she looked pale, when the photographer reacts to her own pale skin in the same way, she states that it is normal that she looks pale, considering her situation.

In *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, Mary, an English upper class woman, is subject to gendered Othering and forced to get dressed according to definite dress codes and act according to some unwritten social moral conducts. She tries to find a way out of these sexual boundaries although she is not willing to leave the advantages of her social status. Through Mary, in the novel it is observable that the family property keeps the woman under control and imprisons her. In this context, family structure means property. If the woman is given the freedom to choose, this would mean the loss of that property; however, this problem is not unique to the upper classes. In the working class, also, the woman is not desired to be liberated as the woman will work for much lower salaries. The war in the novel serves, for Mary, as a break from the household Mary is imprisoned in. Mary is the representation of the women who do not have the chance to go out of their houses, especially those upper class women whose duty was to serve and support their fathers, brothers, and husbands to build good ties with the other respected families in terms of business and politics. When the war breaks, Mary’s idea of what the real war is deserves attention: “What was war, after all,

but morale in helmets and jeeps? And what was morale if no one hundred million little conversations, the sum of which might leave men brave enough to advance? The true heart of war was small talk, in which Mary was wonderfully expert” (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 3). For Mary, war is actually what she had been going through since her childhood; the way she was raised; her need to appear charming and attractive in the social gatherings. For her, the conversations are the social battle fields. Raised in such a social realm, Mary has perhaps involuntarily become an expert of this social war. By giving this statement at the very beginning, the novel suggests that there are important problems in the social lives of the English women, such as being identified as the angel in the house. To be identified as the angel in the house would mean to be a sexless being who is neither a man nor a woman; thus, she will never relate herself to a definite reality and will fail to identify the gender problem itself.

Men are judge and party: so are women. Can an angel be found? In fact, an angel would be ill qualified to speak, would not understand all the givens of the problem; as for the hermaphrodite, it is a case of its own: it is not both a man and a woman, but neither man nor woman. (*The Second Sex* 35)

Thus, in her first job in her life time, she finds herself in a different position other than that of being only an angel in the house. She gains a true identity through which she will express her thoughts. This is also why she finds it hard to fit into her occupation. She is criticized by her superior, the headmaster of the school, Miss Vine. Such a dialogue occurs between the two:

‘You do not have faith in me, Miss Vine.’

‘But you are impossible, don’t you see? My other teachers are dazzled by you, or disheartened. And you are overconfident. You befriend the children, when it is not a friend that they need.’

‘I suppose I just like children.’

The headmistress gave her a look of undisguised pity. You cannot be a friend to thirty-one children, all with needs greater than you imagine. (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 16)

This is an indication that Mary is in need of making real bonds with other people, and especially children. This is a totally new environment for Mary who has spent her lifetime in the presence of adults always in surveillance about the way she talks, she eats, and she sits. She feels the lack of a sincere conversation and relationship with other people. When she finds herself out of the social context she has grown up in, she takes liberty at bonding with children. In her new life out of her past social context, she is accused of being over confident, which shows that Mary still sees herself as superior to the other people around her, and she can give decisions on her own, based on privileges of her social class. Due to the inequality that exists in the business life the woman prefers marriage over work. Marriage seems to be an area where she can make more profit:

In some bourgeois classes, a girl is still left incapable of earning a living; she can only vegetate as a parasite in her father's home or accept some lowly position in a stranger's home. Even when she is more emancipated, the economic advantage held by males forces her to prefer marriage over a career: she will look for a husband whose situation is superior to her own, a husband she hopes will "get ahead" faster and further than she could. (*The Second Sex* 507)

In the scene where Miss Vine and Mary continue their dialogue, by Miss Vine Mary is referred to as a profit as the possible marriage Mary will make in the future may bring advantages to Mary's family in terms of business, blood ties, and property.

She stood for a moment, concentrating — as her mother had taught her — on keeping her face unmoved. 'Very well. ' 'You are a credit to your family. ' 'Not at all,' said Mary, since that was what one said. (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*18)

Mary is acting in the way she has been taught. Though she might be questioning the teachings she has been taught, she cannot help acting according to them.

Gendered Othering, for Beauvoir, is present since the ancient times. In the ancient times, the woman does not risk her life as she does not hunt for her family or protect her family from the outside dangers. She is the creator, the presenter, and the projector of life:

The master's privilege, he [Hegel] states, arises from the affirmation of Spirit over Life in the fact of risking his life: but in fact the vanquished slave has experienced this *same risk, whereas the woman is originally an existent who gives Life and does not risk her life.* (*The Second Sex* 99-100)

This is why in his conversation with Alistair, Simonson states that in the circumstance of war, the daily affairs that the ladies that he has contact with mention in their letters seem unimportant, and Simonson mocks their letters by saying:

'Oh, Alistair, they write without pause or reason. There is nothing I don't know about the menu at Black's or the fashion at McIntie's. I am fully apprised of the current *mot du jour*, which is "swell", and of the words now considered *déclassé*—including "war", apparently, which we must now refer to as "this trouble". I know everything, you see, apart from how to reply. I can hardly write that we are down to skin and rivets. That the enemy could knock us into the sea with a well-timed look.' (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 314)

What the novel shows here is that the world of men and the world of women differ enormously in Simonson's mind. He assumes that women live a life exempt from the hardships of the war and only go to lunches, dinners, and tea parties, and recite only the social gatherings they experience; however, as the readers of the novel, we see that women suffer, too. Both parties are affected and suffer through their individual experiences of the war. The war does not exist in the personal lives of the women in Simonson's point of view as the word "war" in the letters of those women is lessened to the word of merely a "trouble". This is why Simonson assumes in the so called comfortable lives of the women, it is not welcome even to refer to war with the word "war". He suggests by this

statement that the women's world in London is comfortable and enjoyable, and thus, it should not be spoiled. The novel presents Simonson's statement as an indication of how the women's endeavours are underestimated by the male population, and this dominant notion of the male population is presented first by Alistair and then by Simonson in the novel.

Throughout the novel *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, the issue of gendered Othering is discussed through various examples of women characters and their positions in the English social structure. For one, Mary is put down by her family, and her situation sets an example for the women population within the English society, and is presented by the novel as a representation of the female population who suffer from gendered Othering. The choices of Mary are criticized by another woman in the same family, her mother, who is older and who is from the same social class. Though the two share the same social opportunities and circumstances, the only difference between them is generational. Mrs. North criticizes her daughter and her daughter's life choices as can be seen in her conversation with Mary, where she says: "There are a dozen ways of serving, for a young woman of your abilities that are safer and more beneficial to the cause" (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 320). As the headmistress Miss Vine stated earlier in the novel, Mary is seen again unfit for working as a teacher or an ambulance driver during war, and the service she wants to give to her country is seen unfit for a woman of her cultural and social background. The question arises at this point: If these duties are unfit for Mary, what is the thing that she should do? A safe choice would be to help her father rise in his business and strengthen his social ties, and just to simply be a so called good and loyal daughter who is going to make people admire her and her family and make her own family proud, which also suggests that she will not leave the safe surroundings and the borders of her household. The problematic part lies in the second part of the definition of Mrs. North: being more beneficial to the cause degrades all the efforts and the sacrifices that Mary puts to her endeavour, and this definition shows them unnecessary and unworthy of being practiced.



The woman's such disadvantaged situation, for Beauvoir, originated when the men started to present their service to other men. In this stage, slavery also emerged and as men enslaved other men, so women became the slaves of other men, too. When the property emerged, women became the property itself:

In the Stone Age, when the land belonged to all members of the clan, the rudimentary nature of the primitive spade and hoe limited agricultural possibilities: feminine strength was at the level of work needed for gardening. In this primitive division of labor, the two sexes already constitute two classes in a way; there is equality between these classes; while the man hunts and fishes, the woman stays at home; but the domestic tasks include productive work: pottery making, weaving, gardening; and in this way, she has an important role in economic life. With the discovery of copper, tin, bronze, and iron, and with the advent of the plow, agriculture expands its reach: intensive labor is necessary to clear the forests and cultivate the fields. So man has recourse to the service of other men, reducing them to slavery. Private property appears: master of slaves and land, man also becomes the proprietor of the woman. This is "the great historical defeat of the female sex." (*The Second Sex* 88)

Even if the man does not execute his power in his denial of being the master, its reflection on the woman is observable.

Master and slave are also linked by a reciprocal economic need that does not free the slave. That is, in the master-slave relation, the master does not *posit* the need he has for the other; he holds the power to satisfy this need and does not mediate it; the slave, on the other hand, out of dependence, hope, or fear, internalizes his need for the master; however equally compelling the need may be to them both, it always plays in favor of the oppressor over the oppressed: this explains the slow pace of working class liberation, for example. Now, woman has always been, if not man's slave, at least his vassal; the two sexes have never divided the world up equally; and still today, even though her condition is changing, woman is heavily handicapped. (*The Second Sex* 29)

The way Mary reacts to her mother's statement above is crucial as Mary puts forward that what her parents want their daughter to perform is not going to be more beneficial to the cause:

‘You kill me, Mother. You hate my choices but make none of your own. We tiptoe on our carpeted, deferring some imagined joy to a hoped-for day when Father will do some good for people. And in the meantime we do not live among people at all. We swim in aspic.’

...

‘Your father was my choice. You were my delight. You may despise my life for its smallness—it may seem as nothing to you—but please do not think it is nothing to me. And the smaller it becomes, the more frightening I find it, because all that is left is so dear.’ (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 321)

What Mrs. North suggests is that women are left with the choice they are given, and they should cherish what they are given. Mrs. North does not want to find herself left only with her small family circle. When big gatherings happen, she has the chance of drifting away from this essential core and finds herself dozed off in a different and dream like situation. In another way to put it, she needs distraction, and the outer world serves her in this direction. At the end of the novel the readers are presented with the actual feeling that Mrs. North possesses about her own identity as a woman and her role in the society:

‘Our own passions become muted—well, perhaps that isn’t the best word—our passions become lighter, and seem to weigh on us with less urgency. Do you imagine that I was not idealistic at your age? I was for women’s votes, you know. I chained myself to things.’

‘Why did you stop?’

‘I suppose you will say I chained myself to your father.’

‘You are happy though, aren’t you?’

‘Happy? Oh goodness, is that even a word in wartime?’

‘But the war hardly touches you.’

‘I expect you think nothing does.’

Her mother took a cigarette from Mary’s pack and lit it with hands that shook a little.

‘Mother...’

‘I am not to be pitied. I still believe it is our duty to leave the world improved. Do you suppose you will marry this Alistair of yours?’

‘I don’t know. He is far away and we haven’t spoken of it. But yes, I hope so.’

‘You must choose a husband carefully, you see, because his ideals must stand in for yours. Ideals will become ambitions, and ambitions need allies, and allies require soirées and galas and seating plans.’

‘You don’t think it will be different between men and women, after this war? You don’t feel we are on the cusp of something?’

‘We should make a tapestry of the cusps we’ve been on.’  
(*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 383-384)

This conversation serves as a summary of what the novel tries to transfer as a message. Mrs. North states that she had to give up her ideals and to imprison herself within her household. She thinks that Mary will end up in the same way, too. She thinks that there is no point in her daughter’s endeavours and that the conventions of the society will win over the ideals in the end because within the realm of sexual Othering where men and women are assigned to certain roles that are related to gender, the ones who fail to do their duties right are punished. Such a punishment can be executed because of the fact that it is disregarded that gender itself is a constructed notion which comes to life through a set of certain actions. This means that the gender itself hinders the process of questioning where the gender emerges:

We regularly punish those who fail to do their gender right. Because there is neither an “essence” that gender expresses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires, and because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender create the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all. Gender is, thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the tacit collective agreements to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those productions—and the punishments that attend not agreeing to believe in them; the construction “compels” our belief in its necessity and naturalness. (*Gender Trouble* 140)

Though Mary in the conversation given above seems still enthusiastic about the war’s probable ability to change the social structure totally, Mrs. North warns her daughter that there have been other progress promising moments which failed in their courses. The tapestry represents the household where the women are bound to find themselves in after every trial and endeavour they put to

acquire the recognition they deserve within the society. Mary will end up like her mother too as she is thinking of marrying Alistair and will be chained to her husband in the end. Alistair and Mary's wedding does not seem to be a completely unacceptable happening for Mrs. North as she sees it as a material to promote her family in the society column of the paper:

And you will come back to live with us, until you are married. You will join me with good grace at the lectures and the coffee mornings. I shall not make unreasonable demands on your time, but I will expect you to make peace with society. At least make peace to the extent that your wedding, when it does come, will feature on the society page and not on the 'gossip'. (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 386)

Mary is expected to be imprisoned within her marriage and to use her marriage as a potential good for the sake of her family name and not as material for gossip as her former behaviours such as the one at the Ritz.

In *Incendiary*, the woman's position in the English society is criticized; however, the novel does not question only the perspective that the male population in the English society have about the female identity, the novel also makes a commentary on the perspective that the female population in the English society possess about themselves. The lack of self respect the woman feels for herself is criticized by the novel *Incendiary* as it can be observed in the following quotation:

When he left the room I turned round in his chair. It was one of those adjustable chairs with levers all over it. I swear that chair was more complicated than me. There isn't all that much to me Osama and certainly nothing you could adjust . . . . I was singing la la la Wonder Woman I always liked to do that ever since I was a girl. (*Incendiary* 140)

The comparison and contrast the protagonist makes between her and a chair is notable. The reality that a chair can be more complicated than a person is not only unlikely but it is also interesting. The reason why this is presented in the novel is because the novel tries to depict that the female person thinks that she is

not valuable and worthy to be sitting on a chair in an office. The chair connotes the position that the female person wants to hold in the English society or in the business world. The choice of the song that the protagonist chooses to sing when she is sitting on the chair is important, too. “Wonder woman” as a phrase suggests that what the protagonist wants to achieve in the English society is seen itself as a wonder or a miracle, and the fact that she is sitting on that chair is seen as a miracle or a wonder by herself. The woman finds herself in a situation of duality where she is both expected to be a successful and an equal peer of the man, but she is also restricted back to the area where she is to play her role as the Other and the object, and to help the man assert his role as the subject and the whole:

The duplicitous attitude of men today creates a painful split for women; they accept, for the most part, that woman be a peer, an equal; and yet they continue to oblige her to remain the inessential; for her, these two destinies are not reconcilable; she hesitates between them without being exactly suited to either, and that is the source of her lack of balance. For man, there is no hiatus between public and private life: the more he asserts his grasp on the world through action and work, the more virile he looks; human and vital characteristics are merged in him; but woman’s own successes are in contradiction with her femininity since the “real woman” is required to make herself object, to be the Other. (*The Second Sex* 323)

The acceptance that the women show about their forced duty to clean up the mess of the male people in the English society is criticized by the novel as it can be observed in the following passage: “When all the files were arranged I took the cardboard boxes they’d come out of and I broke them down flat and stood them against the wall. It felt so nice making everything neat and clean I wanted it to go on for ever” (*Incendiary* 141-142). It is notable that the tidying up process gives protagonist contentment; she is pictured as the embodiment of the purity, cleanliness, and the angel in the house. The working class female population the protagonist represents in the novel is accustomed to cleaning up the dirt and the mess of the male population in the society:

When Terrence Butcher came back in he looked at his office all unpacked and he just started laughing.

-Wow, he said. I don't know what to say.

-Don't mention it. I'm used to tidying up after boys. (*Incendiary* 143)

For Beauvoir, the woman's current problem in the male dominated society is that she is not sure where she stands or where she should stand. If she manages to achieve this, the next thing she should do is to forget where she stands in order to construct a new ground where she can be the subject this time and not the object: "To do great things, today's woman needs above all forgetfulness of self: but to forget oneself one must first be solidly sure that one has already found oneself. Newly arrived in the world of men, barely supported by them, the woman is still much too busy looking for herself" (*The Second Sex* 834). Though there are different social classes, and different determiners about the assigned roles of the female person, through Jasper's comparing Petra Sutherland and the protagonist, it is observable that the woman is expected to be a maternal figure for the men in her life; not only for her son but also for her father, brother, husband, boyfriend, and even a plain friend. The maternal role that the protagonist possesses can be seen in the following example:

Sleep Jasper. Try to get some sleep now there's a good boy. . . .  
Hush now my darling boy. Hush.

. . .

You never really lose the habit of looking after a boy I suppose it's like riding a bicycle. (*Incendiary* 249)

Jasper Black wants Petra Sutherland to be more like the protagonist, who symbolizes the caring maternal figure at home looking after the man. This perspective, however, is criticized by the novel through the reaction that the protagonist gives to Jasper Black's comment. She states that Petra is a working woman, and Petra is the one who brings home the money they need.

I stroked his tummy.

-Thanks, he said.

-You're alright. You'll feel better in a minute.

-There you go again, he said. Why can't Petra be more like that?  
-I reckon she's too busy earning the money you're putting up your nose.  
-Petra doesn't give a shit about me, he said. She doesn't care. I wish she'd just go. (*Incendiary* 246)

The protagonist cannot be thought separate from her identity as a mother. When the protagonist tries to move out of her role as a maternal figure in Jasper's life, Jasper Black protests harshly:

I mean I haven't heard a squeak out of either of you for weeks and I can't say I've missed you.  
Jasper blinked.  
-Christ, he said. This isn't like you. Bitter.  
-Yeah well what did you expect? I wasn't put on this earth for your benefit Jasper Black I'm not some cd you can forget about down the back of a drawer and pull it out when it suits you and it still sounds just the same. (*Incendiary* 276)

At the end of the novel, she gets rid of this role of the maternal figure who tidies up the mess of the men around her. She steps up and defends her independence and personal value in the society.

As Beauvoir claims, while men are not questioned or judged by the way they are dressed, what the women wear carry utmost importance. The women are told that they need to get dressed in a certain way that will make the distinction between them and the men more apparent to the eye. This distinction in the way women are dressed highlights the desirability of the Other, the one that the man wants to own. "To preserve this mystery, men have long implored women not to give up their long dresses, petticoats, veils, long gloves, and high boots: whatever accentuates difference in the Other makes them more desirable, since it is the Other as such that man wants to possess" (*The Second Sex* 246). While the dress code is the way how woman exists in the eyes of the society, such a problem does not exist for the man. He is not identified with what he wears:

Like his body, a man's clothes must convey his transcendence and not attract attention; for him neither elegance nor beauty constitutes him as object; thus he does not usually consider his

appearance a reflection of his being. By contrast, society even requires woman to make herself an erotic object. The goal of the fashion to which she is in thrall is not to reveal her as an autonomous individual but, on the contrary, to cut her from her transcendence so as to offer her as a prey to male desires: fashion does not serve to fulfill her projects but on the contrary to thwart them. A skirt is less convenient than trousers, and high-heeled shoes impede walking; the least practical dresses and high heels, the most fragile hats and stockings, are the most elegant; whether the outfit disguise, deforms, or molds the body, in any case, it delivers it to view. (*The Second Sex* 650)

In *Little Bee*, it is shown that the woman has to live and get dressed according to some social codes determined outside of her reach and control. The example that the character Sarah pictures makes this clear in the novel:

I always dressed up for deadline days. Heels, skirt, smart green jacket. Magazine publishing has its rhythms and if the editor won't dance to them, she can't expect her staff to. I don't float feature ideas in Fendi heels, and I don't close an issue in Pumas. (*Little Bee* 30)

As the editor of a magazine, Sarah, though she is not told to do so by anyone, decides that she has to wear certain clothes in order to ensure her control and power over her own staff in order to make them listen to her. She thinks that she will not be taken seriously if she is not dressed in a way that suggests a powerful working woman who is dedicated to her professional work life. She suggests wearing high heeled shoes ensures that the people will listen to her as these shoes connote pain, suffering, commitment, and intent on the job's being well done. Puma shoes, on the other hand, connote just the opposite of the features explained above; they suggest a relaxed mind, not caring, not suffering enough, and other things which will diminish Sarah's authority as an editor. This means that Sarah, though she identifies herself as a woman, is biased against her own sex's ultimate power and the possibility of the women voices' being heard within the English society. In this context, the novel suggests that while the people in her office represent a woman's social environment where she wants to make her thoughts be heard, she represents any woman from her cultural and social



background and current situation. The novel presents this in order to highlight the difference between a man and woman; while such an anxiety which is related to the dress code does not exist in a man's world, it has twice as much importance in a woman's world.

As Butler states, the power struggle occurs between the subject and the Other, and this is the origin where the gender issue appears: "Power seemed to be more than an exchange between subjects or a relation of constant inversion between a subject and an Other; indeed, power appeared to operate in the production of that very binary frame for thinking about gender" (*Gender Trouble* vii-viii). How the female identity is put down by the male controlled society, and that it is a universal phenomenon are shown through the events that Little Bee's sister Nkiruka goes through in the novel *Little Bee*:

My big sister Nkiruka, she became a woman in the growing season, under the African sun, and who can blame her if the great red heat of it made her giddy and flirtatious? Who could not lean back against the doorpost of their house and smile with quiet indulgence when they saw my mother sitting her down to say, *Nkiruka, beloved one, you must not smile at the older boys like that?* (*Little Bee* 7)

The expression that Little Bee uses about Nkiruka's blamable actions is worth of looking at. Little Bee says that the heat and the African sun make her sister flirtatious and willing to be in a relationship with the members the other sex. She speaks as if her sister's action is a blamable one, and Nkiruka is doing something accusable, but Nkiruka is doing this only because of the natural reasons which are represented through the sun and the heat in the passage given. As Little Bee shows her own undeniable sexual awareness through her painting her toenails when she is alone, she also celebrates her sister's action, and renders it as a celebration of her own sexual awareness. The warning of their mother, however, can be read as a counter perspective. By telling Nkiruka that she should not smile at the boys, the mother implies that her daughter should reject her own sexual stamina and desire, and she should be forced to live a fake identity that is

deprived of self sexual awareness. The novel shows that such sets of ideas, further, form the gap in the social community, and these gaps collect and then consist of the basis of the gendered Othering. The term gender itself refuses to be identified with the term sex. While the gender is the cultural meaning that sexed body creates, this situation itself creates the distinction between the gender and the sex; thus the two cannot be the same: “If gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way. Taken to its logical limit, the sex/gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders” (*Gender Trouble* 6). This does not suggest that the gender is construed upon sex. It is not the sex but the gender that shapes the destiny and the life pattern of the person. “When the relevant “culture” that “constructs” gender is understood in terms of such a law or a set of laws, then it seems that gender is as determined and fixed as it was under the biology-is-destiny formulation. In such a case, not biology, but culture, becomes destiny” (*Gender Trouble* 8). Gender is more relatable culture and politics than to sex. It is a neutral ground that can easily be shaped while sex is the nature itself and it is not controlled by culture: “As a result, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which “sexed nature” or “a natural sex” is produced and established as “pre-discursive,” prior to culture, a politically neutral surface *on which* culture acts” (*Gender Trouble* 7). In *Little Bee*, Sarah is presented as a woman who is aware of the quality of the newspaper she is editing, and how it fails to serve the necessities of creating an awareness of the gender problem existing in the English society because gender controls the human social life. Sarah is aware of the fact that the magazine fails to break the gender codes that exist in the society, and it rather serves them. This is made clear in the following dialogue between Clarissa and Sarah:

Clarissa shook her head. “Getting big’s different from staying big. You know as well as I do, we can’t be serving up morality tales while the other majors are selling sex”. . . .

“Maybe you don’t realize just how big you are now, Sarah. Your next job could be editing a national newspaper.”

I sighed. “How thrilling. I could put topless girls on every page.” (*Little Bee* 35)

This dialogue, however, makes it clear that although she is editing a national newspaper, she is aware of the fact that the things that they will sell as important news are unlikely to change. They will continue to serve the gender biased community and will serve naked woman body images to their readers. This is a reference to the newspaper that the officer in the detention centre was reading and the existence of the topless girls’ pictures on its pages. The key point here is that everyone seems to be aware of the fact that the woman body is the thing that makes the newspaper gain more hits compared to a male person’s body. This suggests the need of breaking away from the meaning the woman body is given. As it is told in the novel, the female body serves to make the newspaper benefit as well as other untold media such as TV commercials or billboard ads where woman body is used to make companies gain more profit. This is why Sarah quits her job as an editor at the magazine in order to do something more worthy of doing. The moment when she decides to quit means that she is awakened by the desire to change the working system and becomes a person who is aware of the problems related to gender.

In *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, though it is observable that Mary is not willing to leave the privileges of her social class, she still continues to question why, though women are independent, they still need to conform to certain rules, and why they cannot act as free as they desire. She is aware that gender is constructed by a variable set of rules, regulations, and actions which form its very core: “Gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence” (*Gender Trouble* 24). Gender is also not a stable and passive notion. It is active and it shapes the identities: “Gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by

a subject who might be said to preexist the deed” (*Gender Trouble* 25). Through her gendered self, and her perception, Mary, questions how she is gendered as a woman. Her following question and Hilda’s answer to it are worth looking at:

‘Why must we do what we’re told? ‘  
‘Says the girl smoking in the scullery! Why not say to Mother: “I shall smoke in your drawing room, and if you must replace those curtains then do let me pick you out a pattern that is not so exquisitely vile.” She’d respect you for it.’ (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 42)

Hilda’s first sentence in her response is ironic as it shows that Mary only talks and does not take action. Mary criticizes the situation she is in, but does not do the necessary actions. That is what Hilda points out. Hilda seems to be a stricter follower of the social rules and boundaries; she does not go into the labour of questioning the way social codes work. The novel also shows the lack of social activity of the women in the business world through the two characters, Hilda and Mary both of whom are coming from upper class families and do not need to work; however, when the war breaks they hope that they can find a way of being in the business world. Hilda’s speech where she tries to persuade Mary to take the ambulance job serves as an indicator of this:

‘Stop it. Say you’ll take the ambulance job. I’ve never worked a day in my life and I’m hardly going to start without you.’  
...  
‘I don’t feel as if I’m for anything any more, that’s the trouble. I used to know straight away what was the right thing to do.’  
(*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 261)

It is normal for a young upper class woman at Hilda’s social status not to have worked before the war. Though, unlike Mary, she did not question how the social structure affect their lives, she ends up being the one who is trying to persuade Mary to take the ambulance job. This statement of Mary shows that although she used to be a young woman who had ideals, when she faces the hardships of the war and the trauma she gets, she cannot find the direction she needs to follow. This suggests that although Mary is an idealist, when she faced

the hardships that the real life presents her, she got weak and lost belief in her ideals.

Though at the beginning of the novel Alistair was the one who gave counsel about women to Tom and was the one who had notions which could be identified as sexually assaulting against women identity, in the second half of the novel, he is the one whose counsel on women is asked for by Simonson. Though in Alistair's and Tom's conversation at the beginning the novel, Alistair was the one who mentioned the possibility of Mary's turning out to be a rotten woman, this time Alistair defends Mary.

'The woman is utterly fallen.'

'Women fall differently, that's all. We die by the stopping of our hearts, they by the insistence of theirs.'

'Oh do give it up, Alistair. She's lost.'

'I don't believe that. Everything can be restored. If one won't believe that, how does one endure all this?'( *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 359)

Though Simonson tries to persuade Alistair that he will not be able to get anything beneficial from Mary, Alistair is hopeful in his trial to show Simonson that the women are not allowed to follow their hearts and their emotions; however, he still states that the women and the men are different in the ways that they react to situations and in terms of their feelings. Such a statement does not have a scientific standing, but it shows the male English population's perspective about the gendered woman identity. This male population think that the woman nature is not changeable and remains as a concrete subsection within the English social structure because where the gender is constructed, it is futile to look for an identity related to gender, for gender itself is a set of expressions and the results where the idea of the gender is discussed: "There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results" (*Gender Trouble* 25). The woman stays unrepresentable as even when the woman identity is presented through its relation to the male one, the woman can only be presented as the point where the

male identity fails; the woman is his failure: “The Other as well as the Same are marked as masculine; the Other is but the negative elaboration of the masculine subject with the result that the female sex is unrepresentable—that is, it is the sex which, within this signifying economy, is not one” (*Gender Trouble* 103). The novel shows how the women’s endeavours and struggles to be recognized by the society fail to do so, and that the real core of the problem lies within how the women perceive their own identities and assigned duties within the society. The novel suggests that the women think less of themselves considering the duties they are given, and they do not have faith that the course can be changed. The way Mary thinks about herself is an example of this:

He smiled kindly enough, but now she saw herself as he must. In the bright light of the chandelier, before he arrived, London’s circle had seemed quite equal to earth’s equator. Now she saw the smallness of it. How vain she had been in her nest, feathering it with mirrors. She was a teacher nobody needed, a daughter whose parents despaired. And now here was Alistair, this man who had stood up to the enemy while she had been so proud of standing up to her mother. Did she really sit at the table, even now in her new feathered hat, wondering if she loved him? (*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* 423)

The novel claims that comparing her duties and her own struggle to Alistair’s suffering in the war is not something that Mary should be after. As stated at the beginning of the given passage, this is what Mary thinks Alistair is thinking of her. The feathering mentioned in the passage above represents the foolishness that women are related to especially by most of the male population in the English society, who are represented by Simonson and Alistair in the novel. The work done by the female figures are seen as empty endeavours that do not change anything but only as things that are usurped by women in order to attract attention to themselves.

Another aspect of sexual Othering is the difference in the usage of the language by men and women. What the woman lacks is the fact that she cannot possess the privilege of speaking through the self and the “I” which assert the

woman with power as the subject. As she cannot say “I”, she cannot be the subject, the universal, or the whole. She is always gendered:

This privilege to speak “I” established a sovereign self, a center of absolute plenitude and power; speaking establishes” the supreme act of subjectivity”. This coming into subjectivity is the effective overthrow of sex and, hence, the feminine: “no woman can say *I* without being for herself a total subject—that is, ungendered, universal, whole. (*Gender Trouble* 117)

While the female parties are despised and criticized when they use swear words, there is a less restrictive situation for men. The protagonist and her husband in *Incendiary* function as an example of this in the novel:

-Fuckers, he said.  
- You don’t have to swear love.  
- I’ll fucking swear when I fucking well want to.  
- Don’t swear it makes me jumpy when you swear.  
- Calm down love, said my husband.  
- No you calm down. You’re the one who lost 250 quid. How am I meant to feed the boy and put clothes on him when you carry on like that? Why don’t you effing well calm down? (*Incendiary* 32)

While the male party’s getting angry, yelling, and swearing are seen as acceptable by the male person, the female party’s doing the same action is answered and cut with a harsh criticism that comes from the husband. This biased thinking is criticized in the novel by the female protagonist’s reaction to her husband’s attitude. She tells her husband that he is the one who should calm down first. The scene gets even more interesting as the husband starts to accuse the protagonist of being angry and possessing attitudes of a mentally disordered person. Those words lead the protagonist to react even more furiously, and the following dialogue occurs:

-My nerves are shot and you’re half mental with worry all the time. You’re turning into a hysterical woman.  
-I am not hysterical.  
-Yes you are, he said.  
-NO I AM EFFING WELL NOT HYSTERICAL.

I grabbed my water glass and I smashed it against the wall. The water and the glass burst all over the carpet and I burst into tears. My husband held me very tight and stroked my hair.  
-It's alright love, he said. It's not your fault. Anyone would be the same with all this stress. (*Incendiary* 32-33)

The interesting part in this scene is that the protagonist was actually the calm one; however, the accusing attitude of the male party forced her to act in the furious way that he pointed out. The female person's attitudes are shaped according to the directives and suggestions made by the male communities. Female parties find themselves acting according to exactly the same way as the male parties show and direct them towards. This is a notion that is criticized by the novel. The way the female people need to act according to a notion that is predetermined by the male population makes them feel less real. This is why when Jasper meets the protagonist he says:

-I think you are the most original woman I know. . . . I think you are very real.  
- Well. I've been called a lot of things by a lot of people but no one's ever called me real before. They probably thought that was bleeding obvious. (*Incendiary* 42-43)

The fact that she expresses her feeling and thoughts without being vulnerable about in which way they will be conveyed makes her real. This is why Jasper reacts to her in such a way. In Jasper's mind, the conclusion he arrives at might be a result of the comparison he makes between his girlfriend Petra and the protagonist. In Jasper's mind, Petra is a career driven woman who is fond of shopping for luxury outwear, for which he criticizes her: "Oh god Petra don't you have enough shoes already? Well alright then. Do try to leave a little something in the bank account. Just in case we need to buy anything tedious like food or electricity" (*Incendiary* 47). In this scene, it is depicted that for Jasper what Petra does cannot be appreciated, and he concludes that she is an empty personality. While Petra is busy with her career, buying clothes, pretending to be smiling to the people, what the protagonist does is asking questions very directly



and seeking the core of every problem or situation she encounters. This is why Jasper is attracted to the protagonist:

- Look. I don't know what this is all about. What exactly is it you want with me Jasper Black?
- See? He said. There you go again getting straight to the point. Clearing the air. It's very original. (*Incendiary* 50)

Jasper finds the protagonist original, real, different, not fake, and strong as opposed to other women that he knows:

- You were just having a stressful night, said Jasper Black. What I mean is you're strong because you know what you want.
- Don't you have what you want? Posh newspaper job. Aston Martin. That'd be enough for most people I should of thought.
- I thought that was what I wanted, said Jasper Black. You make me think I want different things. Simple things. Fish fingers. You bother me. (*Incendiary* 51-52)

Jasper Black's definition fits the protagonist as she is a woman who knows what she wants, and this is important. The novel suggests that the person's own desire is bigger and above than what the other members of the society will think. The so called need of a man for the women to make her feel whole and to fill the emptiness in her life is shown by the protagonist's thought in the following statement: "Jasper Black pulled out of me. I felt so empty. There had been something inside me but now there was nothing" (*Incendiary* 57-58). The way that the male presence within the female body is given in the novel is interesting because the male genital body parts that, I think, represent the social, familial, as well as the physical existence in a woman's life, are presented this time as merely "something". In this context, it is suggested in the novel that male existence in a woman's life can easily be filled by anything and thus an ordinary thing.

The novel additionally criticizes the way women are represented as vulnerable beings, along with the notion that they should not be lonely, and if they are lonely, they should find a partner. This is given through Jasper Black's

perspective which represents the common view point towards the woman identity in English society:

Jasper Black looked out of the window and then back at me.  
-I couldn't get you out of my head, he said. I kept seeing this picture of you with nobody to cook fish fingers for. (*Incendiary* 96)

As this example shows, the loneliness of the women is seen as a problem that should be solved. It is the fault and the guilt of the female person, and it should be taken care of by a male presence.

To conclude this chapter, Chris Cleave's three novels *Incendiary*, *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, and *Little Bee* show the disadvantaged position that woman characters are in and the sexual Othering they suffer from. Through scenes which are relatable to the English society and English female characters, the novels show how women find themselves in a disadvantaged position through gendered Othering both in the household and in the general social structure within the English society. Cleave's three novels claim that the woman cannot escape being Othered because of the way how her body is seen by the male dominated society and because of the gender related roles and duties that are assigned to her.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

Following the Introduction, in Chapter 2, I tried to identify some of the racial issues raised in Chris Cleave's novels *Everyone Brave is Forgiven*, *Incendiary* and *Little Bee*. In his these three novels, Cleave questions and analyses possible approaches to the issue of racial Othering. These novels show that the encounter with the Other is not an option but a fact. However, the choices taken by the individual in his/her encounter with the Other are crucial. When the conditions that form a person's identity as different from the rest are excluded, the concept of Otherness is born. A person displaying excluded or Othered characteristics will be excluded from society, too, because at this point, the possibility of thorough integration is eliminated. While it is true that Otherness is based upon "the idea that difference is the condition of the identity of subjectivity," and "the identity/difference, self/other relation is organized in fundamentally spatialized ways - around tropes of here and there, inclusion and exclusion, presence and absence, in-place and out-of-place" (Barnett 4), the novels focus on the social forces that operate in the experience of Othering and Otherness. They show that the concept of the Otherness bears two different and yet parallel meanings in itself: the first is that it uses enforcement on the person to inseparably belong to a group; and the second is that it puts emphasis upon the inevitable detachment of the person from the group. There is then, a paradox within the very experience of Othering—it seems to require a constant defence against seeing oneself in one's own individuality as Othered from the very group that provides your identity. "The realm of the paradoxical . . . belongs neither to the one nor the Other. It is an interstitial realm of the in-between—a space and time of 'thirdness'" (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 6). The novels show that individuals live in a third-space even

when within their groups, and the same can be claimed for smaller groups of people mingling with larger groups. The actual reason that causes this detachment is the force and the pressure used by the community or group upon the person to be a part of some larger unit. The impossibility of existing as an individual in a single unit, conforming thoroughly to the communal unit, is responsible for the creation of the Other. The isolation that is brought up by such enforcement creates an infinite circle where the person is left alone seeking for a ground parallel to the unit's to stand on. Such a balance is not easy to accomplish, since the more the person tries, the more the possibility of failure is. Given the circumstance that the search for those parallel grounds is bound to fail, and the possibility of success remains a utopia. "Recognition—without which it would be difficult to take responsibility for hospitality in either of its modalities—is a problem of negotiating Alterity, not a matter of accommodating diverse cultures or multiple identities" (*Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival* 7). On the grounds that this recognition is achieved by the two mediums (self and Other) mutually, the formation of identity is completed. There is no identity formation apart from the relation between self and Other in a social context: "To see a missing person is to *transgress* that demand; the 'I' in the position of mastery is, at *that same time*, the place of its absence, its *re-* presentation" (*The Location of Culture* 47). The novels claim that the gap between two different cultures, ethnicities and colours will always remain, and Cleave also shows that even the concept of multiculturalism creates problems. In his three novels Cleave shows his readers that there will always be a gap between different cultures, ethnicities and colours. Cleave questions and analyses different potential ways to close this gap in his three novels. In *Incendiary*, he suggests the path of communication and understanding; however he also shows that this is only a dream not the reality. In *Everyone Brave is Forgiven*, he questions whether an individual should start from the personal level or from more general grounds, asking which could be more functional in the mission of solving the problem

of Othering. In *Little Bee*, he presents fleeting image of the ideal world in an almost Blakean vision of black and white children frolicking in the waves, suggesting, perhaps, that the future is our best hope.

Chapter 3 examined the novels' commentaries on the social class problems in England. In this chapter, I have tried to identify some of the class issues raised in the three novels. The novels show some of the class divisions in England, illustrating the distance between different groups of people who belong to different social classes, and demonstrate that people are subject to Othering because of their class. For Marx, class Othering starts when the object that is produced by the labour becomes alien to its producer. The labour itself is alienated, and this: "(1) estranges nature from man and (2) estranges man from himself, from his own active function, from his vital activity; because of this it also estranges man from his species. It turns his species-life into a means for his individual life. Thus, the separation of the individual from the communal whole happens" (*Early Writings* 328). However, as it can also be seen in the three novels, Marx states that through society, the true unity of the individual and the nature becomes possible. Marx also states that to claim that the society is reproachable, considering that the society connotes a man extracted out of nature: "Society is therefore the perfected unity in essence of man with nature, the true resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature. . . . It is above all necessary to avoid once more establishing 'society' as an abstraction over against the individual" (*Early Writings* 350). Through extreme scenes and examples the novels show that the social structure is not easy to change, and that a person's first attempt should be not to change things, but to question the shortcomings and advantages that the class system might own and exhibit. The three novels put emphasis upon is the idea that the person is not born with choices to which class she or he will be born into, and thus blaming one class totally for the negative situations and the sufferings of the lower class is not a favourable idea. The novels suggest that what the person

should do or aim at firstly should not be to change the system totally as such a change cannot be done in a short period of time. The first aim of the person should be to question and evaluate the shortcomings and the positive ways that the English class system exhibits and owns, and the person should try to find a path that can work as a solution to class Othering. The novels show that although the British society is divided in to classes, they coexist in space, and especially perhaps in London. London is depicted in the three novels as a space where people with high and low incomes live side by side. What the novels put emphasis on is that the idea of English society being one inseparable community is a mere fantasy. The novels claim that people of the English society, even if there is no ethnic difference among them, cannot escape from experiencing Othering on class basis.

In Chapter 4, I have showed that Chris Cleave's three novels present examples of the disadvantaged position that woman characters are in and the gendered Othering they suffer from. Through scenes which are relatable to the English society and English female characters, the novels show how and when the women find themselves in a disadvantaged position through gendered Othering both in the household and in the general social structure within the English society. The three novels depict that together with the word gender, there appears the socially biased formation where humans have to conform to the rules that they do not actually understand and that they find unnecessary. In this troubling system, the woman might find herself struggling to conform to the assigned gender roles. As Beauvoir points out in her *The Second Sex*, not every female human being can be called a woman. To be identified as a woman needs courage and dedication to a cause. The woman tries to find a place for herself within the male dominant society that is ready to reject her: "Be women, stay women, become women. So not every female human being is necessarily a woman; she must take part in this mysterious and endangered reality known as femininity" (*The Second Sex* 23). Woman's being and existence is not autonomous; it is rendered through its relation to the male identity. "Humanity is

male, and man defines woman not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being” (*The Second Sex* 26). While for the male identity, the existence is not that problematic; the perspective that the woman has towards herself is also problematic. The woman thinks of herself only in relation to the male identity. Her own identity, that is to say, is constructed upon the contrast that she observes between the male and female identity. In this case, the word Other becomes the core of her identity: “She is determined and differentiated in relation to man, while she is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other” (*The Second Sex* 26). Cleave’s three novels claim that the woman cannot escape being Othered because of the way how her body is seen by the male dominated society and because of the gender related roles and duties that are assigned to her.

This thesis has attempted to examine the issue of Othering and the possibility of embracing the Other in Chris Cleave’s novels, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*. These novels were chosen for this study because they all contain profound examples that are relatable to the issue of Othering on a personal level. The novels show that the self is socially and thus artificially identified in its function within and through the labeling system which creates differential categories of race, class, and gender. In Cleave’s novels, the relation of the self to the Other takes place within, and is organized along, these power relations of race, class and gender. More to the point, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* confront the politics of the formation of the self which cause the making of the Other—the non-Western, the female, the poor, all of which have been moved to the global perimeter and which have turned into stable concerns which needed further analysis. Through the attempted analysis I have made on the three novels, it can be claimed the novels show examples of how the society is divided into groups and then into individuals and the individuality of the people forms groups and the groups form society. This thesis shows that the three novels indicate that the gaps in-between are

unbridgeable, and the differences remain unruffled, even though this does not mean that one should be indifferent to those differences; the novels, rather, suggest that differences should be highlighted. Thus, this thesis concludes that the novels depict the concept of Otherness as bearing two different and yet parallel meanings in itself: the first is that it uses and arises from forces within and outside of the subject to inseparably belong to a group; and the second is that it simultaneously entrails a recognition of the inevitable disconnection of the subject from the group. Cleave's novels suggest that the actual cause of this detachment is the community peer-pressure forcing the subject to be a part of some larger unit. The impossibility of existing as an un-allied individual in a single unit while at the same time conforming thoroughly to the communal manifesto for the unit, is responsible for the need to reject those who have not been included in the manifesto—a sort of abjection. This lies behind creation of the Other. The isolation that is created by these opposing forces or pressures creates an infinite circle where the person is left alone seeking for a ground parallel to the unit's to stand on. Cleave's novels suggest that such a balance between individuality and group identity is not easy to accomplish, since the more the person tries, the greater the possibility of failure. Thus it can be claimed that the novels defend the idea that the search for these parallel grounds is bound to fail, and the possibility of success will remain a dream. The novels claim that even if the Other is recognized, this recognition will be biased and will not be sufficient to produce genuine and undistorted communication between the two parties.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ambarwati, Dwi Septiani, and Fabiola Dharmawati Kurnia. "Racial Conflict in Chris Cleave's *Little Bee*." *Nama Journal* Vol.1 No.1 (2013), 205-16.
- Ampuja, Marko. *Theorizing Globalization: A Critique of the Mediatization of Social Theory*. Leiden: Brill, 2012. *EBook Academic Collection (EBSCOhost)*. Web. 3 March 2014.
- Assmann, Aleida. "Civilizing Societies: Recognition and Respect in a Global World." *New Literary History* Vol.44 No.1 (2013), 69-91.
- Barnett, Clive. "Ways of Relating: Hospitality and the Acknowledgement of Otherness." *Progress in Human Geography* Vol.29 No.1 (2005), 5-21.
- Beauvoir, Simone De, Constance Borde, Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, and Judith Thurman. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage, 2011. Print.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *Our Neighbours, Ourselves: Contemporary Reflections on Survival*. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.
- . *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Bush, Christopher. "The Other of The Other?: Cultural Studies, Theory and the Location of the Modernist Signifier." *Comparative Literature Studies* 42.2 (2005): 162-80. Web.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- . "Giving an Account of Oneself." *Diacritics* 31.4 (2001): 22-40. Web.
- Childs, Peter, and Patrick Williams. *An Introduction to Post-colonial Theory*. London: Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1997. Print.
- Cleave, Chris. *Incendiary*. New York: Knopf, 2005.
- . *Little Bee*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010.
- . *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*. London: Sceptre, 2016. Print.
- Clarke, Kamari Maxine, and Deborah A. Thomas. *Globalization and Race: Transformations in the Cultural Production of Blackness*. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2006."

- Cornforth, Sue. "Bridging The Gap: Weaving Humanism And Poststructuralism." *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling* Vol.38 No.2 (2010), 167-78.
- Cuddy-Keane, Melba. "Modernism, Geopolitics, Globalization." *Modernism/Modernity* Vol.10 No.3 (2003), 539-58.
- Eagleton, Terry. *Marx: And Freedom*. London: Phoenix, 1999.
- . *Marxism and Literary Criticism*. Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2013.
- . Eagleton, Terry. *Why Marx Was Right*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2011.
- Fanon, Frantz, and Charles Lam. Markmann. *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: PlutoPress, 2017.
- Foster, Kevin. "Migrants, Asylum Seekers and British Identity." *Third Text* Vol.20 No.6 (2006), 683-91.
- . "New Faces, Old Fears: Migrants, Asylum Seekers and British Identity." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* Vol.86 No.3 (2008), 429-37.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1977.
- Frank, Nathan. "Diamond Wheels and Machetes: The Political Praxis of Prosthesis." *Rocky Mountain Review* Vol. 67 No.1 (2013), 61-6.
- Gibson, Sarah. "Accommodating Strangers: British Hospitality and the Asylum Hotel Debate." *Journal for Cultural Research* Vol.7 No.4 (2003), 367-86.
- Gut, Ulrike, and Robert Fuchs. "Progressive Aspect in Nigerian English." *Journal of English Linguistics* Vol.41 No.3 (2013), 243-67.
- Harler, Courtney A. "The Ogbanje in *Little Bee* by Chris Cleave." Thesis. Eastern Washington University, 2013. Print.
- Hart, Matthew. "Representing Immigration: Detention and Removal." *English Language Notes* Vol.49 No.1 (2011), 29-50.
- Kristeva, Julia, Alice Jardine, and Harry Blake. "Women's Time." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 7.1 (1981): 13-35.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Strangers to Ourselves*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.

- . *The Kristeva Reader*. Ed. Toril Moi. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Latimer, Joanna, and Rolland Munro. "Keeping & Dwelling: Relational Extension, the Idea of Home, and Otherness." *Space and Culture* Vol.12 No.3 (2009), 317-31.
- Leddy-Owen, Charles. "Reimagining Englishness: 'Race', Class, Progressive English Identities and Disrupted English Communities." *Sociology* (16 January 2014), 1-16. Web. 27 February 2014.
- Lynn, Nick, and Susan Lea. "'A Phantom Menace and the New Apartheid': The Social Construction of Asylum-Seekers in the United Kingdom." *Discourse & Society* Vol.14 No.4 (2003), 425-52.
- Madden, Kathryn C. "Diffusing the Clash of Otherness in Projective and Complex-Discharging Fields." *J Relig Health* Vol.50 (2011), 543-49.
- Marais, Mike. "Violence, Postcolonial Fiction, and the Limits of Sympathy." *Studies in the Novel* Vol.43 No.1 (2011), 94-114.
- Marx, Karl. *Karl Marx: Early Writings*. London: Penguin Books, 1975.
- . "The Communist Manifesto." *Marx and Engels: Selected Works*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1968.
- . *The German Ideology*. Ed. C. J. Arthur. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1974.
- . "Theses on Feuerbach." *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*. Ed. Lewis S. Feuer. London: Anchor, 1969.
- McGhee, Derek. *Intolerant Britain? Hate, Citizenship and Difference*. New York: Open University Press, 2005.
- McLaughlin, Carly. "Childhood, Migration, and Identity in Chris Cleave's *The Other Hand*." *Cross / Cultures* 167 (2013): n. pag. Web. 10 Sept. 2016.
- Moten, Fred. "Knowledge of Freedom." *CR: The New Centennial Review* Vol.4 No.2 (2004), 269-310.
- "Other." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. [www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/133219](http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/133219). Accessed 12 January 2018.

- Ovadia, Jesse Salah. "The Nigerian 'One Percent' and the Management of National Oil Wealth through Nigerian Content." *Science & Society* Vol.77 No.3 (2013), 315-41.
- Phipps, Alison. "Voicing Solidarity: Linguistic Hospitality and Poststructuralism in the Real World." *Applied Linguistics* Vol.33 No.5 (2012), 582-602.
- Ploesser, Melanie, and Paul Mecheril. "Neglect-Recognition-Deconstruction: Approaches to Otherness in Social Work." *International Social Work* Vol.55 No.6 (2011), 794-808.
- Russell, Gillian K., and John M. Doris. "Knowledge by Indifference." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* Vol.86 No.3 (2008), 429-37.
- Savu, Laura E. "Bearing Wit(h)ness: 'Just Emotions' and Ethical Choices in Chris Cleave's *Little Bee*." *Critique* Vol.55 No.1 (2014), 90-102.
- Sheridan, Alan. *Michel Foucault: The Will to Truth*. New York: Tavistock Publications, 1984.
- Snyder, Susanna. "Encountering Asylum Seekers: An Ethic of Fear or Faith?" *Studies in Christian Ethics* Vol.24 No.3 (2011), 350-66.
- Taylor, Charles. *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*. Ed. Amy Gutmann. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Van Pelt, T. "Otherness." *Postmodern Culture*, vol. 10 no. 2, 2000. *Project MUSE*.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010.
- Wachholz, Sandra. "Hate Crimes against the Homeless: Warning-Out New England Style." *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* Vol.32 No.4 (2005), 141-63.
- Welch, Michael, and Liza Schuster. "Detention of asylum seekers in the UK and USA: Deciphering Noisy and Quiet Constructions." *Punishment & Society* Vol.7 No.4 (2005), 397-417.
- Wilkie-Stibbs, Christine. "The 'Other' Country: Memory, Voices, and Experiences of Colonized Childhoods." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* Vol.31 No.3 (2006), 237-59.

Wright, Brian. "Non-Governmental Organizations and Indifference as a Human Rights Issue: The Case of the Nigerian Oil Embargo." *Journal of Human Rights* Vol. No.2 (2002), 231-45.

Yoo, Sung-jin. "Two Types of Neutrality: Ambivalence versus Indifference and Political Participation." *The Journal of Politics* Vol.72 No.1 (2010), 163-77.



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez, Chris Cleave'in *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* ve *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* romanlarında işlenen ötekileştirme ve öteki olaak nitelendirilenin kabullenilme ihtimalleri konularını incelemeyi amaç edinir. Bu üç romanın bu çalışma için seçilme nedeni, üç romanın da ötekileştirme konusu ile ilgili karakterler ve olay örgüleri içermeleridir. Romanlar gösterir ki benlik sosyal ve yapay olarak etiketlendirme sistemi içerisinde ve bu sistem yoluyla nitelendirilir ve bu süreç de ırk, sınıf ve toplumsal cinsiyet gibi farklı kategorileştirmelerin oluşmasına neden olur. Cleave'in romanlarında, benliğin öteki ile olan bağlantısı, ırk sınıf ve cinsiyet gibi güç dengeleri ile ve bunlar üzerine *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* ve *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* öteki olgusunun oluşmasında rol oynayan ve toplum içerisinde sabitleşmiş, batılı olmayan, kadın, yoksul kavramlarının benliği oluşturma politikalarını ele alır. Tezin diğer, ırk, sınıf ve cinsiyet kavramının üç ana kaygısı etrafında şekillendirilmesinin nedeni budur. Öteki kavramı ile ilgili olarak romanlar şu soruları sormaktadır: öteki olan toplumsal, bireysel, politik, ekonomik ve kültürel açıdan kabul edilebilir mi? Öteki olanı kişisel düzeyde kucaklamak mümkünse, bu kucaklama farklılıkları tanımak, onlara karşı saygı göstermekle mi yoksa bu farklılıkların hepsini göz ardı ederek mi sağlanabilir? Kişi kendini kimliğini nasıl ve nerede gerçekleştirmiş olarak buluyor? "Ben" nerede bitiyor ve öteki nerede başlıyor? Ötekilik nereden kaynaklanmaktadır? Öteki ne demektir?

Giriş bölümünü takip eden Bölüm 2'de, Chris Cleave'in *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, *Incendiary* ve *Little Bee* romanlarında ortaya atılan ırksal sorunlardan bazılarını saptamaya çalıştım. Cleave, bu üç romanında, ırksal ötekileştirme konusundaki olası yaklaşımları sorguluyor ve analiz ediyor. Bu romanlar, öteki ile karşılaşmanın bir seçenek değil, bir gerçek olduğunu

göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte, öteki olan ile karşılaşmasında bireyin aldığı seçimler çok önemlidir. Bir kişinin kimliğini ötekilerinden farklı olarak oluşturan koşullar hariç tutulduğunda, ötekilik kavramı doğar. Hariç tutulan veya ötekilik özellikleri gösteren bir kişi de topluluktan çıkarılır, çünkü bu noktada kapsamlı entegrasyon imkânı ortadan kalkar. Romanlar, gözden geçirilmesi gereken ve ötekilik deneyiminde faaliyet gösteren toplumsal güçlere odaklanıyor. Romanlar ötekilik kavramının kendi içinde iki farklı ve aynı zamanda paralel anlam taşıdıklarını göstermektedir. Birincisi, bir gruba ayrılmaz bir şekilde ait olmak için kişinin uygulaması gereken kuralları kullanmaktadır; ve ikincisi, kişinin grubun bir parçası olmaktan kaçınmayacağına vurgu yapmasıdır. O halde öteki olma tecrübesinin içinde bir paradoks vardır. Kendi kimliğinizi sağlayan gruptan ötekileri gibi kendi bireyselliğinde kendinizi görmeye karşı sürekli savunma istiyor gibi görünüyor. Bhabha'nın da belirttiği gibi çelişkili alan ne birine ne de diğerine aittir. Bir aralık ve zamanın "üçüncü derece" zamanının bir geçiş noktasıdır. Romanlar, bireylerin kendi grupları içinde olsalar bile üçüncü bir boşlukta yaşadığını ve bunun daha büyük gruplarla karışan daha küçük gruplar için de iddia edilebilir olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu ayrılmaya neden olan asıl sebep, topluluk ya da grup tarafından kişinin daha büyük bir birimin parçası olması için kullanılan güç ve baskıdır. Ötekinin var olmasından müteessib, tek bir birlik içerisinde varolma, toplumsal birime uyum sağlama olanağının bulunmaması mümkündür. Bu tür zorlamalarla ortaya çıkan izolasyon, kişinin ayakta durması için birimin paralelinde bir zemin ararken kalacağı sonsuz bir döngü oluşturur. Böyle bir dengenin başarılması zordur, çünkü kişi ne kadar fazla uğraşırsa başarısızlık olasılığı daha yüksektir. Bu paralel zeminlerin araştırılmasının başarısız olması şartı ve başarı ihtimali göz önüne alındığında, bir ütopye olmaya devam ediyor. Bhabha'nın da belirttiği gibi tanıma olmadan—ki bu yöntemlerin hiçbirinde misafirperverlik için sorumluluk almayı zorlaştırmak—farklı kültürlerin veya çoklu kimliklerin barınması meselesi değil, Alterity müzakere meselesidir. Bu tanımın karşılıklı olarak iki araç tarafından sağlandığı gerekçesiyle kimlik oluşumu tamamlanmıştır. Toplumsal bir

bağlamda ben ile öteki arasındaki ilişki dışında hiçbir kimlik oluşumu yoktur. Bhabha der ki; kayıp bir insanı görmek, o talebin üstesinden gelmektir; Üstatlık konumundaki 'ben' aynı zamanda yokluğunun yeri, yeniden sunumudur. Romanlar, iki farklı kültür, etnik köken ve renk arasındaki boşluğun her zaman kalacağını iddia ediyor ve Cleave, aynı zamanda çok kültürlülük kavramının bile sorun yarattığını gösteriyor. Üç romanında Cleave okurlarına, farklı kültürler, etnik kökenler ve renkler arasında her zaman bir boşluk olacağını gösteriyor. Üç roman da bu boşluğu kapatmak için farklı olası yolları sorgular ve analiz eder. *Incendiary*'de iletişim ve anlayış yolunu önermektedir. Bununla birlikte, bunun sadece bir rüya olduğunu ve gerçek olmadığını gösteriyor. *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* romanı bir bireyin kişisel seviyeden veya daha genel gerekçelerden başlayıp başlamayacağını sorar ve hangisinin Öteki sorununu çözmeye görevinde daha işlevsel olabileceğini sorar. *Little Bee*'de, dalgalarda gezinen siyah ve beyaz çocuk imgelemlerini sunarak, neredeyse Blake vizyonunda, ideal dünyanın geçici görüntüsünü sunuyor; belki de geleceğin bizim en iyi umudumuz olduğunu öneriyor.

Bu tez, Ötekeleştirme konusunu ve Chris Cleave'in yazdığı, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* ve *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*'da öteki olanı kucaklama olasılığını incelemeye çalışır. Bu romanlar, hepsi, kişisel seviyede ötekileştirme ile ilişkili derin örnekler içerdikleri için seçildi. Romanlar, benliğin toplumsal ve dolayısıyla yapay olarak, ırk, sınıf ve toplumsal cinsiyetin farklı kategorilerini oluşturan etiketleme sistemi içinde ve aracılığıyla kendi işlevinde tanımlandığını göstermektedir. Cleave'in romanlarında, benliğin öteki ile olan ilişkisi, ırk, sınıf ve cinsiyet arasındaki bu güç ilişkileri içinde yer alır ve düzenlenir. Dahası, *Incendiary*, *Little Bee* ve *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, ötekinin—yani Batılı olmayan, kadın, fakir—hepsi de şahısa taşınan benliğin oluşum politikasına karşı koyulur. Küresel çevre daha fazla analiz gerektiren istikrarlı bir endişe haline geldi. Üç romanda yaptığım analiz teşebbüsü ışığında, romanların toplumun gruplara ayrıldıktan sonra bireylere nasıl ayrıldığına dair örnekler ortaya koyduğu ve halkın bireyselliğinin gruplar oluşturduğunu ve grupların da toplumu



oluşturduğu iddia edilebilir. Bu tez, üç romanın, bireyler ve gruplar arasındaki aralarındaki boşlukların koparılması ya da farklılıklara kayıtsız kalınması gerektiği anlamına gelmediği halde farklılıkların devam ettiğini gösteriyor; Romanlar, farklılıkların vurgulanması gerektiğini önermektedir. Dolayısıyla bu tez, romanların ötekilik kavramının kendi içinde iki farklı ve yine de paralel anlamlar taşıdığını tasvir etmektedir: Birincisi, konu içindeki ve dışındaki güçlerin bir gruba ayrılmaz bir biçimde ayrılmış olarak kullanması ve ortaya çıkması; ve ikincisi, aynı zamanda, konunun gruptan kaçınılmaz olarak kopukluğunun farkına varır. Cleave'in romanları, bu ayrılmanın gerçek nedeninin kişinin daha büyük bir birimin parçası olmasını zorlayan topluluğun akran baskısı olduğuna işaret ediyor. Tek bir birimde müttefik olmayan birey olarak var olmamanın aynı zamanda birlik için toplumsal manifestoya tam olarak uymasının imkânsızlığı, manifestoda yer almamış olanları reddetme ihtiyacından kaynaklıdır; ki bu bir tür haksızlıktır. Ötekinin yaratılmasının arkasında bu yatıyor. Bu karşıt kuvvetler ya da baskılar tarafından yaratılan izolasyon, kişinin tek başına ayakta duracak birime paralel bir zemin aradığı sonsuz bir daire oluşturur. Cleave'in romanları, bireysellik ve grup kimliği arasında böyle bir denge elde etmenin kolay olmadığını, çünkü kişinin daha çok başarısızlığa uğrama ihtimalini arttırdığını önermektedir. Dolayısıyla romanlar, bu paralel zeminlerin araştırılmasının başarısız olduğuna ve başarı imkânının bir rüya olarak kalacağı fikrini savunuyorlar. Romanlar, ötekinin de tanınması durumunda dahi, bu tanımın önyargılı olacağını ve iki taraf arasında orijinal ve çarpıtılmamış iletişim üretmek için yeterli olmayacağını iddia ediyor.

Romanlar, ötekiye farklı bireysel yaklaşımlar olabileceğini gösteriyor. Bunlar, ötekinin ihmalinin aslında eşitlik imkânını hedefleyebileceğini ima eder. Farklılıklar görülmediğinde, her insan aynı tarafsızlığa sahip olur; bu da, tasvirin aşırı derecede genelleştirilmesine rağmen, aynı şekilde tasvir edilmesine izin verir. Öte yandan eşitlik her zaman gerçek eşitlik anlamına mı gelir? Bazen Nijeryalı Little Bee karakteri aracılığıyla *Little Bee* romanında olduğu gibi eşitsizlik anlamına da sahip olabilir. Bu roman, mültecinin kimliğinin kendisinin

bulduğu ülke tarafından tanınmasını zorlaştırdığını göstermektedir. Bir Afrikalı mülteci olarak Little Bee, Britanya'daki sığınma merkezinde olduğunda umutsuz ve istenmeyen bir durumdadır. İngilizler Little Bee'nin varlığına karşı ya hoş gitmeyen bir şekilde tepki veriyorlar ya da yüzeysel açıdan cömert eylemler yapıyorlar. Little Bee, iki tarafın denemek ne kadar zor olursa olsun, onunla diğer dünya arasındaki boşluğun devam ettiğinden emin. Little Bee istenmeyeceğine inanıyor. İngilizler onu istenmeyen gibi görmeye devam edecek.

Chris Cleave'in son romanı, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında Londra'da geçen *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, Afrikalı Amerikan karakteri Zachary aracılığıyla ırk ayrımı meselesini sunuyor. ABD'den İngiltere'ye gelen Afrikalı bir Amerikalı ailenin üyesi olan Zachary, İngiliz topluluğu tarafından okulda ve günlük hayatında kabul görmeye çalışılıyor. Zachary'nin ten renginin İngiliz topluluğunun diğer üyeleri tarafından algılandığı biçim, romanın beyaz tenli kahramanı olan Mary'nin tepkisiyle romanda yansıtılır:

*Incendiary*'de siyahi bir karakter etrafında çatışma olmamasına rağmen, roman etnik çatışmaya ve iki farklı topluluk arasındaki anlayış eksikliğine odaklanmaktadır: İslam toplumları ve arsanın etrafında bulunan komitenin etrafındaki beyaz gayrimüslim İngiliz topluluğu. Adsız karakter, takipçileri insanları bir futbol stadyumunda bombaladıktan sonra Usame bin Ladin'e mektup yazıyor. Cleave, aynı zamanda romanın içinde bir karakter olan bir kişiyi anlatıcı olarak vererek ve bu karakter/anlatıcı aracılığıyla öyküyü vermeyi seçti. Karakter içinde yaşadığı toplumu eleştiriyor ve yaşadığı en büyük çatışma, İngiliz topluluğunda sınıf dersinde analiz edeceğim sınıf sorunu ile ilgilidir. Bu bölümde, anlatıcı/ana karakter etnik farklılıklarla ilgili perspektifini ve deneyimlerini inceledim. Gönderilmemiş mektuplarında kahraman, Usame bin Ladin ile aşinalıkla konuşarak hayali bir bağ oluşturuyor. Romanın başında, yalnızca terör saldırısı için kendisini suçlamayacağını belirtiyor. Ana karakter diyor ki, bir suç varsa ve suçlu bulunacak birileri varsa, bu suçluluk hem Batı

hem de Doğu toplulukları tarafından, hem gayri-Müslim dünya hem de Müslüman dünya tarafından paylaşılmalıdır.

Bölüm 3, İngiltere'deki sosyal sınıf sorunlarıyla ilgili romanların yorumlarını inceler. Bu bölümde, tez üç romanda ortaya çıkarılan bazı sınıf konularını saptamaya çalışır. Romanlar, İngiltere'deki sınıfsal bölünmelerden bazılarını göstermekte ve farklı toplumsal sınıflara mensup farklı gruplar arasındaki mesafeyi göstermekte ve insanların sınıflarından ötürü ötekileştirmeye tabi olduklarını göstermektedir. Marx için sınıf, emek verilerek üretilen nesne üreticisi için yabancı olduğunda başlar. Emegin kendisine yabancılaşmıştır ve Marx'a göre bu doğayı insandan uzaklaştırır ve insanın kendi aktif görevinden, yaşamsal faaliyetinden uzak durmasıdır; bu sebeple de insan kendi türünden kopar. Tür ömrünü, bireysel yaşamı için bir araç haline getirir. Böylece, bireyi toplumsal bütünden ayırır. Bununla birlikte, Marx, üç romanda da görülebileceği gibi, toplum aracılığıyla bireyin ve doğanın gerçek birliğinin mümkün hale geldiğini öne sürmektedir. Marx ayrıca, toplumun doğadan çıkartılmış bir insanı kastederek, toplumun su kaçağı olduğunu iddia ettiklerini belirtmektedir. Marx'a göre toplum, doğal insanın özü, doğanın gerçek dirilişi, gerçekleşen doğa bilinci ve erkek doğanın hümanizmasıdır. Dolayısıyla toplumu bireye karşıt bir oluşum olraka görmemek gereklidir. Aşırı sahneler ve örnekler aracılığıyla romanlar, sosyal yapının değiştirilmesinin kolay olmadığını ve bir kişinin ilk denemesinde var olan sistemi değiştirmek değil sınıf sisteminin sahip olabileceği ve sergilediği eksiklikleri ve avantajları sorgulaması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Üç roman, kişinin doğacağı sınıfın seçim yoluyla doğmadığını ve dolayısıyla bir sınıfın alt sınıfın olumsuz durumları ve acıları için tamamen suçlanması fikrinin uygun olmadığını savunur. Romanlar, kişinin sistemi kısa sürede değiştiremeyeceği için, sistemi tamamen değiştirmeyi amaçlamak yerine, gerektiğini ne yapması ya da neyi hedeflemesi gerektiğini önermektedir. Kişinin ilk amacı, İngilizce sınıf sisteminin sergilediği ve sahip olduğu eksiklikleri ve olumsuz yolları sorgulamak ve değerlendirmek ve kişinin sınıf dengesini sağlaması için bir çözüm olarak çalışabilecek bir yol bulmaya çalışması

olmalıdır. Romanlar, İngiliz toplumu sınıflara ayrılmış olmasına rağmen, uzayda ve özellikle de Londra'da bir arada var olduğunu gösteriyor. Londra, üç romanda yüksek ve düşük gelirli kişilerin yan yana yaşadığı bir alan olarak tasvir edilmiştir. Romanların vurgu yaptığı şey İngiliz toplumunun ayrılmaz bir topluluk olma fikrinin sadece bir fantezi olmasıdır. Romanlar, İngiliz toplumunun insanların, etnik farklılıkları olmasa bile, sınıf temelinde ötekileştirmeyi tecrübe etmekten kurtulamayacağını iddia ediyorlar.

Roman, başkalarının üzüntülerine karşı empati kurmanın ve öteki olanın hissettiği şeyin ötekileştirme meselesini çözmede kilit noktası olduğuna işaret ediyor. Bununla birlikte, bu yalnızca bir rüya gibi sunulmaktadır. İdealdir, ancak tıpkı bir *Little Bee*'nin dalgaların içinde oynayan çocukların vizyonu veya Mary'nin dünyayı değiştirme girişimleri gibi bir rüyadır. Bu, hala aşılması gereken çok yol olduğu anlamına gelir. *Incendiary*, 21. yüzyılın başında Londra'daki işçi sınıfı ve mesleki orta sınıfları inceler ve karşılaştırır. Bir terörist saldırısından sonra Londra'daki İngiliz halkının hayatında egemen olduğu gösterilen etnik farklılıkların yanında, romanın ana karakteri, kendisiyle diğer karakterlerin karşılaştığı sosyal sınıflar arasındaki özellikleri ve farklılıkları gözlemler ve anlatır. Romanda, terör saldırısında dul kalan, eğitim görmemiş, bir doğu-ucu yakası Londra sakini, ev hanımı olan karakter yoluyla, Avrupalı olmayanların İngiliz halkının hayatına imrenmesi ya da tiksinti duymasının yanlış olduğu gösteriliyor, çünkü Avrupalı olmayanlar İngiltere'deki sosyal sınıfsal hayatın nasıl olduğunu bilmiyorlar. Roman vurguluyor ki Avrupalı olmayanların, Londra'da yaşayan insanların, örneğin gelişmekte olan ülkelerde yaşayan insanlardan daha iyi yaşıyor olduğunu varsaymaları yanlış. Romanda ana karakter üzerinden tasvir edilen sosyal düzen, birçok Londralı'nın kötü yaşam koşullarına sahip olduğunu ve kıskanacak bir hayatlarının olmadığını gösteriyor. Usame bin Ladin'e yazdığı mektupta, kahraman bakış açısını değiştirmeye çalışıyor ve Londra'nın lüks olmaktan ziyade Londralıların çetin yaşam koşullarına sahip olduğunu söylüyor. Hayallerde canlandırılan Londra, gerçek olmaktan uzak ve belki de asla gerçek olamaz.

*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven* romanı da İngiliz toplumundaki sınıf sorunlarına, Londralı karakterlerin tasvirleri yoluyla değinir, fakat diğer iki romana kıyasla daha erken bir dönemden bahseder. daha fazla önem verir. Silahlı çatışma ve şiddetin arka planı bu romanda da var. Romanın ana karakteri Mary, üst sınıf bir aileden geliyor. İkinci Dünya Savaşı son bulurken, Mary bunu halk arasında bir ayaklanma ve kendisi adına büyüdüğü toplumsal gruptan kopma fırsatı olarak görür. Toplumsal hayatın karmaşıklaştığı süreçte, emeğin üreticileri daha çeşitli bir versiyon oluştururlar. Böylece farklı emek türleri ortaya çıkar ve bu süreç sonucunda Marx'a göre, iş bölümü meydana gelir. Marx'ın bu konseptindeki sorun, insanı, pek çok farklı ve çeşitli yeteneklere sahip olmaktan ziyade bir kişinin yalnızca bir tek güçlü yeteneği varmış gibi hissettirdiği düşüncesinde yatmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, kişi kendisine bile yabancılaşır. Bu nedenle, kişi evrensel ile olan ilişkisini kaybeder ve yalnızca bireysel, çevresel alan içerisinde varlığını sürdürür. *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*'da Mary, evrensel olan ile bu temasın kaybolmasına bir örnektir. Önemli bir üst sınıf ailenin kızı olan Mary için, Mary'nin katıldığı çay ve öğle yemeği toplantıları başlı başına bir savaştır.

Cleave'in *Little Bee* romanında, Little Bee karakterinin siyah bir kız olduğu gerçeğinin yanısıra, Sarah ve Lawrence gibi onunla temas halinde bulunan İngiliz karakterleri arasında bir sınıf ayrımı vardır. Bu nedenle, romanın başında, Little Bee kendisi ve bir İngiliz sterlini madeni para arasında bir karşılaştırma yapar. Bu tez çalışmasının ırksal ötekeleştirme kısmında Little Bee için İngiliz sterlininin önemini belirttiğim gibi, İngiliz madeni parası önemsizdir ve satın alabileceği şeyler az miktarda olsa da, Little Bee'nin kendi şahsi kimliğinin aksine bu madeni para topluluk tarafından kolayca kabul edilebilir.

4. Bölüm'de, Chris Cleave'in üç romanı, kadın karakterlerin içinde bulunduğu dezavantajlı konum ve bunlara maruz kalmış cinsiyete bağlı ötekileştirme örneklerini gösterdiğini belirttim. İngiliz toplumu ve İngiliz kadın karakterleriyle ilişkili sahnelerle romanlar, hem hane halkında hem de İngiliz toplumundaki genel toplumsal yapıda kadınların kendilerini nasıl dezavantajlı

konumda bulduklarını ve cinsiyet ayrımını gösteriyor. Üç roman cinsiyet sözcüğünün insanların aslında anlamadıkları kurallara uymak zorunda oldukları ve gereksiz buldukları toplumsal açıdan önyargılı bir oluşum olduğunu ortaya koyuyor. Bu rahatsız edici sistemde, kadın kendini kendisine atanmış toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine uymaya çalışıyor olarak bulabilir. Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*'de işaret ettiği gibi, her dişi insana bir kadın denemez. Bir kadın olarak tanımlanmak cesaret ve bir davaya bağlılık gerektirir. Kadın, kendisini reddetmeye hazır erkek egemen toplum içinde bir yer bulmaya çalışır. Beauvoir der ki; kadın olun, kadın olsun, kadın ol. Yani her kadın insan mutlaka bir kadın değildir; kadınlık olarak bilinen bu gizemli ve nesli tükenmekte olan realiteye katılmalıdır. Kadının varlığı otonom değildir; erkek kimliğiyle ilişkisi ile ortaya çıkar. İnsanlık erkektir ve insanlık kendini kadında değil de kendisiyle ilişkili olarak tanımlıyor; kadın özerk bir varlık olarak görülmez. Erkek kimliğinde varlık olgusu kadındaki kadar sorunlu değildir; kadının kendine bakış açısı da sorunludur. Kadın kendini yalnızca erkek kimliğine göre düşünür. Kendi kimliğini, öteki bir deyişle, erkek ve kadın kimliğini gözlemlediği kontrast üzerine inşa eder. Bu durumda, “öteki” sözcüğü onun kimliğinin çekirdeğini oluşturuyor. Kendisiyle ilişkisi yokken, insana göre belirlenmiş ve farklılaşmış; kadın temelin önünde olan önceliğe sahip değildir. Erkek öznedir, mutlaktır. Kadın ötekidir. Cleave'in üç romanı, kadının erkek egemen toplum tarafından nasıl görüldüğü ve ona verilen toplumsal cinsiyetle ilgili roller ve görevler nedeniyle kadınların ötekeleştirmeden kurtulamayacağını iddia ediyor.

Toplumsal cinsiyet, içinde yaşadığımız toplumun bir oluşumdur, oysa cinsiyet, doğumdan bu yana var olan fiziksel farklılıklarla ilgilidir ve yaygın ve çoğunlukla kabul gören ayırt edici bir sistem biçimidir. Toplumsal cinsiyet kavramı, herbiri önyargı içeren sözleşmeler sonradan oluşturulmuş kurallardan ve beklentilerden doğan ayrımcılığa ilişkindir. Hem erkekler hem de kadınlar, genellikle mantığa meydan okuyan ve haksız ve gereksiz olarak adlandırılabilirler, cinsiyete dayalı kurallar ya da uygulamalarla karşılaşılır. Bu rahatsızlık verici sistemde, kadınlar özellikle kendilerine atanan cinsiyet rollerine

uymaya çabalayabilirler. Sınıf ve ırk konularıyla ilgili bölümlerde de belirtildiği gibi, cinsiyet meselesiyle birlikte, erkek ve kadının gördüğü muameledeki farklılıklar bir tarafın yararına çalışıyor olabilirken, aynı kodlar ve farklılıklar diğer tarafı muzdarip edebilmektedir. Toplumsal cinsiyete bir tema olarak cevap veren Cleave romanı *Incendiary*'dir. Bu bölümde uzun zamandan beri tartışılan ilk romanda, kadın kimliği ve cinsiyete dayalı olan, kadınların karşılaştığı sorunlar iki farklı kadın karakterle (isimsiz işçi sınıfı anlatıcı/ana karakter ve orta sınıf bir kadın Petra). *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, cinsiyete dayalı ötekileştirme sorunu üç üst sınıf karakterin deneyimleriyle sunulur: Mary, arkadaşı Hilda ve Mary'nin annesi Bayan North. *Little Bee*'de cinsiyete göre ayrılmış ötekileştirme küçük bir temadır ve çoğunlukla yoksulluk ve sosyal gücün eksikliği alt sınıfları oluşturur. İngiliz sınıf sistemi içindeki konumu açıklanmayan orta sınıf Sarah ve Nijeryalı mülteci kızların deneyimlerinde ötekileştirme görülür.

*Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*, toplum tarafından tanınması gereken kadın çabalarının ve mücadelelerinin başarısız olduğunu ve sorunun asıl çekirdeğinin kadınların kendi kimliklerini nasıl algıladıkları ve toplum içindeki görevleri sormadan yerine getirmeleriyle ilgilidir. Roman, kadınların yüklendikleri ve yükletildikleri görevleri göz önünde bulundurarak kendi kimliklerinin farkına varmayı düşünmediklerini ve bu düzenin değiştirilebileceğine dair inançlarının olmadığını belirtiyor. *Incendiary*'de kadının İngiliz toplumundaki konumu eleştiriliyor. Bununla birlikte roman, İngiliz toplumundaki erkek nüfusun sadece kadın kimliğiyle ilgili bir perspektifi sorgulamıyor; romanda da İngiliz toplumundaki kadın nüfusun sahip olduğu perspektif hakkında yorum yapıyor. Kadının kendisi için hissettiği öz saygı eksikliği roman *Incendiary* tarafından eleştiriliyor. *Little Bee* karakteri yoluyla, romanda kadınların kontrol altına alınma korkusu ve cinsel kimliklerini İngiliz toplumunda korkusuzca yaşamak için güven eksikliği yaşadıkları gösteriliyor. Ayak parmaklarını oje ile boyaması gibi *Little Bee*'nin hücrelerinde tek başına gizlice yaptığı eylemler, kadının kimliğinin kontrol altında tutulduğunu, hapsedildiğini ve ortaya özgürce çıkmasının yasaklandığını ve erkeklerin kontrolünde olduğunu ortaya koyuyor.

Bu, kadınların gerçek kimliklerini yaşamaktan alıkonulduklarını ve mahrum bırakıldıklarını göstermektedir. Kadın, toplumsal yapıdaki rolünden dolayı erkeğe fiziksel görünüşü aracılığıyla bile olsa benzemeye çalıştığında başarısız olduğuna ve olacağına karar verir; çünkü bir erkek gibi davranmaya devam etse bile, kadın sadece bir nesnedir ve erkeğin arzusu. *Little Bee*, erkeğin bakışının ne kadar vahşi ve kötü olduğunu düşünürse düşünsün, kendi orijinal cinsel kimliğini korur ve kendi kimliğine saygılı olduğunu söyler. *Little Bee*, cinsel kimliği ile barış içindedir. Kadınlık kimliğini günışığında yaşamak istiyor ve kadınlığını cezalandırma merkezli toplumsal cinsiyet ortamında gizlemek zorunda kalmaktan hoşlanmıyor. *Little Bee*'de, kadının kendi kontrolü dışında belirlenen bazı sosyal kodlara göre yaşamak ve giyinmek zorunda kaldığı gösteriliyor. Sarah karakteri örneği ile romanda bunun netleştirildiği gözlemlenebilmektedir. Bir derginin editörü olarak Sarah, hiç kimsenin kendisine bunu yapması gerektiğini söylenmese de, çalışanlarının kendisini dinlemelerini sağlamak için ve kendi personeli üzerinde kontrol ve güç sağlayabilmek için belirli kıyafetler giymesi gerektiğine karar verir. Mesleki çalışma yaşamına adanmış güçlü bir çalışan kadını ima edecek şekilde giyinmese ciddiye alınmayacağını düşünüyor.



## APPENDIX B: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

### YAZARIN

Soyadı : Tekşen Memiş

Adı : Ayşe

Bölümü : İngiliz Edebiyatı

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Othering in Chris Cleave's Novels *Incendiary*, *Little Bee*, and *Everyone Brave Is Forgiven*

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans  Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınmaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: