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Migration And Mobilities In Post-Colonial Fiction: A Study of Chris Cleave's *Little Bee*

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how Chris Cleave's Little Bee utilizes themes of mobility and immobility to explore the challenges faced by migrants in a postcolonial context. By analyzing the protagonist's experiences in both Nigeria and the UK, the study reveals how cultural bereavement, existential anxieties of waiting, and struggles with integration shape the migrant experience. Furthermore, the novel's portrayal of violence and conflict disrupts normative understandings of migration, prompting critical reflection on issues of national identity, cultural adaptation, and humanitarian responses. Ultimately, this analysis demonstrates how postcolonial fiction can enrich mobility studies by offering a nuanced perspective on the complexities of migration.

Keywords: Postcolonial Migration; Mobility Studies; Immobility; Diaspora; Postcolonial Fiction.

Introduction

This paper examines how Chris Cleave's "Little Bee" intertwines themes of mobility, economics, and waiting to explore the complexities of migration in a globalized world. Drawing on Lagji's ([2018]) framework of "waiting in motion" and Žižek's ([2017]) critique of mobility disparity, I argue that Cleave utilizes the concept of waiting to reveal the anxieties and frustrations experienced by migrants navigating bureaucratic systems and social expectations. By analyzing how characters like Bee experience both physical movement and emotional stasis, the paper demonstrates how "Little Bee" enriches our understanding of migration beyond simplistic narratives of movement. Furthermore, the novel's exploration of the interconnected lives of Bee, a Nigerian asylum seeker, and Sarah, a British editor, highlights the impact of global forces on individual experiences. Ultimately, this analysis aims to contribute to the dialogue between mobility studies and postcolonial literature, demonstrating how "Little Bee" expands the parameters of migration narratives through its nuanced portrayal of waiting and human connection.

Waiting, Mobility, and Migration: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on *Little Bee*

Primarily, mobility involves a significant waiting phase. Thus, Bee's case can be understood as an overwhelming attempt to perceive global behaviour toward the powerful trap of economic interests, which involves making the refugees wait for years before they are deported to their home states. Nation states' imposition of such policies towards the refugees is, as Haas (2017) calls it, a source of trauma that is more poignant than the issues back home (2). A victim of

the politicization and securitization of migrants. Bee's post-arrival to the UK debunks the ever-pleasant slogan of the land of rights and democracy—the system is not willing to accept her and the people are less confident of Bee's qualities as a British woman. The discouraging situation is a part of the domestic policies of many Western nations and thus the immigrants' harshness is the result of their "labelling, defined, oppression, ex-communication, and even physically distorted by society" (Žižek 2017, 22). Waiting is a nuance of progress which according to David Bissell (2007), is an event happening in that space of travel (281)—"waiting" and arrival are intrinsically similar as the waiting continues even when the migrants reach a destination. The investigation by Deirdre Conlon (2011) on the gendered coding of mobility and immobility will be connected to the text of *Little Bee*, and a study conducted in 2017 by Bridgit Haas.

Tim Creswell's (2010) views that the 'fundamental stories of modernity have been built around the bare fact of movement. Mobility as freedom, modernism as progression' (20). These issues are taken into consideration during the reading of *Little Bee* to examine the literary and imaginative devices used to depict the experiences of the migrants who are both citizens and non-citizens. The thin line between a citizen and a migrant is exposed as a result. Despite the presence of illegal or unconventional means of transportation, Cleave's story narrates the issues outside the text, where the options are either meagre and restricted or totally denied. The intention is to explore *Little Bee* beyond conventional constraints, examining how waiting and (im)mobility persist even after migrants reach their envisioned western destinations. The waiting periods introduce additional settings not inherently linked to movement, as exemplified by Bee's portrayal of her village in the ghetto and during travel to the city. Within this domain, as elucidated by Conlon, two fundamental choices emerge: movement and the potential for movement. Conlon argues that waiting and mobility define the essential aspects shaping migrants' experiences, outlining the geographical and temporal dimensions of stillness. (2011, 354).

Žižek not only draws attention to concrete global policies but also vehemently critiques Western open-door policies, contending that such initiatives may lead to unwanted delays even after the arrival immigrants and asylum seeker to the west. Apparently, it will yield more negative outcomes for both the host cultures and migrants. Žižek's non-fluidity of migrants' nature is essentially an outcome of unquenchable capitalistic desires. Thus, when modern economies require an inexpensive labor force, they often turn to weaker economies, where a cheap workforce becomes available to fuel the capitalistic markets (Žižek 2017, 48), therefore, thus the capitalist world is inviting people who are not destined to settle in the West even after they arrive there. Thus, by debating migration through fiction, sociology and economics, I will demonstrate how the literary response includes an imaginative but powerful portrayal of the multifaceted issue of mobility and immobility.

Contemporary sociology has focused on mobility, the demise of the nation-state, flexible citizenship, and permeable political boundaries (Turner 2007, 287). "Stillness in a Mobile World" by Bissell and Fuller is perhaps the most famous definition of the interaction between mobilities and immobilities: "It is easy [...] to miss the fact that the intensity we experience from a journey arises at least in part from the fact that we are often immobile concerning the moving bicycle or plane," they assert (Bissell and Fuller 2011, 25). The moving practices completely encompass various forms of immobility (Cresswell 2012). Over the past ten years,

the new mobilities paradigm has surged to prominence across social sciences (Bissell and Fuller 2011). Cresswell (2010) defines movement as the overall fact of displacement before the type, methods, and social ramifications are taken into account (18). By mixing reality and fiction, the authors bring immobility and mobility in the same frame as the intermingling of such concepts would be difficult to sketch outside the fictional world. Travel time is therefore not wasted, because mobility is not a continuous process but rather consists of temporary activities (Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006, 11). As a result, the concepts of mobility and immobility can overlap and be interdependent both in context and meaning.

Little Bee, like many other fictional settings, for example, *Exit West*, provides spaces like waiting areas (Cleave 2009) waiting for an interview, queues, and ghettos for portraying continuity even after the arrival to the host culture. The author mentions: "I thought these dark green squares were parks and gardens, but now I saw that they were just empty spaces, waiting for something to be built" (233). Spaces, both physically and conceptually, offer readers a cross-sectional perspective on mobility and immobility, activity, and inactivity. According to Bissell, a prevailing notion of mobility involves a constructive sense of waiting, a sentiment he finds curiously lacking in current and emerging mobility literature (Bissell 2007). Bissell argues that "the event of waiting is not the immobile being-in-the-world that it has perhaps traditionally been characterized as" (55). In *Little Bee* the time waiting in the queue is suddenly slow, and keeps testing the endurance of the individual. The passages to the destination go through a morbid waiting period. Bissell believes that the nuances such as pauses, inactivity, and suspension, become more interesting areas to study (2007, 294). Hence, waiting is a hybrid and multipronged concept in fiction and is not contradictory to mobility but a link between two interactive states (284).

The migrant's expression or language may be linked to their feelings of waiting (Turnbull 2015). In addition to the textures and tempos that we typically assume waiting to have, waiting, according to Rebecca Rotter's (2015) analysis of refugees' accounts of their feelings of long waits for asylum, is a complex dialectical process that involves both a sense of empty, idle, suspended time and a kind of emotionally and cognitively demanding, active, productive time (Rotter 2015, 86). Everyday occurrences like waiting for hearings, interviews, rejections, and reschedules come together to provide a concrete and organized representation of daily life. Rotter is less interested in the events typically characterizing the ideas of mobility and argues that more suffering ensues in the waiting periods. The entire procedure appears to be slow, and disconnected, undercutting any assumptions (Rotter 2015, 84). The power of the movement is often construed as "friction", Cresswell comments (2014, 108). Friction slows and stops the mobility of people, things, and conceptions, and it sometimes allows them to surf different levels (Cresswell 2010, 114). Phillip Vannini (2014) argues that the rules of the common perceptions of travel are challenged in the western world (110). Nation-states enforce the rules and a centralised mechanism denies migrants basic rights, political representation, and other freedoms. Elizabeth Olson (2015) expresses this fear and explains that space and waiting come together to produce and maintain harmful arrangements of power and inequality (517).

Refugees and asylum seekers are acutely cognizant of the waiting which additionally genders potential movement as threatening or "authentic": "as a result, the experiences that asylum seekers have with waiting directly contradict the hegemonic masculinity shades that they are

given when travelling” (Conlon 2011, 357). The waiting for the refugees and migrants, Haas concludes, simultaneously develops them into citizens-in-waiting and deportees-in-waiting and their waiting was neither neutral nor benign, but rather strongly hard to deal with and profoundly distressing (2017, 75). So practically the transition is more of a rapture in the conditions than a transition to a better status, she argues (81). The delay involves multiple reasons including bureaucratic hurdles functioning like a black hole in the legalization process of the immigrants.

The recentring of physicality helps us sense place, position, and displacement and set emotional boundaries, according to Sheller and Urry (2016, 216). Literature helps readers reimagine mental and geographical boundaries by recreating and going beyond the “real.” As a result, the ability will allow a more generous look at options and create more goals for future studies. By working within the parameters or visualised imaginaries of the migration crisis, contemporary migrant literature will expand socio-economic and political perspectives. Future studies motivated by the new mobilities hypothesis, according to Sheller and Urry, “will have to investigate various “transfer points” and “places of in-between-ness” in settings like waiting areas and lounges (2016, 219). Refugee camps, border hideouts, ghettos, and boundless areas of waiting should be added to a list of zones encouraging the migrants to wait.

Anne Marie Fortier (2014) introduced an interdisciplinary approach to migration, and mobilities and linked them to different postcolonial and neo-colonial histories, and evaluated the representation of supremacy and domination, desire and changes in the identity reclamation. Fortier makes a relationship between literature and migration, emphasizing their importance and the ability for both to represent cultural imaginaries through the queries of what is at stake and how migration is envisioned (2014, 69). To assess migratory imaginaries, Fortier explicitly recommends humanities research, including “film, literature, photography, art, or other cultural productions,” (2014, 69). Through reflection on the major issues, fiction assists in our understanding of the specifics of borders between mobility and immobility and teaches us how to make sense of movement and stillness holistically. The defining and emphatic power of literature can offer solutions to and get inspiration from migration crises through the presentation of reality by means of fictional situations (Merriman and Pearce 2017, 497). *Little Bee* enables the reader to change the modes of seeing reality; as Baudrillard (1994) describes such writing as hyperreal literature, it possesses the captivating and convincing capacity to construct an independent and immersive world.

Bee on the move, awaiting arrival

Though Bee reaches a so-called destination, she awaits arrival. Her stagnation is both from her internal conflict and external factors. The reader goes through into the life of a young girl named Bee who becomes ensnared in the complex web of neo-colonization and the relentless pursuit of a town’s precious natural resources. This power struggle embroils not only the local mafia but also the formidable state apparatus, highlighting the pervasive influence of modern nation-states on the world stage. Bee’s experiences shed light on the intricate dynamics at play as various forces vie for control over the town’s valuable resources. The author’s narrative unfolds to mirror the harsh realities of our contemporary world, where the interference of the so-called developed nations is laid bare. The story serves as a poignant reflection of the ongoing struggles caused by the influence and intrusion of powerful nations

into the affairs of less developed regions. While the story of *Little Bee* is an individual reference, the pain and agony associated with the story are cross-continental. Texts indeed “create” worlds to model theoretical possibilities, as Merriman and Pearce acknowledge (2017, 502), but they also index descriptive and normative statements about the world beyond the book. Reading books written several decades or centuries ago with historical distance makes it easier for readers to recognize how fiction engages with cultural imaginaries. The struggle is long; and when she loses her elder sister, killed by the mafia, she runs to save her life. There are multiple layers of the story including the involvement of the modern states in the formation of the refugees and the subsequent rejection of the migrants. The story implies that the modern world has a key role in the creation of the migrants, but the so-called modern states fail to protect them when they reach the neo-colonizers’ homes. The story begins with the discovery of oil, foregrounding the fact that the peace of the neo-colonized states is disturbed by modern economic ventures. Oil is easily mobilized in the world but people from the same town are not allowed to move away from the crisis. The migrant with monetary advantage can also reach developed nations and take them to “Queens land”. Though there are multiple sources of transportation and movement is visible, there is a constant stillness in the migrants’ struggle to move in their essential statuses, which ultimately leads to Bee’s deportation along with many others.

The boat floats carrying Bee to the UK but does Bee float with it? The location where Bee begins her journey marks the beginning of a stalemate where she runs in a mirage. The use of a boat to move and get away from trouble eventually formulates the cause for her rejection: illegal migration. The UK authorities do not acknowledge the fact that while in trouble, anyone could use illegal means to run away from the threat. Reflecting the narrowmindedness of the migrant policies, Cleave exposes the lack of acceptance of migration as a *fait accompli*. The authorities fail to assess the severity of the issue and challenge the spontaneous flow of migrants into the host culture. However, more than the issues of politics and the impacts of politicization of migration is practically cornered by authorities. Bee finds herself repeatedly waiting in various locations, carefully assessing the prospects that could ensure her survival. At times, her existence seems to fracture into multiple facets. Her arduous journey, marked by relentless struggles, paradoxically fuels her determination to break free from the stagnation that time imposes upon her. Even after months of traveling, she appears as though she has made no progress whatsoever (Cleave 2009, 233). Similar to the gradual progression of a slow-moving queue, this transition is a prolonged, agonizing, and precarious journey. At times, she succumbs to the inertia, trying to defy the relentless advance of time. Indeed, the characters find themselves trapped in a relentless cycle of unprecedented events, causing their actions to stagnate and rendering Bee, Sarah, and Andrews physically immobile. The tangible sensations they experience become entwined with the nightmarish chronicle of unfolding events, presenting a challenge that can only be resolved by Bee confronting the perpetrators directly. There is a cycle of events that either does not allow Bee to move or slows her down:

I stowed away in a great steel boat, but the horror stowed away inside me. When I left my homeland, I thought I had escaped—but out on the open sea, I started to have nightmares. I was I to suppose I had left my country with nothing. It was a heavy cargo that I carried. (Cleave 2009, 116)

This is also true about other characters like Andrews and Sarah who fall within Bee's space and most likely get influenced and affected by her circumstances.

For each character, mobility transforms into an inescapable state of stasis. Sarah and Andrews, the hosts, attempt to erase the traumatic beach incident in which Bee's sister was brutally murdered. Their premature avoidance of confronting the guilt for their inability to save her ultimately leads to Andrews' untimely demise. (Cleave 2009, 380). The beach incident leaves Sarah, Andrews, and Bee, with a stark memory and a frozen junction where they meet and it continues to exist after they move physically' Bee's arrival at the couple's home in the UK and A'drew's death serve to strengthen the relationship—but at the same time, Sarah declares that they did not move away from the beach incident—one tangible reminder of the beach calamity is 'arah's severed finger. They would not have been motivated to help Bee as a refugee if they had not experienced the calamity; so, the past motivates the present. The shared experience of seeing a re'ugee's birth on a Nigerian beach and the memories that form the foundation of their tremendously life-altering experiences bind all of the individuals who live in the UK together.

The events in this regard give the characters an odd quality. *Little Bee* helps the reader in comprehending the complex experiences of refugees, including memory, culture, insight, and knowledge of how the mind shapes behaviour. Like *Exit West*, where “the passage was both like dying and like being born” (Hamid 2017, 104), *Little Bee* goes through emotional and psychological contrasts. The enraged murderers following Bee to murder her and her escape capture the reality of the migrants' jarring experience of transition which is like experiencing a rebirth. Bee mentions: “One of them was horror, but the other one was hope. I realized I had killed myself back to life” (Cleave 2009, 123). Through the course of Bee's stay in the UK, she is confronted with duality and paradoxical existence. Bee lives with a dual uncertainty of time. The contrasting existential experiences of migrants' rebirth are a reflection of the dual uncertainty of time, according to Haas. In the process, change is at once lost and it is imminent (Haas 2017, 82). The contrast is further worsened by modern nation-states tagging migrants as legal or illegal. Mr. Ayres remarks: “It's bloody typical of this government” [...] “I don't give a damn if you're legal or illegal” (Cleave 2009, 148). The contrast also goes on when she is between the extremes of refuge and no refuge, she is at once within the law and outside the law. Cleave declares, “We must understand that there is no refuge” (115). The refugees will be massacred if they are repatriated; otherwise, they will starve to death because they are unable to work and support themselves (173). The description of “horror” transferring into the idea of “escape” and into the sea conveys a strong reflection of contrasts. The sea is at once the harbinger of mobility and immobility and escape and detention.

For migrants' freedom and movement are simply staying outside the law, which Cleave refers to as a “second kind of freedom” (2009, 126) and therefore, the definitions of a citizen and an immigrant widely differ from each other. Even refugees are called “a halfling, a child of an unnatural mating” (36). And the obliqueness draws into her existence and represents a resurgent image of change and unchanged and of mobilization-immobilization, taking place within her character. She is in a continuous dilemma: “neither a woman nor a girl, a creature who had forgotten her language and learned yours, whose past had crumbled to dust” (58). Over time, Bee's image of herself dilutes into a state of nothing when she cannot practically announce her identity.

Cleave insinuates that illegal immigrants tend to live in a “grey area. I thought about how I was going to live. I thought about the years, living as quiet as could be. Hiding my colours and living in the twilight and the shadows [...] Fear is a constant accomplice” (2009, 178). Though *Little Bee* starts with a young girl overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the expected opportunities in the UK, her skin colour, language and priorities bar her from integration. Later, she considers herself to be a victim of the colonizers, “coughing up colonial waters from her lungs” (35). There exists a desperation of both the hosts and the migrants: “At our end, the road finished where we sat” (117). The grey area is essentially a by-product of the unnatural mating between the West and the neo-colonized cultures. Cleave's characters being present in “the ‘‘o go’’ areas of Western cultures also trigger a thorough process aimed at impeding the already slow integration progress.

The time in Bee's life is slow and thick; but it becomes one of the most interesting times in her narrations, as she indulges in long asides and wishful thoughts and productive sessions with her own identity. Her spaces for waiting also incorporate queues and the wait outside Sarah's house where she sees Andrews commit suicide. Her waiting times make extra spaces for her which are not associated with her physical presence and location. The refugee camp, the waiting queue, and various locations like Andrews and Sarah's house, along with the waiting lounge in the deportation centre, are interconnected within an unconventional temporal and spatial framework, different from the regular understanding of time and space. The act of leaving the refugee camp is notably marked by a shift in the flow of time. Likewise, the narrative of Andrews committing suicide is encapsulated within a specific timeframe.

Like a supernatural force, the Nigerian beach functions as a powerful influence capable of bringing people to the centre of a time loop. Bee, Sarah, and Andrews revisit an existential moment through recurring recollections. One of the time loops, the murder scene, is embedded in the minds of the individuals, compelling them to visit the place both physically and mentally. Sarah's chopped-off finger and ensuing self-reproach force Andrew to commit suicide; “It was depression [of not being able to help Bee and her sister] that killed Andrews, of course—depression and guilt” (Cleave 2009, 70). Bee wants to use her imagination to change the inhabitants of London into those from her Nigerian town. She recognises her family members in the faces of the onlookers: “My sister, my mother, my father and my uncle. Every face I see, I am looking for them in it” (198)). On another occasion, she sees, “Once I saw my mother, but when I looked more closely, she was somebody else's” (473). But even as the tension escalates in Bee's life, she waits calmly.

The instance of the temporality of waiting as a shared one appears as the foundation of migrants' existence. The extreme movements in everyday life become invalid in the migrants' life—it is thus not a part of a highly active life. Bee finds the buzz around her in the new place, but she fails to find momentum in others' movements. There is a constant temporality in Bee's status as she is neither an equal human being nor a refugee; she is treated as none. Even as an author, Cleave fails to see Bee as an equal human being. Cleave sympathizes with the African girl but, somehow, he belittles her and tags her with a mocking name “Little Bee,” who can only speak a language more like a Bee humming: “in some language that sounded like butterflies drowning in honey” (2009, 19). Bee resembles a honeybee, which buzzes around with no real progress or movement. Nevertheless, in the line drawn between the

victim and the offender, the author declares: "You're the brave little refugee girl, 'nd I'm the selfish bastard" (269).

Both the fluidity of a migrant character and the host's incapacity to broaden the liveable sphere for the migrant meet at a junction of immobility in Cleave's text. Sarah holds the belief that Bee's sister perished due to Andrew's inability to effectively handle the crisis. The moment of the murder, therefore, evolves into a lingering sense of guilt for Andrews, encapsulated by his sentiment that he "wouldn't cut off one finger to save you." (422). On similar grounds, the lingering time/space moves on with no pace as the two leading characters, from two entirely different backgrounds seem to converge into each other by chance; one is with the UK identity and the other without any document. For Bee, the process of documentation seeking is challenging. While going through the process, Bee remembers the moments spent with her friends and siblings in her hometown.

Bee takes advantage of her slow time and gives it purpose and substance. She can navigate the intricate dialectical process within herself, make judgments, and put her decisions into action. She uses it to prepare herself for potential interviews and hearings and to portray the always active viewpoint on immigrants—thus, it is not a moment that is idle or suspended. Nevertheless, Bee has more pain while waiting than she does while trying to flee the sense of suspended time in the migrant camp. The entire process seems to be taking forever, which causes anxiety, panic, and suicidal thoughts. She passionately waits and learns "Queen's English" while in the detention centre (Cleave 2009, 8). The wait slowly redeems Bee's past and tempts her to travel into her past imagination. Her past and Nigerian life seem more vocal and colourful, whereas her present is merely a wishful desire, which seems to fade away. Therefore, her past time seems more fluid and active than her present. The idle time also lets her go back into her memories, and it is also a cathartic process to undo the present crisis, as the author declares: refugees do not really leave their country behind; instead, everything moves with them (436). In terms of identity, Bee's national belonging, which formulates her character before the beach incident and coming to the UK, travels with her throughout her time and helps her to converse with herself in the detention centre. She conjures up situations where she would be in constant debate about her past, through her friends' reincarnations. The incapacity to readily accept and jump headlong into British society illustrates her character—thus, in waiting, she meets her past self. Her leisure time helps her navigate her weaknesses strengths and purpose and redeems her commitment through her memories.

The corners like the refugee camp offer the creation of new formations. Though it is transnational, the refugee camp has formulated a change in the behaviour of inhabitants and the securitization further establishes a complicated relationship between the migrants and the modern nation-state. Soon after the realization that the migrants are different from the majority in the UK, Bee formulates a group, calling it "We de United Nations" (Cleave 2009, 22), which reflects that without hybridity the nation states become illusory, and hybridity is a transitional and never-ending movement. Cleave writes about the skin transition which reflects movement within the human body, and a shift which is irrepressible: "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" (183). Bee's establishment of the United Nations can be seen as a manifestation of her detachment from the present, signaling a yearning to

reconnect with her past. It represents an ideological consolidation, transcending religious, linguistic, and ethnic barriers that might otherwise impede their collective progress in the long term. Also, Bee's long waiting in a queue and her perception of the waiting can be regarded as multifaceted temporalities, dimensions, and approaches in the conceptualization of waiting. The word "queue" is mentioned more than eighteen times in the text. Mostly, it is mentioned in the context of the tedious wait for the refugee's legal pursuits: "I pointed to the third girl in the queue, the one with the bag of documents" (19).

Global scale mobility lies in the power of money, Cleave suggests. Women cannot "earn money," which Bee suggests "has all the tricks of a sorcerer" (2009, 22). The better-looking women are suited for Western culture to remain fit for integration while others "are sent home," and as a result, "the UK" becomes lively and more beautiful" (25). Men and women are mainly segregated because there are so many refugees with different financial backgrounds. Men who work at the detention centre frequently threaten the women; the author compares them to ravenous wolves that should be kept away from the women at night (29). In terms of welcoming poor and powerless migrants, the UK is no better "than Nigerian shores where men and dogs hunt women together" (296). In the UK, adjusting to a new life where men and women coexist, is frequently simpler, but Bee finds it difficult: "For the entire two years I did not smile or even look in any man's face" (32) as she feared molestation in the refugee camp. Men, Money and authorities work together by further challenging women's existence in the contemporary migration process.

As mentioned, Cleave suggests that past identities move with the migrants to new lands (Cleave 2009, 436) therefore, there is always a shadow of immobile past associating with Bee. Bee's life is notable for both her struggle for becoming British and her already being British in the Nigerian skin. Bee is physically present in the UK, but her spirit is elsewhere—there is a lack of movement. She treasures the memories of the past and has a stronger connection to it than to her time in London. The past gives Bee the will to live, helps her reconnect to memories, cheers her up when she is depressed, and gradually builds and reconstructs Bee's behavioural pattern. Additionally, it establishes Bee's position within the host society. Bee needs to understand the British way of life because she is seeking shelter in the UK. It is, therefore, forced conversion. To comply with the host culture, Bee must suppress her past as an undocumented immigrant. The circumstances finally characterise her as more Nigerian than a British woman, resulting in her exile despite her desire and determination to forget her background. *Little Bee* emphasizes that an asylum seeker is finally denied recognition because she cannot let go of her history, though she fulfils other concerns such as language and ethics of the hosts. It is contrary to Giorgio Agamben's (1995) idea that a surrendering refugee will more readily integrate into the new community and have the opportunity to become a citizen (96). Bee's desires and dreams find it contradictory to the black hole of Nigerian identity that pulls her back every time she struggles to get away with it.

Cleave feels that people are exiles from reality and refugees in their separate pasts, and the majority of his characters are refugees in their private spheres (2009, 65). Bee finds herself bound to her past, cherishing the moments spent in the small town with her family and friends. Following the incidents on the Nigerian beach, Andrews seeks solace in death. Andrews is forewarned by the hunter: "You won't forget. Perhaps one day you will discover you lost more than just your finger when you awaken in Kingston-upon-Thames" (2009, 250).

As Bee arrives, Andrews is virtually insane (418). For Andrews, death seems like an acceptable escape and a motion while he is stuck in a quagmire of immobility. The condition is thus defined: "It's where you go when a new name, or a mask and cape, can no longer hide you from yourself. It's where you run to when none of the principalities of your conscience will grant you asylum" (40).

Conclusion

Within the paradigm of post-colonial literary discourse, *Little Bee* presents an intricately structured, arduous odyssey undertaken by the migrants, deftly juxtaposing the literary portrayals of their ceaseless mobility with moments of profound immobility. By exposing the systemic issues within the realm of global politics, and shedding light on the commodification of individuals within the modern economy, Cleave's mobility encompasses a myriad of dimensions; the author not only draws inspiration from existing notions but also astutely interrogates them, thus enriching the discourse surrounding the concept. The paper explored the inherent tension that arises from the state economies' insatiable demand for adaptability and their unwavering pursuit of territorial sovereignty' Bee's journey to the United Kingdom, clearly concealed within a vessel of cargo, serves as a poignant exemplification of the dehumanisation, commodification, and subsequent marginalisation experienced by numerous migrants within the host society. By exploring mobility, the paper sheds light on the complex interplay between individuals and their environments, as well as the transformative processes that occur during the experience of movement and stasis. The utilisation of physical and mental spaces of anticipation within the narrative of *Little Bee* serves as a profound means through which readers can apprehend the intricate dynamics of mobility, idleness, and action. The domain of post-colonial fiction serves as a tool to understand the intricate dynamics surrounding migration and mobilities. Literature offers readers a profound opportunity to apprehend the intricate dynamics of mobility and stasis, as portrayed through a rich tapestry of narratives that interweave diverse and multifaceted identities. Moreover, it promotes the cultivation of interdisciplinary approaches, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the mobility in the modern interdisciplinary contexts. Beyond sociological perceptions, characters like Bee, Sarah, and Andrews find themselves ensnared within a web of circumstances wherein movement is incessantly controlled by the shackles of immobility. It also connects to the discussions on the delicate balance between legality and illegality, the dichotomy of seeking refuge while simultaneously being denied it, and the enigmatic nature of existing within a dual and paradoxical realm. In this context, the Nigerian shoreline assumes the role of a formidable agent, exerting its influence as a compelling catalyst that ensnares individuals within a temporal cycle. Bee as a migrant and her relentless pursuit of citizenship serve as a testament to the enduring challenges encountered by individuals caught in the web of post-colonial mobilities. In *Little Bee*, Cleave extends an invitation to readers to engage in profound contemplation regarding the ramifications of migration and mobilities, situated within the policies of the post-colonial world.

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