Ideas Of Orientalism And Othering In A Small Place By Jamaica Kincaid And Heart Of Darkness By Joseph Conrad

Post-colonial was a period when countries that were superpowers like Great Britain, Belgium, Spain, and America took over countries that they see as inferior such as Antigua and some part of the African continent. These superpowers began seizing helpless countries due to their might, strength, and the nationalistic feeling towards their countries. This period was from the late 1800's till the end of World War Two which was 1945. Due to the sufferings, slavery, brutality, the liquidation of culture, religion and the legacy of colonizers, a lot of intellectuals and post-colonial writers have spoken in this new narrative. For example, Jamaica Kincaid who was born in the West Indies of India on May 25, 1949, is an intelligent student that became a famous writer in literature; she has spoken her mind belatedly in "A Small Place". However, joseph Conrad who is a European, was born on the 3rd of December, 1857 and is well known as one of the best novelists in literature, has given a balanced view that identifies how the colonizers were wrong but he was also guilty of sexism and racism of the black people during colonial rule. This essay will highlight how the concept of orientalism is presented in "A Small Place" by Jamaica Kincaid and "Heart of Darkness" by Joseph Conrad. Furthermore, it will also elaborate on how the concept of other is presented in each text. The first paragraph of this essay will clearly define the differences in the concept of orientalism from both the texts whereas; the second paragraph will discuss the concept of other from each text.

To begin with, the orientalism highlighted by Kincaid is that the tourists only concentrate on the positive side of the place and people of Antigua but they fail to realize the darker side of the people such as the suffering that they have been going through. The tourists feel that everything is good by seeing the greatness of the hotels, the glorious sun in Antigua and they even feel that the people are living happily and are also enjoying the way they do. Regardless of the sufferings and bad feelings of the natives, the white men continuously enjoyed the beauty of Antigua. All these suffering are due to the corrupt government brought up by the colonialists. According to Kincaid, A Small Place (1988), the tourists were described as mean people because they think of themselves as Superior and regarded the Antiguans as inferior. For example, the Antiguans were made slave to their own homeland while all the gains go to the colonialist who arouses fear within the natives as to how Antigua will look like in years to come. Moreover, the orientalism highlighted by Conrad is that the colonized people of the African Congo were badly treated and were taken as the uncivilized people which lead to the practice of slavery which was being brought up by V.C Bird, the Prime Minister of Antigua. Although everybody knows that slavery was a brutal way of dealing with human beings while chaining and making them work as slaves but the colonialists feel that because the people were violent and badly treated, they have now know the ideas of the whites. For instance, the quote, "at least he has improved with our way", Heart of Darkness, (1899). This shows how the people of the African Congo were helpless and couldn't get away with the harsh attitude of the colonialists.

Furthermore, Jamaica Kincaid, being part of the other in the story, portrays her own love-hate relationship towards colonial rule (Kincaid, 1988). She describes how the tourists have been the cause of hate by the community for they only focus on the best side of Antigua and rejects to realize the reality of the community. The narrator also came up with the idea of colonialism in

India; the sati practice to compare the ill-treatment towards the people of Antigua by the colonialists. This was where the colonialists say that the people have no culture and the natives have to do the western way. For example, the idea of Christianity in which they believe was the best way to avoid the sacred practice of the natives that they think was ugly. Kincaid strongly went against this idea of the colonialists because she could see and feel the atmosphere and suffering of the natives from all perspectives. On the other hand, Conrad depicts the harsh reality of the imperialist and the effects of the Western aspects in the African Congo which was unfair to the Africans. He describes how the Europeans have classed themselves as superior and the way they treated the colonized people, tagging them as bush people and blacks which created the self in the story. With this, the colonizers believe that they are the best so they came up with the idea of imperial discourse, expecting the natives to recognise their way of living. For instance, the natives of Africa were made slaves to their own land which questions the minds of the natives as to why they are treated as slaves.

With the above, the concepts of orientalism and others in both the texts are both based on post-colonial subjects and talks about the reality of life which arouses the feeling of argument and criticism in both the writer and the readers mind. The first text is written by a native of a former colony while text two is written by a European writer; they both focus on post colonialism and how the natives were suffering. On the other hand, the first texts talks about the hidden pain that the natives have been going through and are helpless to avoid it whereas, text two highlights the grievances of the colonialists towards the whole African Congo. Thus, the two concepts discussed above teach us a lot more about the reality of life during the colonial era and what it had done to the tradition of the individuals.