The Ugly Tourist's Analysis

In her short story “The Ugly Tourist,” Jamaica Kincaid explains how oblivious tourists are in comparison to the natives of a land. She continues to explain how tourists only get to look at the surface layer of beauty, therefore never fully comprehending the depth of what they’re looking at. Kincaid labels the tourist as “ugly” to highlight how they disturb others’ lives and have a lack of respect. Through her use of a sarcastic tone and anaphoras, Kincaid is able to successfully portray how natives don't physically find tourists “ugly,” but more so find their actions as a tourist “ugly.”

Kincaid incorporates anaphoras to emphasize how a person is only ugly once they begin acting like a tourist. By repeatedly using the words “You are not an ugly person,” Kincaid proves that on the inside tourists are not bad people. Only once they begin acting like a tourist is when they are considered “ugly.” By continuously emphasizing that physically the tourist is not “ugly”, Kincaid causes the reader to internalize that it is the tourist’s actions defining them. Moreover, she continues with her use of anaphoras to further emphasize one’s physical appearance is not what makes them “ugly.” Again by repeating the phrase, “From day to day,” the reader now anticipates the next line as they know what is coming next, which taps into their emotions. The fact that the tourist is a normal and genuine person in their day-to-day life is now instilled as the repeated words allow the reader to absorb what the author intended.

In order to further prove her message, Kincaid continues with her use of anaphoras to show a tourist’s true colors. By using the phrase “to being a person” frequently, she emphasizes the disturbing actions made by tourists. Kincaid is affirming the type of person one is when entering the state of tourism as they are disrespecting other people’s day to day lives. She is highlighting the fact that tourists disregard natives and take pleasure in their normality. Moreover, Kincaid uses the phrase “an ugly thing” time and time again to reiterate that once you begin acting like a tourist, that is when you are considered “ugly”. She underlines the true colors of a tourist and shows how their actions define them.

Furthermore, Kincaid's sarcastic tone helps the reader to better understand how a tourist’s actions are disliked by the natives. By stating “how awful it is to go unnoticed, and how awful it is to go unloved,” she is exaggerating and mocking these people’s feelings to better prove how tourists are looked at. She is proving to the tourist that it is their fault that they are disliked, as they came and disrupted other people’s lives. When touring places and finding pleasure in natives' struggles is when the tourist is hated. In addition, Kincaid uses words such as “marvel” and “harmony” to deepen her sarcastic tone, as these words are complete opposites of her argument. By using these words, she expresses how a tourist is loved in their native land so they might as well stay there instead of intruding on other native’s lives.

In her short story “An Ugly Tourist,” Jamaica Kincaid’s use of anaphoras and a sarcastic tone highlight how the natives view a tourist in their state of tourism. Kincaid argues that a tourist will never understand the culture and history of what they are looking at, therefore disrespecting the natives of the land. By coming to a foreign land, and finding enjoyment in people's everyday lives, the natives get offended and feel like they are being mocked. When calling the tourist “ugly,” she is not referring to physical appearance because their actions are really what defines

them as “ugly”.