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**Exploring Power Dynamics in Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana*
(1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988) Travel Writing:
a Comparative Study**

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Dedication

To my beloved parents, who have been my unwavering foundation and guiding light throughout every step of this journey. To my dear grandmother, whose love and wisdom continue to inspire me, even in her absence. Your memory lives in my heart forever. To my sisters, my brother, to my friends, whose support and laughter have made the difficult times easier, and the good times even brighter. And to my binomial, Djidji—thank you for being my partner in this adventure, for your trust, collaboration, and for always having my back.

katia

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Abstract

This dissertation is a comparative study between Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana* (1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988). The objective of the research is to delve into the exploration of power dynamics in travel writing. The subsequent chapters of our discussion have relied on Edward Said's theory, mainly the concepts of 'Othering' and 'Representation' from his book *Orientalism* (1979). The basic findings of our investigation reveal in the first chapter the various negative impacts of colonialism observed by the authors of both novels. In the second chapter, we have tried to examine the way both Byron and Kincaid challenge the Western perspectives in the way they depict non-European cultures, people and their towns. Consequently, our comprehensive analysis of the chosen novels has led us to a discerning conclusion which is that Byron and Kincaid share common perspectives towards power dynamics.

Key words: Colonialism- Orientalism- Othering- Power Dynamics- Representation- Travel Writing- Western Perspectives.

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I. Introduction

Travel Writing is a genre that describes places, people, customs, and cultures for an audience who may not be familiar with them. It is often a nonfiction form that combines curiosity, narrative, and personal experience to educate and entertain readers about locations across the world. It has long been a tool for storytelling, investigation, and discovery that gives readers a window into far-off places and cultures. At a general level, Travel writing has historically been shaped by colonial and imperialist perspectives, often portraying the visited lands through the lens of the traveler's own cultural biases and preconceptions. This dynamic reflects broader power structures where the traveler, typically from a Western or privileged background, holds the authority to narrate and define the experiences of the places visited.

In the same context, defining power dynamics in travel writing, is the relationships and influences that travelers (typically from Western backgrounds) establish with the cultures they encounter. These dynamics can significantly influence narratives, perceptions, and interactions. Travel writing has historically served to reinforce Western cultural supremacy by depicting non-Western countries as strange. However, contemporary travel writing is more aware of these power disparities. Writers are becoming conscious of their own biases and how colonial histories influence their narratives.

Moving on to a more specific context, notable travel writers such as Robert Byron and Jamaica Kincaid deal with power dynamics in various ways. *The Road to Oxiana* (1937) reflects colonial rules at the time while also providing a nuanced portrayal of the cultures he encounters. Additionally, Kincaid's essay *A Small Place* (1988) addresses and exposes colonialism's history and influence on her native Antigua, challenging mainstream narratives and revealing the exploitative nature of the tourism industry.

The fundamental goal of comparing these two key sources in terms of power dynamics in travel literature is to illustrate the various perspectives and approaches to colonial legacies, representation, and the impact of imperialism on the genre. By juxtaposing these two pieces, the comparison seeks to demonstrate how travel writers from different generations and backgrounds manage and critique power structures, cultural prejudices, and privilege dynamics inherent in travel stories. This approach sheds light on how travel literature can reinforce or challenge imperial ideals, as well as providing insights into the genre's intricacies of representation, agency, and resistance.

1- Review of the Literature

To begin with, the first piece of criticism Josh Philip Ross provides a review of Robert Byron's influential travel book in his article 'Capsule Review: *The Road to Oxiana*'. Ross recognizes the book's importance in influencing later works in the genre including authors like Bruce Chatwin and William Dalrymple. He praises Byron's witty writing style and the blend of vivid descriptions with humorous interactions and philosophical analyses. However, he also identified some of the book's flaws, such as occasional anti-Semitic remarks and Western arrogance in Byron's portrayal of local people. He supposes that while the book was groundbreaking in its time, it may not have the same impact today since its innovative techniques have been widely adopted by later travel writers (Ross, 2022). The author also shares his own approach to travel writing, stating that he prefers to provide a general sense of places rather than exhaustive architectural or natural descriptions, allow the story to convey its own message without excessive explanation. (Ross,2022).

As still another piece of criticism, 'Danny Yee's Books Reviews' of *The Road to Oxiana* by Robert Byron offers a critique of the book's themes and writing style. Yee argues that while admitting Byron's talent in capturing scenes and meetings with precision and brevity, he notes that the author maintains a detached and unemotional narrative voice

throughout the work. He states that this creates a sense of distance between the reader and the protagonist, as we neither feel threatened by the dangers he faces nor exult in his successes. Yee also argues that Byron's writing lacks the artificial nostalgia sometimes found in other travel writers. However, Yee argues that Byron seems insensitive to people and culture, exhibiting a careless arrogance of the English imperial elite abroad. According to Yee this is exemplified by the fact that it took Byron and his companion nearly a month to realize they could not treat Afghan guards like English domestic servants. (Yee,2000)

Equally, Dr. Bahman Zarrinjooee's paper, 'Revisiting Persian Architectural Myth through Byronic Gaze in Robert Byron's *The Road to Oxiana* (2014)', is another criticism that provides an insightful analysis of how Robert Byron interprets Persian architecture in his 1937 travelogue *The Road to Oxiana*. Zarrinjooee frames architecture as a "cryptogram"; a coded system through which intellectual travelers, like Byron, decipher the myths, history of a country. He argues that Persian architecture reveals hidden layers of political and social significance, offering a window into the power structures that have shaped Persian culture over time.(Zarrinjooee, 2014)

In the same way, Jamaica Kincaid's work has also been studied by many scholars and reviewers. For instance, Darkowaa in his article entitled 'African Book Addict review: *A Small Place* (1988) delves into the impact of European colonization and tourism on Antigua, Kincaid's birthplace. She praises Kincaid's candid critique of the government and tourism industry. Darkowaa describes the book as 'brutal' and 'full of vitriol', praising Kincaid's harsh criticisms of the Antiguan government's corruption and the negative impacts of tourism. She notes that Kincaid's frank critique of the Antiguan leadership and tourism industry could be seen as hateful but argues that the book should be read as satire. She wonders if the book was banned in the Caribbean due to Kincaid's scathing attacks on former Prime Ministers of Antigua, Grenada and Haiti .(Darkowaa 2017)

According to Darkowaa, Kincaid also criticized the essence of travel, tourism, and even tourists who are mostly white. At one point, he wonders if Kincaid condones xenophobia due to her frank descriptions of how Antiguan and other Caribbean people dislike tourists. She adds that the book addresses the reader directly as a tourist visiting Antigua, highlighting the stark contrast between the tourist's experience and the lived reality of Antiguan society. Kincaid also criticized the corruption, greed and injustice that permeate Antiguan society as an extension of colonialism. (Darkowaa, 2017)

Another review, Lesley Larkin reviewed Jamaica Kincaid's book *A Small Place* in her essay entitled 'Reading and Being Read: Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* arguing that Kincaid seems to provide readers with a way to break free from the constant association with tourism, racism, imperialism and slavery that have been imposed on them. Larkin expresses concern that Kincaid's shift in tone at the conclusion might weaken the strong critique of exploitation and imperialism in Antigua that she established earlier. (Larkin,2012)

Finally, Rita Baleiro and Sílvia Quinteiro entitled 'A small place, by Jamaica Kincaid: Envisioning Literary Tourism In Antigua' analyzes Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988), focusing on its critique of the tourism industry in Antigua. According to them, Kincaid presents a nuanced view of tourists, portraying them as both exploitative and oblivious to the local context. They discuss how 'tourist literature' can promote literary tourism in Antigua, focusing on the need for sustainable practices that connect locals and visitors. Recent studies highlight the importance of 'responsible tourism', community involvement, and protecting local culture to create genuine experiences and economic benefits in places like Antigua, where tourism plays a major role. (Baleiro,2019)

2- Issue and Working Hypothesis

From the above review of literature, it appears that Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana* (1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988) have been studied by numerous critics from various perspectives. However, we believe that no previous study has yet ventured to put the two works together in a comparative way in the light of the suggested theory of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, despite the disparity between the backgrounds and generations of the two authors. This gap in research provides an opportunity to uncover the possible affinities between the two novels.

Our comparison of the two novels focuses on the exploration of power dynamics in travel writing by shedding light on both authors' critiques of colonialism and its enduring effects on non-European cultures as well as their people, while challenging also western representations of these societies in their narratives. For such a purpose, we based our comparison on two important theoretical concepts, part of the Postcolonial Theory, by relying on Edward Said's *Orientalism*, concepts of 'Othering' and 'Representation' in order to analyze and compare how Byron and Kincaid highlight the consequences of colonialism and offer alternative perspectives on place and people they described.

3- Methodological Outline

This dissertation is written following the IMRAD method. The work starts with an introduction in which the issue is identified. It is followed by a brief overview of the literature conducted on the two novels. The second section is devoted to methods and materials. In the methods section, we will borrow the concept of 'Othering' and 'Representation' from Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979). The materials section comprises the synopses of the novels and biography of the two authors. In the results section, we emphasize on the findings we have reached in each chapter. The discussion section will be divided into two main chapters. The

first part delves with the negative impacts of colonialism on towns and people in Robert Byron's *The Road to Oxiana* (1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988). The second chapter discusses Robert Byron's and Jamaica Kincaid's Critical Perspectives on Western representations of non-European societies in *The Road to Oxiana* and *A Small Place*. This piece of research will be closed with a conclusion that restates the issues under discussion and the major findings of the work.

II. Methods and Materials

1- Methods

This section of our work explores postcolonial theorist Edward Said's theory as expanded in his work *Orientalism*. We will borrow concepts that are relevant to our work namely 'Representation' and 'Othering'. Postcolonial theory is an academic framework that examines the social, cultural, and political effects of colonization and imperialism; it looks at how colonial powers exerted control, subjugated indigenous cultures and imposed their own systems of knowledge and governance. Emerging in the mid-20th century, it seeks to understand how colonial histories shape contemporary societies, identities and power dynamics.

Fundamentally, Postcolonial theory addresses the impact of colonial rule on formerly colonized nations. It critiques the binary opposition (a hierarchy in which one is privileged and the other is unprivileged) established by colonial powers, often portraying the colonizer as civilized and the colonized as primitive. This dichotomy is exemplified in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979), which describes how the West constructed an image of the east as exotic and inferior, justifying imperial domination.

Orientalism is a Western study and portrayal of Eastern societies in ways that reflect and promote Western domination and stereotypes. It involves a framework, in which the Orient is depicted as strange, backward and inferior in comparison to the West, which is portrayed as rational, advanced and superior. This construction serves to justify and legitimize Western imperialism and cultural hegemony (referring to the domination of one culture group over others in a way that shapes and controls societal norms, values and beliefs) by creating and perpetuating a distorted image of Eastern societies. (Said, 1979)

Moreover, Orientalism popularized by Edward Said critiques how this representation has justified colonialism and maintained power dynamics. To start with the first concept of ‘Othering’, is defined by Said as a process by which the West constructs and maintains a distinction between itself (the West) and the Orient. This process involves creating and reinforcing stereotypes that depict Eastern societies as fundamentally different (Said, 1979).

Edward Said (1979) claims that Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, “us”) and the strange(the Orient, the East, “them”)” (p.43). This dynamics of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ is a key aspect of othering, as it maintains a power imbalance and legitimizes the marginalization of the other. He argues that the West, by creating a dichotomy between itself and the East, has positioned itself as superior and rational while depicting the Orient as exotic, backward, and inferior. This process of ‘Othering’ serves to justify colonial domination and exploitation by presenting Eastern societies as fundamentally different and inferior to Western norms and values (Said, 1979)

Second, Edward Said defines the concept of ‘Representation’ as the way Western cultures perceive and depict Eastern societies (Said, 1979). He argues that these representations are not accurate reflections of the East but are constructed through Western lens that often serve to reinforce colonial power dynamics; he states that “The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” (p.01). This quote highlights how the representation of the Orient in Western discourse is shaped by fantasy and projection rather than accurate depiction.

Said contends that the West created a distorted image of the East , portraying it as exotic and inferior to justify and legitimize colonial rule. He claims that “The relationship between

the Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination of varying degrees of complex hegemony, and is quite accurately indicated in the title of K.M Passikkar's classic *Assia and Western dominance*"(p.05).

In analyzing travel writing through the lens of power dynamics, the concepts of 'Othering' and 'Representation' are pivotal. We believe that, Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana*(1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*(1988) provide rich examples of how travel narratives engage with these concepts to portray the colonial legacy and to challenge the western perspective.

2- Materials

a- Biography of Robert Byron

Robert Byron, an English travel writer renowned for his literary contributions, was born into a middle-class family in England in 1905. He studied at Eton and Merton Colleges in Oxford, where he became passionate about travel writing and Byzantine art. His journey began in 1926 when he traveled with his friends. He produced a number of significant works, among his notable books *The Station* (1928) which is a narrative about his experiences on Mount Athos, reflecting on Byzantine culture. A second one is *The Byzantine Achievement* (1929) a critical examination of Byzantine art and its legacy. Then *The Birth of Western Painting* (1930), an explanation of the evolution of painting.

His travelogue *The Road to Oxiana* (1937) is a powerful narrative that chronicles his journeys through Afghanistan and Persia that critiques the imperialist attitudes of his time, providing insights into the power dynamics in travel writing of the early 20th century. Byron's writing significantly contributed to the appreciation of Islamic and Byzantine art in Western literature. Byron died in 1941 when his ship was torpedoed during World War II leaving behind a legacy as a pioneering travel writer and cultural critic.

b- Synopsis of *The Road To Oxiana* (1937)

The Road to Oxiana (1937) by Robert Byron is a travelogue documenting his journey through Persia (modern day Iran) and Central Asia in the early 1930s. The book documents Byron's travels to historic locations, amazing buildings, and other cultures. It reflects his deep interest in art, history, and archeology. The book stands out for its unique combination of travel writing, historical analysis, and evocative descriptions, giving readers a deep and captivating depiction of the places he visits, the buildings he sees, and the people he meets.

Byron's event exposes the intricacies of power dynamics through his dealings with numerous local rulers and colonial powers. His interactions with other cultures and governmental bodies frequently highlight the complex balance of power. His travel writing also considers the cultural intellectual exchanges that occur as a result of these power dynamics, focusing on how the history of previous empires shapes present encounters and perspectives. Byron's thorough descriptions and personal reflections provide a sophisticated analysis of power dynamics and historical background.

c- Biography of Jamaica Kincaid

Jamaica Kincaid born in Antigua in 1949 as Elaine Potter Richardson; she is a Caribbean American author best known for her vividly portrayed family dynamics and her native Antigua in her essays, stories, and novels. When Kincaid relocated to New York City at the age of sixteen, she started her literary career as an au pair before joining the staff of the *New Yorker*.

Writing with a strong undertone of rage and lyricism, Kincaid's style reflects her experiences and viewpoints. She has received numerous honors for her contributions to the literary community, including the PEN/Faulkner Fiction Award and the Guggenheim

Foundation Fellowship for fiction. Her quest for obscurity in her work and her Antiguan origin led her to take on the name Jamaica Kincaid.

By delving into the intricacies of the postcolonial age, Kincaid's examination of travel writing provides a unique perspective on the interplay between individual story and more general theoretical discourses. She draws attention to the ways that histories of colonization, identity, and cultural power have influenced travel by concentrating on postcolonial issues. This viewpoint gives readers a deeper, more critical knowledge of the genre by enabling them to perceive travel not only as a personal experience but also as a setting where unique experiences collide with the lasting effects of colonialism.

d- Synopsis of *A Small Place* (1988)

A Small Place (1988) is a powerful work of creative non-fiction. It delves into topics like colonialism, government corruption, tourism, and the lingering effects of colonialism, all while providing an eye-catching assessment of Antigua. The book creates a vivid picture of life in Antigua by fusing history, social commentary, and personal experience. The story opens with a typical white tourist arriving in Antigua, emphasizing the sharp contrast between the tourist's opulent experience and the hard reality that the island's impoverished residents should live with. In her extensive research, Kincaid explores the history of the island, focusing on British colonialism, and the detrimental impacts of colonial rule on the island's culture and society. Kincaid criticizes the corruption of the Antiguan administration and its reliance on tourism to maintain economic stability and the difficulties the native population have encountered as a result of colonization and oppression. She considers the effects of the earthquake in 1974, which destroyed a large number of buildings, as well as the widespread corruption that afflicts the island.

The power dynamics inherent in travel writing are critically examined in Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*, especially as they relate to colonialism and its consequences in Antigua. The story highlights how exploitative tourism is as a kind of neocolonialism and examines the contradiction between the experiences of local Antiguan and the views of tourists. She takes a direct approach to tourists, questioning their lack of knowledge and their involvement in the commercialization of her country, which has been molded by a long history of colonial subjugation and economic reliance on foreign powers.

III. Results

This part of our dissertation is concerned with the major findings and results we have reached after studying and deeply exploring Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana* (1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988), through Edward Said's postcolonial theory explored in his work entitled *Orientalism* (1979). From our exploration of the two works, we have noticed that although they belong to different countries, cultures, and generations, the two authors share common themes. Through a deep analysis of both works, we find that Byron and Kincaid address the themes of colonial influence and cultural representation which make the two works comparable.

In the first chapter, our analysis of the two works reveal that both Byron and Kincaid explore the impact of colonialism and its influence through various situations. Byron's travel through regions impacted by colonialism and his encounters with local rulers reflect how colonial legacies continue to influence socio-political structure and economic inequalities in these regions and how it impacted on people. Kincaid, in the same time, addresses the profound and lasting impact of British colonialism on Antigua and how they exploited the island's resources and enslaved its people.

In the second chapter, we deduce that both Byron and Kincaid challenge the western perspectives in their depiction of non-European societies, Byron subverts traditional Western views by highlighting the rich cultural heritage and architectural beauty of the east, arguing against the typical colonial era tendency to portray non-European societies as inferior, uncivilised and without history. Similarly, Kincaid confronts the Western Gaze, but with a more critical tone; she directly attacks the romanticized and exploitative western view of Antigua; she challenges the simplistic, tourist view of the Caribbean as a perfect paradise, urging readers to understand the deeper history and identity of its people.

These narratives illuminate the power dynamics in travel writing by revealing the enduring impact of colonialism on societies and how the authors challenge Western perspectives on non-European cultures. Furthermore, both authors reveal shared themes of cultural representation despite their different contexts. Ultimately, Byron and Kincaid's works are comparable in their critique of the Western gaze.

IV. Discussion

Chapter one: The Negative Impacts of Colonialism on Towns and People in Robert Byron's *The Road to Oxiana* (1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988)

Colonial legacy refers to the long-lasting political, economic, social, and cultural impacts left behind by colonialism. Even after colonies gained independence, the structures, systems, and attitudes introduced during the colonial period often remained, influencing the development of post-colonial societies. In this chapter we will delve into the enduring impact of colonial rule shown in both Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana* (1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988) and its ongoing negative impacts on different fields.

a- Colonial Legacy in *The Road To Oxiana* (1937) and *A Small Place* (1988)

Robert Byron reflects on the colonial legacy through his observations of the impacts of colonial and imperial influence on the societies he encounters. To begin, Byron's insights are framed by the geopolitical geography of the time, which included numerous regions influenced or controlled by colonial powers. His ideas represent a time when western nations wielded considerable influence over world perception. This historical backdrop shapes how he views and represents the idea of Western domination, his travel through the regions impacted by colonialism provides light on power dynamics between the West and East. He considers how colonial legacies continue to shape socio-political system, economic inequities and cultural identities in these places. Byron's insights highlight the complexities and ambiguities of postcolonial realities, in which historical injustices and inequality endure even after political independence. This passage is an illustration;

This feeling has been strengthened by an article de Bathe wrote in The Times on his return to England, in which he described Marjoribanks's assault on the Turcoman jockey under the eyes of the Diplomatic Corps

press retorted that in England the King dare not leave his palace without a guard of 3000 men, while the Prince of Wales keeps 100 dogs that climb on to his bed by a special ladder and sleep there. Intimidated by these outbursts, the London Foreign Office persuaded *The Times* to make amends in a leading article, which compared the state of modern Persia to that of Tudor England, and the achievement of Marjoribanks to that of Henry VIII. This only added vinegar to the Persian wound, since the Tudors are considered backward... In this hell of English good intentions, the Persians find inexhaustible response to the tremors of affronted dignity (Byron, 1937.132).

This passage highlights the power imbalance between Britain and Persia, which reflects larger colonial and imperial dynamics. The British foreign office's efforts to influence Persian reactions and media views reflect the colonial mindset of domination and control. British comparison of Persian and Tudor cultures (refers to cultural, social, and political characteristics of England during the Tudor dynasty which ruled from 1485 to 1603) indicate and implied feelings of cultural superiority, which is prevalent among colonial mindset. The British assessment of Persian reactions as petulant, as well as the parallel to Tudor England reflects a colonial attitude that regards non-western cultures as backdrop or inferior. The Persian reaction to British diplomatic measures and media reporting shows how colonial policies and interactions continue to have an impact today. The tension between national pride and colonial meddling is a direct result of colonial relations, where colonial powers often undermined or misrepresented local cultures.

Robert Byron's engagement with the legacy of colonialism aligns with Edward Said's critique of Orientalism by exposing and challenging western representations that serves the interests of domination and control. Said (1979) states: "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and (most of the time) the Occident" (p.02). This illustrates how Western knowledge about the East has been shaped by and serves to reinforce power imbalances between the West and the East.

However, Byron's observations reveal the complex interplay between colonial legacies and local traditions, illustrating how colonialism influenced both the imposition of Western norms and the resistance to them in the regions he visited. The passage describing the king of Afghanistan Amanullah Khan's intentions to modernize Afghanistan faster than Persian modernization attempts, demonstrates colonial influence on local leadership. He states: "Amanullah, the story goes, boasted to Marjoribanks that he would westernise Afghanistan faster than Marjoribanks could westernise Persia. This was the end of Amanullah, and may like pronouncements long be the end of his successors" (Byron, 1937, p.90). Colonial powers frequently encouraged local rulers to adopt western methods, and in this excerpt, Amanullah's attempt to rapidly westernise Afghanistan exemplifies the larger tendency of colonial-imposed modernization. Byron implies that such efforts to quickly adopt western practices often fail and lead to political instability, reinforcing the notion that forced modernization is counterproductive. And he uses Amanullah's boast as a vehicle to illustrate the king's weak personality.

Byron frequently draws comparisons between regional customs and Western architectural and cultural norms; his detailed explanation of contemporary renovations and interventions in historically significant locations offer a critical perspective on the ways that colonial policies and Western influences have shaped regional cultures and historical legacy. He declares,

Mr. Trump-of-Raphael told me his plans for improving the Maidan. The first instalment of them has got him into trouble, since Marjoribanks disapproves of the new tank on the ground that it may breed the anopheles mosquito. Nevertheless, he will proceed with the rest. The arcaded walls are to be enriched with tile work. And where the road cuts across in front of the bazaar entrance at the north-eastend, it will pass under big tiled archways on either side. The architect is a German who works under a supervising committee consisting of Herzfeld, Godard, and other savants (p.179)

In the passage, the engagement of German architect and supervising committee of Western experts demonstrate the colonial heritage of Western domination in developing local infrastructure and urban planning. This indicates how colonial powers and their descendants continued to influence and dictate local development. The imposition of foreign architectural plans, as well as Western specialist's authority highlights ongoing effects of colonial attitudes and control.

In addition, Byron's interactions with Herzfeld (a prominent German archaeologist and historian of art, specializing in Persian art and archaeology) provides a lens through which to understand the impact of colonial era practices on the field of archaeology and the broader cultural implications, often controlled and restricted access to knowledge and cultural heritage. This passage is an illustration:

I'm not an archaeologist. I've no concern with your discoveries. All I'm interested in here is the Architectural forms, not because they are old, but because they are a part of architectural history ... You may think you have the legal right to prevent my taking photographs at all. But you must admit it would be morally indefensible. It would be as if the Parthenon had suddenly become a private bilk and the rest of the world been excluded from it

Herzfeld (bridling): Not at all. In Europe there have always been these rules. When I was a young man, making excavations, we were never allowed to photograph anything...

This attitude of German authoritarianism seemed unbecoming in a Man about to be turned out of his own country by the Nazis.(p.173)

In this passage, Herzfeld's adherence to the traditional prohibition against photographing archaeological sites reflects a larger norm prevalent during the colonial period. This approach was frequently rationalized as protecting precious cultural heritage but also served to maintain control over the spread of knowledge, by restricting access to photographs and documentation, colonial authorities could control how information about archaeological discoveries was shared and used. This frequently implied that access to this knowledge was

restricted for the local population and other scholars, reinforcing a power dynamic where Western authorities possessed sole control.

Herzfeld's actions do reflect an imitation of Western colonial practices in managing cultural heritage, his adherence to European regulations and insistence on control over access to historical sites reflect a Western, and specifically colonial, attitude to archaeology and cultural administration. This imitation reflects Western colonialism's broader influence on how cultural resources were and continue to be controlled.

Byron observes the geopolitical games played by Russian and British interest in the Middle East and Central Asia, highlighting how the strategic position of Afghanistan was used to serve these colonial powers interests. He states:

The local Turcomans, swollen by disaffected refugees, are regarded by the Russians as a potential source of anti-Bolshevik infection. Naturally, the province's real safeguard lies in the fact that the Russians are not anxious to embroil themselves with the British, and that Afghanistan intact, if quiet, is useful to both Powers as a buffer. But the Afghan think it humiliating to admit this. None the less, they know well enough that the way to keep the Russians at arm's-length is to keep their own country peaceable, and that the best means of doing this are telegraphs and roads (p.266).

The passage illustrates how British and Russian colonial interests have shaped Afghanistan's strategic position. And the need for stability in Afghanistan as a buffer state between the two powers reflects the broader impact of colonial policies on regional geopolitics. Byron here notes also the efforts made by Afghanistan to improve its infrastructure like roads and telegraphs to maintain internal stability and control outside pressures from colonial powers. This demonstrates how colonial interests motivate local modernization in an indirect manner. While Afghanistan's infrastructure improvements were aimed at enhancing its own stability, these efforts were also a response to the demands and influences of British and Russian colonial interests.

However, Byron discusses how colonialism frequently results in the local people and resources being exploited for the gain of colonial powers, and he noted the underdevelopment of the economy in the regions he visited, where colonial powers had frequently taken advantage of local businesses, and local economies were reshaped to serve the interests of imperial powers rather than to benefit the local populations. An example in point; the lambskin trade in Andkhoi (city located in Northern Afghanistan) is an illustration of the exploitation of local resources by foreign powers or external interests, which is often a consequence of colonialism. Byron (1937) states that: “The Andkhoi skins were the best of all, those of Akcha nearly as good and those of Mazar, where the ewes lamb three or four weeks later, not so good. Every year he sent a lakh (7500) of skins to London” (p.254)

The passage reveals how local resources were being exported to serve foreign market, reflecting the economic exploitation and dependency typical of colonial or imperial relationship. It emphasises that local businesses and resources are underutilized for the benefit of the community. Instead, they are taken and co modified, leaving local communities underdeveloped. Byron’s description of the different grades of skins from Akcha and Mazar demonstrates a clear grasp of local economic differences, but these details are obscured by the underlying reality of exploitation. The local economy becomes dependent on colonial powers, which impose trade and development terms, frequently resulting in a cycle of poverty and dependency.

Furthermore, Western perspectives frequently demonstrated an implied sense of superiority caused by colonialism. This attitude reflected a widespread belief among westerners that they are more educated and civilized compared to non-European people. Byron’s encounter with the Hungarian in Herat and the Hungarian’s speech on the Afghan and their country highlight the western sense of superiority. This dialogue is an illustration:

“You like travelling?”

“Who could like travelling in Asia, Monsieur? I had a good education. What would my parents say if they saw me in such a place as this? It is not like Europe. Beirut is like Europe. Beirut I could support. But this country, these people... the things I have seen! I cannot tell you of them. I cannot. Aaaaah! ” And overcome by the recollection of them, he buried his head in his hands.

“Come, Monsieur,” I said, giving him a gentle pat, “confide in me these terrible experiences. You will feel better for it.”

“I am not the type, Monsieur, who thinks himself superior to the rest of humanity. Indeed I am no better than others. Perhaps I am worse. But these people, these Afghans, they are not human. They are dogs, brutes. They are lower than the animals.”(pp.106-107).

This passage, exactly the Hungarian discourse likely reflects a view of the Afghan people as the ‘other’, emphasizing their differences from western norms and portraying them as less civilized and underdeveloped. This reinforces the western perspective of cultural superiority, where Western values practices and beliefs considered the standard against which other cultures are judged.

In addition, this situation (Hungarian discourse) can be closely related to the concept of ‘othering’ as defined in Cambridge Dictionary that it refers to the process by which individuals or groups are marginalized, seen as different and considered inferior than oneself or one’s group. As Edward Said argues that Orientalism has helped westerners to define a European self-image; he states that “Orientalism is never far from what Denys Hay has called the idea of Europe; a collective notion identifying “us” Europeans as against all “those” non-Europeans.” (Said, 1979, p.7). Here European identity and culture are superior to all other cultures and people.

An inferiority complex caused by colonialism is a deeply rooted psychological effect in many postcolonial societies. Colonialism established a tight hierarchy in which the colonizers positioned themselves as superior, both culturally and racially, while systematically undervaluing the colonized peoples’ ancestry, language, and identity. As a result, the colonized developed sentiments of inadequacy, believing that their cultures, traditions, and

even physical characteristics were inferior to those of their conquerors. Byron's encounter with the Afghan Ambassador, along with the Ambassador's response, illustrates the presence of an inferiority complex, as provided in this dialogue: "R.B: I liked the Afghans because they speak loud and speak the truth . They are not full of intrigues. Shikh Ahmed: Ha, ha, you are wrong. They have many intrigues,(m)many, (cr) many. You are not clever, (p) you have not seen them" (p.133). This dynamic generated a pervasive sense of self-doubt and low self-esteem, which has influenced individual and societal identities in postcolonial situations. The long-term consequences of this psychological colonization frequently appear as the pursuit of Western values, rejection of local cultures, and a significant battle with self-acceptance.

Comparing to Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana* (1937), Jamaica Kincaid's Significant travelogue *A Small Place* (1988), in the same way she provides a wide examination on the impact of colonialism and the impact of tourism on Antigua. Kincaid exposes the injustices suffered by Antiguan through her personal narratives since she is a native of Antigua who experienced the island's colonial history and current problems firsthand, ,underlining the contrast between the island's beauty and the terrible realities of its political and socioeconomic conditions. This work serves as a call to awareness among tourists, pushing them to confront the realities of the life behind the paradise world. The book is divided into four sections, with a blend of social criticism on colonial impacts that are still present in all aspects of life in Antigua.

To start, the title of the book *A Small Place* represents Jamaica Kincaid's anger of Antigua's colonial history and current exploitation through tourism. The term "small" refers not only to the island's size, but also to tourists' limited knowledge and understanding of its complex socio-political hardships. Kincaid's title challenges readers to confront the brutal realities of Antiguan life, which are frequently overlooked in favour of ideal tourist narratives.

This juxtaposition underlines the contrast between the island's surface beauty and the real issues of its people, she says: "And so everywhere they went they turned it into England: and everybody they met they turned English. But no place could ever really be England, and nobody who did not look exactly like them would ever be English" (Kincaid, 1988, p. 15). From this quote, Kincaid is enraged by the tourists' inability to acknowledge the hard realities struggles that the Antiguan people confront. As island visitors, these tourists have the opportunity to interact with and learn about the actual experiences of the locals. However, they choose to ignore the daily trials and hardships that Antiguanians confront.

Kincaid investigates an inclination to depict Antigua as a fascinating and romanticized "Other" separate from modernity and Western ideals. In relation to Edward Said's book *Orientalism* that challenges the way Western countries represent Eastern cultures. He claims that these portrayals frequently make Eastern cultures appear foreign and inferior. This generates a deceptive image that fails to capture real depth and variety of these cultures. By portraying the East as the "Other" Western narratives perpetuate stereotypes and justify colonial attitudes, leading to misunderstandings and a sense of Western superiority. Said (1979) argues:

Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient (p.03)

The quotation above explains how the West controls and defines the East. He believes Orientalism is not just a way of studying the East but a system that allows Western powers to dominate and reshape Eastern societies. This creates a view of the East as inferior, preventing it from having its own identity and reinforcing Western superiority.

Additionally, Kincaid challenges Western viewpoints that assume superiority, notably through the lenses of tourism and colonialism. She demonstrates this by noting how Western

explorers and writers frequently portray Antigua and its inhabitants with a judgmental tone. Kincaid employs direct speech to engage the reader, forcing them to confront their role as visitors. For example, she says, “You are a tourist, and you have not yet seen a school in Antigua” (Kincaid, 1988, p.05). This quote underlines tourists’ ignorance of the island’s socioeconomic reality. This technique compels readers to consider their preconceptions and the consequences of their presence in a postcolonial culture, exposing the disparity between the beautiful tourist experience and the lived realities of Antiguan.

In her book, Jamaica Kincaid talks about how tourism can be fake and empty. She says that when tourists go on vacation, they stop caring about the local culture and people. This shows that tourists can be ignorant and feel entitled. Kincaid also talks about the problems between tourists and locals. She shows how tourists can make both groups feel less human, because tourists don’t really connect with the places they visit or the people who live there, Kincaid (1988):

An ugly thing, that is what you are when you become a tourist, an ugly, empty thing, a stupid thing, a piece of rubbish pausing here and there to gaze at this and taste that; it will never occur to you that the people who inhabit the place in which you have just paused cannot stand you.(p.13).

Jamaica Kincaid in this quote criticizes tourists as “ugly” and “empty” due to their ignorance of native lives and struggles. She believes tourists often seek personal satisfaction from experiencing the hardships of local populations, such as those in Antigua. Kincaid uses strong language to highlight that tourists often focus on fun and enjoying sights without understanding or caring about the lives of the locals. She urges readers to be more respectful and aware of the places and people they encounter while travelling.

In *A Small Place* (1988), Jamaica Kincaid contends that British colonialism completely transformed Antigua’s economy to serve colonial goals, emphasizes how British colonialism transformed Antigua into a place that served colonial interests primarily through

the exploitation of its resources and people. The British developed a plantation economy based on sugar production that relied primarily on enslaved African labour. This system not only benefited the colonizers, but it also established social hierarchies, with white farmers at the top and enslaved people at the bottom, resulting in a long-lasting caste system that survived even after freedom in 1834, she articulates the exploitation of Antigua under British colonialism, emphasizing how the colonial system enriched the colonizers while entrenching social hierarchies. Kincaid's critique of colonialism and the exploitation of Antigua and its people by colonial powers, particularly the British. She argues:

You murdered people. You imprisoned people. You robbed people. You opened your own banks and you put our money in them. The accounts were in your name. The banks were in your name. There must have been some good people among you, but they stayed home. And that is the point. That is why they are good. But still, when you think about it, you must be a little sad. The people like me, finally, after years of agitation, made deeply moving and eloquent speeches against the wrongness of your domination over us. (p.22)

This statement addresses the historical injustices faced by Antiguanians under colonial rule. She articulates the violence, oppression, and economic exploitation that characterized the colonial experience. The mention of "murder", "imprisonment" and "robbery" underscores the brutal methods employed by colonizers to maintain control over the island and its resources.

The concept of 'Othering' is illuminated by Jamaica Kincaid's critique of tourism and colonialism in her essay *A Small Place*. She demonstrates how tourists, often unconsciously, generate a sense of alienation and disconnection from the local cultures and people they visit. This process of 'othering' encourages tourists to see Antigua and its people as exotic, inferior, or different from themselves, maintaining a colonial perspective. Kincaid argues that tourism perpetuates a neo-colonial dynamic where locals are marginalized and viewed as strange subjects for the enjoyment of tourists. She discusses how tourists see Antiguanians as mere objects of curiosity, reducing people to "others" in their own country. Kincaid claims that this dynamic marginalizes locals, who are perceived as inferior, foreign and portraying them as

less civilized or undeveloped. This reinforces the Western perspective of cultural superiority, she implies: “The government is for sale; anybody from anywhere can come to Antigua and for a sum of money can get what he wants.” (p.27). Her statement criticizes the Antiguan government’s systemic corruption and commercialization, suggesting that political power and influence are accessible to the highest price. This observation underscores the weakening of integrity and power in postcolonial Antigua, where foreign interests can control local governance to their benefit.

Reflecting Edward Said’s Orientalism he claims that the West develops its identity in opposition to the “other” establishing a sense of superiority over non-Western cultures. He asserts: “Orientalism is more particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient that was permanent, lasting, and self-renewing”.(Said, 1979, p,03). This power imbalance not only marginalizes Eastern cultures but also reinforces Western superiority, shaping perceptions and justifying domination. This quote emphasizes how the West constructs its identity through a lens of superiority, positioning the East as an object of knowledge and domination.

Kincaid analyzes the complex relationship between architecture and the colonial past that defines Antigua’s identity. Through her direct analysis, she demonstrates how the ruins of colonial architecture serve as a constant reminder of the island’s past, exposing the disparities between the splendour of imperial buildings and their current condition of disrepair. Kincaid’s views offer a critical lens into how these structures represent not only the Antiguan people’s historical oppression, but also their ongoing struggles in the postcolonial setting.

On colonial architecture she writes: “The library is one of those splendid old buildings from colonial times, and the sign telling of the repairs is a splendid old sign from colonial times.”(p.08) .The quote gathers Kincaid’s criticism of Antigua’s colonial past, particularly as

seen through the perspective of architecture. The repeated use of the adjective “splendid” emphasizes the early grandeur of colonial constructions, implying that they were once symbols of authority and status. However, the phrase “from colonial times” conveys irony, indicating that these structures are parts of a traumatic past rather than sources of pride in the present. The mention of the notice signalling repairs emphasizes the neglect that has befallen these once-majestic monuments. The statement “repairs are pending” implies a lack of urgency or resources to rebuild the library, evoking larger postcolonial despair. Kincaid observed that both the library and the sign are vestiges of colonialism.

Besides, Kincaid poignantly confronts the status of Antigua’s colonial structures, particularly the library. She considers the perils of colonial-era buildings in her native Antigua, She adds a poignant observation: “This building was damaged in the earthquake of 1974. Repairs are pending.”(p.08). This passage captures the neglect of these old structures. Kincaid’s commentary considers not only the breakdown of the library, but also the larger implications of colonial past and the irony of promised restoration. This statement critiques the failure to preserve cultural legacy, illustrating how colonial memories continue to influence contemporary Antiguan culture. Kincaid’s observations allow readers thinking about the structures’ significance as symbols of both past magnificent and modern abandonment, emphasizing the complexity of postcolonial identity and the ongoing struggle for acknowledgment and maintenance of the island’s historic treasures.

The author’s analysis of the consequences of colonial rule is closely related to Edward Said’s critique of Orientalism, as both authors reveal and challenge Western portrayals that promote authority and dominance, said writes: “Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, West, ‘us’) and the strange (the Orient, the East, ‘them’).” (Said,1979, p.43). In this quotation said

underlines that this conflict justifies Western dominance and control over the East by portraying it as inferior, illogical, and in need of European leadership.

Jamaica Kincaid explores deeply the local culture and people of her native Antigua, presenting a critical and personal perspective informed by her experiences growing up there under British colonial rule. She reflects on her own childhood, noting a disparity between the English identity she was supposed to assume and the Antiguan culture in which she was really nurtured. Kincaid expresses a huge sense of cultural alienation felt by Antiguanas as a result of colonial rule. She discusses how the British imposed their beliefs and educational system, Kincaid (1988) states:

Antigua is a small place, a small island. It is nine miles wide by twelve miles long. It was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493. Not too long after, it was settled by human rubbish from Europe, who used enslaved but noble and exalted human beings from Africa (all masters of every stripe are rubbish, and all slaves of every stripe are noble exalted); there can be no question about this) to satisfy their desire for wealth and power, to feel better about their own miserable existence, so that they could be less lonely and empty—a European disease. (p46)

The statement shows Kincaid's profound sense of cultural alienation, as well as her condemnation of the colonial heritage that imposed English identity while marginalizing indigenous Antiguan culture. She expresses the difference between the identity she was forced to acquire and her homeland's rich cultural legacy, emphasizing the psychological and social consequences of colonial authority for the Antiguanas.

Further, Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* serves as an interesting voice for her native Antigua, examining the ongoing consequences of colonialism and complexities of postcolonial identity through personal experiences. Her function is varied, serving as both a native observer and a critic of her homeland's socio-political context; She takes on the role of a traveller, criticizing Antigua's tourism as well colonial past. Her profound emotional attachment to her birthplace defines her perspective, allowing her to provide a unique lens through which to study the complexity of postcolonial identity and exploitation. Kincaid's

visualization of Antigua before and after colonization conveys a profound sense of loss and pain. She recounts the island's natural beauty, which was once alive and untouched, and contrasts it with the damage caused by colonial exploitation, Kincaid (1988) writes:

The Antigua that I knew, the Antigua in which I grew up , is not the Antigua you , a tourist , would see now .That Antigua no longer exists. That Antigua no longer exists partly for the usual reason, the passing of time, and partly because the bad minded people who used to rule over it, the English, no longer do so (p.15)

This extract sheds light on Kincaid's critique of how colonialism and tourism have transformed Antigua, leading to a profound sense of loss and disconnection from her past. Her words serve as a poignant reflection on the lasting impact of colonial legacies and the challenges faced by postcolonial exploitation.

Furthermore, Kincaid discusses how the colonial past of Antigua promotes a sense of inferiority among its people; she criticizes the post-colonial education system, pointing out that young Antiguan acquire less education than those under colonial authority. This lack of excellent education reinforces the cycle of ignorance and dependency, destroying autonomy and participation in society. In this extract, Kincaid communicates how the colonial legacy in Antigua has an impact on the education system, she states:

There was a headmistress of a girls' school, which only in my lifetime began to accept girls who were born outside a marriage. In Antigua it had never dawned on anyone that this was a way of keeping black children out of this school. (p.18)

This illustration demonstrates how, even after independence, the school system continued to exclude certain areas of the Antiguan community, continuing a legacy of inequality and damaging the potential of young Antiguan citizens and highlights racism. Kincaid contends that many Antiguan's inferior education relative to the colonial era contributes to a lack of social engagement and self-government in the post-colonial period.

Kincaid's narrative about Antigua is closely linked to Edward Said's principle of exploitation; she explains how colonization destroyed Antigua's riches and resources, leaving behind a legacy of poverty that persists today. This mirrors Said's criticism of how colonial powers perpetuate a system of dominance and exploitation over the colonized, he argues: "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (Said, 1978, p.05). This statement highlights how the West's representation of the East is intertwined with power dynamics that facilitate not only cultural but also economic exploitation. Said argues that this power imbalance is foundational to understanding the interactions between the two regions, as Western narratives often serve to justify the domination and exploitation of Eastern societies.

The foreign investments that further impose external control, making Antiguan feel as inferior figures in their own land. This excerpt delves into how the legacy of colonialism has damaged Antigua's economy through the exploitation of its resources and people. Kincaid sheds light on the ways in which colonial powers extracted wealth from the island, leaving behind a lasting impact on its economic development. She writes:

You brought your own books with you, and among them is one of those new books about economic history , one of those books explaining how the West got rich : the West got rich not from the free (free—in this case meaning got-for-nothing) and then undervalued labour, for generations, of the people like me you see walking around you in Antigua but from the ingenuity of small shopkeepers in Sheffield and Yorkshire and Lancashire, or wherever ; and what a great part the invention of the wristwatch played in it , for there was nothing noble minded men could not do when they discovered they could slap time on their wrists just like that). (Kincaid, 1988, pp.08- 09)

According to her, the West's wealth was built on the "free and undervalued labour" of Antiguan and other colonized peoples. However, rewritten histories that link the West's riches to the creativity of its own people refuse or obscure this basic truth. The poor state of modern Antigua is a direct result of this colonial extraction of wealth, as noted in the passage.

The writer points out that Antiguan frequently feel obligated to follow English manners and standards, which contributes to a lowered sense of self-worth, reinforcing feelings of inadequacy and alienation from their own culture, she writes: “Antiguans are so proud of [Independence] that each year, to mark the day, they go to church and thank God, a British God, for this”.(p.08). This quote highlights how Antiguan feel obligated to celebrate their independence by adhering to British customs and religious practices. Kincaid suggests this cultural mimicry reinforces feelings of inadequacy and disconnection from their indigenous heritage.

In addition, the deterioration of institutions like libraries, once symbols of colonial investment, reflects the neglect of cultural and educational resources in independent Antigua. This decay symbolizes the broader of Antiguan society and contributes to a pervasive sense of inferiority. This passage sheds light on the importance of the library in Antiguan society and how colonialism destroyed this gain of knowledge, Kincaid states; “She told me that she always encouraged her girls and her girls’ children to use the library, and by her girls she means grown up Antiguan women (not unlike me) who work in her gift shop as seamstress and saleswomen” (p,27) In this extract Kincaid discusses the importance of the library in the lives of Antiguan women and the larger cultural background of Antigua. The passage is full with meaning and provides insights on subjects such as education, cultural identity, and the impact of colonialism.

Language is a central theme in Jamaica Kincaid’ s *A Small Place*, she uses it as a central metaphor to portray the linguistic colonization of Antigua and the lasting power dynamics it created. The colonizer’ s language is shown to be a tool of oppression, mimicry, and an inadequate medium to express the colonized experience, Jamaica shows how the local language slowly turned into a mix of French and English as the island was controlled by the British and French at different times and highlights the limitations of language in expressing

their experience. Antiguan are forced to use the language of the ‘criminal’ who committed the crime of colonization, a language that cannot fully capture the horror and injustice of their situation. Kincaid (1988) argues: For isn’ t it odd that the only language I have in which to speak of this crime is the language of the criminal who committed the crime? And what can that really mean? For the language of the criminal can contain only the goodness of the criminal’ s deed. The language of the criminal can explain and express the deed only from the criminal’ s point of view . It cannot contain the horror of the deed, the injustice of the deed , agony , the humiliation inflicted on me .(p, 20). In this quote, Kincaid articulates the irony and pain of using the colonizer’ s language to describe the atrocities committed by the colonizers themselves. She suggests that this language inherently reflects the perspective and justifications of the oppressor, which cannot capture the true horror, injustice, and suffering experienced by the colonized. The quote emphasizes that the colonizer’ s language can only convey the “goodness” of the criminal’ s actions, thus perpetuating a narrative that favors the oppressor. This dynamic illustrates how linguistic imperialism not only shapes communication but also reinforces power structures, as those who cannot speak the dominant language are excluded from political and social discourse. Language is thus a key lens through which Kincaid examines the legacy of colonialism in Antigua. Kincaid offers a scathing critique of the relationship between tourists and locals in Antigua. Through her vivid descriptions and powerful quotes, Kincaid highlights how tourism perpetuates a cycle of superiority and inferiority rooted in the island’ s colonial past. Kincaid (1988) in a poignant quote illustrates: They are too poor to go anywhere. They are too poor to escape the reality of their lives; and they are too poor to live properly in the place where they live, which is the very place you, the tourist, want to go so when the natives see you , the tourist , they envy you, they envy your ability to leave your own banality and boredom, they envy your

ability to turn their own banality and boredom into a source of pleasure for yourself . (P. 14). This quote underscores the vast economic disparity between tourists and locals. Visitors possess the means to transcend the “reality of their lives” through travel, while Antiguan are trapped in a cycle of poverty, unable to access the same opportunities for escape and leisure. Kincaid suggests that this economic superiority, a direct consequence of colonial exploitation, engenders feelings of envy and inferiority among the native population. As tourists flaunt their wealth and privilege, they serve as a constant reminder of the Antiguan’s own economic limitations and lack of power. Moreover, the author implies that this dynamic is not a coincidence but rather a calculated outcome of the tourism industry itself. By catering to the desires of affluent visitors, the industry perpetuates the very conditions that keep Antiguan in a state of economic subordination. The tourists’ ability to “escape” their lives at will, while locals are confined to their “reality,” reinforces the colonial power structures that have shaped Antigua’s history.

In conclusion, Both Byron and Kincaid underscore the multifaceted nature of colonialism, and show how it has affected societies and people, urging readers to engage critically with its legacies and their implications. Through their works, they highlight cultural, political and personal ramifications of colonial rule, emphasizing how these impacts have endured over time.

Chapter Two: Robert Byron and Jamaica Kincaid's Critical Perspectives of Western Representations on non-European Societies.

In the realm of travel literature and personal narrative, the portrayal of the East by Western writers has often been fraught with stereotypes, misconceptions and sense of exoticism. In this chapter, we will analyse how Robert Byron and Jamaica Kincaid critique the western perspective in their masterpieces. The first by portraying the East with a sense of fascination and the second by highlighting the harsh realities of Antigua contrary to what the tourists view as a beautiful and idyllic space.

a- Representation of the East in *The Road to Oxiana* (1937) and Antigua in *A Small Place* (1998)

In Robert Byron's seminal travelogue *The Road To Oxiana* (1937), he offers a thorough critique of Western depictions of Central Asia, illuminating the region's intricacies beyond the exoticized lens through which it was frequently depicted. Byron's critique stems not only from academic research, but also from his actual experiences and contacts while travelling through Persia (Iran), Afghanistan, and sections of Central Asia in the early 1930s. His story is a painful reflection on the shortcomings of Orientalist attitudes, as well as a demand for a more nuanced understanding of Central Asian cultures and people. He contributed to show the reality of the East and that the non European and their towns are not portrayed as they are discribed by Western writers.

To begin, Byron questions the widespread exoticization of Central Asia in Western literature and art by presenting a nuanced view of the region that challenges the prevailing stereotypes and romanticized notions, he states:

I regret having left Palestine. It is refreshing to find a country endowed with great natural beauty, with a capital whose appearance is worthy of its fame, with a prosperous cultivation and a prodigiously expanding revenue, with the germ of an indigenous modern culture in

the form of painters, musicians, and architects, and with an administration whose conduct resembles that of a benevolent Lord of the Manor among his dependants (Byron, 1937, p.37)

In this quotation Byron sets a tone of admiration and appreciation for both the natural landscape and the urban environment. Byron's reflections convey a sense of respect and approval for the advancements in Palestine, highlighting the country's successful integration of natural beauty, economic growth, cultural development, and effective administration.

As well, Byron addresses the temptation to portray the region as a mystical and romanticized other cut apart from modernity and Western standards. As Edward said in his book demonstrated how the western literary and cultural canon has otherized its other and how they have misrepresented the Orient (Said, 1979). Byron's method is refreshingly grounded in actual observations and conversations, portraying Central Asians as persons with various backgrounds, beliefs, and daily lives rather than exotic cliches. He challenges the prevalent Orientalist fantasies through exploring the customs, traditions, and everyday life of Central Asians in a manner that emphasizes their diversity and complexity; he engages with local practices like ceremonies, rituals, and social interactions; the following passage is an illustration:

It was a pleasant evening, and when Mr. Trump-of-Raphael in a touching manner asked me what I thought of it I honestly applauded his good taste. There was nothing pretentious, no self-conscious nationalist anti-quarianism or self-conscious Parisian modernity, to spoil the guests' enjoyment. Persians have a gift of social ease. This taste of it made me feel quite affectionately towards the old monster whose life we had been celebrating. Besides, not everyone can say he has danced in the Chihil Sutun (Byron, 1937, p.182)

In this quotation, Byron reflects his observations and reflections on a social gathering in Persia (Iran); his mention of dancing in the Chihil Sutun Palace reflects his appreciation for experiencing significant cultural sites and activities during his travels. The Chihil Sutun Palace in Isfahan is known for its historical and architectural significance. This highlights

Byron's favourable experience at a social event in Persia, marked by authentic hospitality and a deep sense of connection with the local people and their traditions.

Byron's profound admiration and awe for the architecture he encountered challenges the dominant Eurocentric perspective. His descriptions suggest a broader appreciation for cultural diversity and artistic achievements beyond European norms, highlighting the richness and significance of architectural traditions from different parts of the world. He states:

This building stands at the opposite pole of architectural virtue to the small dome-chamber in the Friday Mosque. The latter is remarkable because, apart from its unique merit, that merit is of a kind which most people have regarded as the exclusive property of the European mind. The Mosque of Sheikh Lutfullah is Persian in the fabulous sense: the Omar Khayyam brigade, to whom rational form is as much anathema as rational action, can wallow in it to their hearts' content (p.185)

In this passage, Byron criticizes the trend to strictly define architectural merit using European norms. He emphasizes how the modest dome chamber in the Friday Mosque defies stereotypes by demonstrating architectural quality that Europeans have historically claimed as their own, and challenges the assumptions that only European architectural styles can achieve certain levels of beauty and innovation.

Byron highlights the historical richness and artistic significance of the east. Praising cities like Isfahan for their architectural splendour and showing how these architectures hide the immense richness of the history of this nation. He declared:

One could explore for months without coming to the end of them. From the XIth century, architects and craftsmen have recorded the fortunes of the town, its changes of taste, government, and belief. The buildings reflect these local circumstances; it is their charm, the charm of the most old towns. (Byron,1937,p.183)

The passage emphasizes that architects and craftsmen from as early as the 11th century were recording the fortunes, tastes, and beliefs of their towns. This contrasts with Western-centric narratives, which frequently undervalue or overlook the sophistication and historical depth of non-Western architecture and cultural history. It demonstrates how non-Western towns and

cities, like their European counterparts, were formed by complex past and histories and deserve equal attention for their creative and cultural significance.

Byron frequently contrasts Eastern and Western architectural achievements, challenging the dominant Western perspectives of cultural superiority. His wonder for the mosque in Isfahan, where he finds its interior splendour surpasses even the most renowned European structures, underscores the unique and remarkable beauty of Persian Islamic architecture. Byron aims to demonstrate that the East, rather than being a passive consumer of Western culture, has its own rich intellectual and creative traditions that merit acknowledgment and respect. He declared:

I have never encountered splendour of this kind before. Other interiors came into my mind as I stood there, to compare it with: Versailles, or the porcelain rooms at Schönbrunn, or the Doge's Palace, or St. Peter's. All are rich; but none so rich. Their richness is three-dimensional; it is attended by all the effort of shadow (p.187)

In this quotation, Byron's appreciation challenges prejudice against Islam, showcasing the sophistication and cultural depth found in non-Western architectural traditions. His comparison emphasizes how Persian mosques provide a profound aesthetic experience that rivals and even outperforms those of renowned European interiors. Byron elevates the status of Eastern art and design, offering a counter-narrative to the Western belief in its own cultural superiority. His detailed and evocative description highlights the mosque's unique use of space, light, and shadow, as well as the emotional and sensory impact it had on him as a traveller.

In addition, Byron opposes the shallow, stereotyped Western perception of the East as merely mystic or exotic by highlighting Persian culture's significant intellectual and creative achievements. He rejects the romanticized notions of the East and instead celebrates the sophistication and historical significance of the art he encounters. He states:

Islam! Iran! Asia! Mystic, languid, inscrutable! One can hear a Frenchman saying that, the silly fool—as if it was An opium den in Marseilles. We felt the opposite; that is why I mention it. Every circumstance of sight, sound, and trespass Conspired to swamp the intelligence. The message of a work of art overcame this conspiracy, forcing its way out of the shadows, insisting on structure and proportion, on the impress of superlative Quality, and on the intellect behind them. How this message was conveyed is difficult to say. Glimpses of arabesques so liquid, so delicately interlaced, that they looked no more like mosaic than a Carpet looks like stitches; of larger patterns lost in the murk above our heads; of vaults and friezes alive with calligraphy—these were its actual words. But the sense was larger. An epoch, the Timurids, Gohar Shad herself, and her architect Kavam-ad-Din, ruled the Night (Byron, 1937, p.220)

In this passage, Byron opposes typical Western ideas of the East, including Iran and Islamic art, while acknowledging its intellectual and artistic achievements. He believes that art, when evaluated correctly, has the power to represent structure, proportion, and intellectual rigor; this is a direct challenge to Westerners who regard Eastern art as merely attractive or strange. Byron highlights the significance of Islamic calligraphy in Persian architecture, showing it as more than just decoration, but as an essential component of the structure's intellectual and creative expression. He explains that the use of calligraphy in Islamic art displays its spiritual and intellectual depth, connecting faith, beauty, and knowledge. Through compelling imagery and references to historical characters, Byron demonstrates that Persian art is more than just aesthetics, serving as a monument to the cultural and intellectual riches of the Timurids culture.

The ideas Byron expresses here align closely with Edward Said's concept of "Representation", as outlined in Said's influential work *Orientalism* (1979), he states:

My analysis of the Orientalist text therefore places emphasis on the evidence, which is by no means invisible, for such representations as representations, not as "natural" depictions of the Orient. This evidence is found just as prominently in the so-called truthful text (histories, philological analyses, political treatises) as in the avowedly artistic (i.e., openly imaginative) text. The things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social

circumstances, not the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original. (Said, 1979, p.21)

In this passage, Edward Said emphasizes the significance of viewing Orientalist writings as representations rather than actual or exact depictions of the East the 'Orient'. He shifts the focus from judging whether these representations are correct or faithful to the real Orient, toward analyzing the way these representations are constructed and how they reflect Western perspectives and interests. That means that the Western representation of the East is not neutral and objective; the east has always been misrepresented.

Overall, the exceptional hospitality offered to Byron stands in contrast to Westerners' generally harsh vision of non-European societies, and these were displayed when Byron and his companion arrived in Kunduz, Afghanistan. They were expecting to be taken to a guest house, but it had recently fell down, instead, they were shown a row of tents set up beneath a grove of plane trees, complete with carpets, tables, and chairs, as well as lamps lit for the reception. Their host (Mudir-i-Kharidja) states: "it would have been better done if he had known they were coming; but there was no telephone between here and Mazar to warn him" (Byron,1937,p.278).Byron's experiences in this passage reveal a different reality: he is greeted with kindness and generosity instead of hostility .This hospitality contradicts the dominant Western narrative, which frequently depicts non-European countries as dangerous or mysterious.

Byron provides a vivid and critical portrayal of Afghan society and its self perception, contrasting it with European norms and expectations. He emphasizes that Afghan expected European to adapt to their customs rather than submit to European ideals, he state:

It may be inconvenient tradition, from the point of view of government. But at least it has preserved the people's poise and their belief in themselves. They expect the European to conform to their standards, Instead of themselves to his, a fact which came home to me this morning when I tried to buy some arak; there is not a drop of Alcohol to be had in the whole town, Here at last is Asia without an Inferiority complex (Byron, 1937, p.90)

The passage, demonstrate Byron's experience of trying to buy arak (an Alcohol beverage) and discovering that there is none available, which underscores the strong adherence to local customs and norms, that illustrates Afghanistan's great cultural pride and resistance to other influences.

Byron critiques the romanticized representations of Persian culture and art, particularly through Safavid frescoes (artworks created during the Safavid dynasty , which ruled Persia from 1501 to 1736 , the Safavid period was known for its vibrant art and architecture, often blending Persian , Islamic and central Asian influences) and the poetry of Omar Khayyam (a renewed Persian Poet, famous in the west, which is renowned for his romanticized portrayal of Persian themes in poetry) , suggesting that these depictions lead to a misleading understanding of their true complexity and significance. Byron (1937) state: "The second was more select. About fifty people collected in a long vaulted room, beneath those languid Safavid frescoes which have vied with Omar Khayyam to give the world a false idea of Persian art and sentiment" (p.181). In this excerpt, Byron introduces a critical perspective on how both these frescoes and the poetry of Omar Khayyam have contributed to certain romanticized and distorted view of Persian culture and art in the eyes of the world. This highlights that Persian art holds profound and complex significance, yet it is often misrepresented or inadequately portrayed. Westerners, in Byron' s view, often reduce Persian art to mere aesthetic beauty, overlooking its deep historical and cultural significance.

In comparison of Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana* to Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*; the critical analysis of Western perceptions that frequently idealize and misrepresent Antigua. Through his exploration of the island's history, culture, and the lived experiences of its inhabitants, Kincaid challenges these narratives, revealing a more complex and often painful reality. She works to dispel how Antigua has been portrayed by westerners and show

the real story of Antigua by pointing out the harshness of life faced by its inhabitants. Kincaid , focusing on the perspective of tourists and the realities of life in Antigua, she opens her essay by addressing Antigua's superficial fascination, which is defined by its beautiful surroundings and attractive beaches , Kincaid(1988) declares

As your plane descends to land , you might say , What a beautiful island is Antigua is more beautiful than any of other islands you have seen , and they were very beautiful , in their way , but they were much too green , much too lush with vegetation ...for you are thinking of the hard and cold and dark and long days you spent working in North America (or, worse , Europe) , earning some money so that you could stay in this place (Antigua) where the sun always shines and where the climate is deliciously hot and dry ... while at the same time surrounded by a sea and an ocean the Caribbean sea on one side, the Atlantic Ocean on the other . (p.05)

This passage is a social commentary on tourism and the perspective of Westerners visiting Antigua, the passage depicts Antigua as an idyllic paradise known for its beauty and ideal climate. The speaker expresses awe as they approach the island, noting that Antigua is more beautiful than the other islands; despite their desirability .The passage also emphasizes the tourist's focus on the sunny and dry climate of Antigua, contrasting it with the harsh weather conditions they experienced in North America or Europe. This reinforces the idea that the tourist is primarily concerned with their own enjoyment and comfort.

However, Kincaid quickly contrasts this beauty with the potential challenges faced by the local population. It emphasizes a clear distinction between the tourist experience and the daily problems of Antiguan, who face systemic concerns such as poverty, corruption, and inadequate public services. Kincaid states: "Have you ever wondered why it is that all we seem to have learned from you is how to corrupt our societies and how to be tyrants" (Kincaid,1988, p.22).This statement underlines how tourists are sometimes blind to the poverty and inequality that define the lives of natives. This critique seeks to deconstruct the romanticized picture of Antigua as a paradise, encouraging readers to confront the difficult reality under the fake facade of luxury that Westerners used to demonstrate.

Jamaica Kincaid's work critiques the Western view of the Caribbean as an exotic 'Other' paralleling Edward Said's discussion in *Orientalism*, she illustrates how Western narratives often reduce Caribbean culture to simplistic stereotypes, overlooking its complexity and richness. She emphasises the importance of recognizing the humanity and individuality of Caribbean people, challenging the notion that they exist solely as objects of fascination for Western audience, she says: "the native does not like the tourist is not hard to explain. For every native of every place is a potential tourist, and every tourist is a native of somewhere (Kincaid, 1988, p.14)

Jamaica Kincaid illustrates the essence of hospitality for Antiguans who welcome Westerners upon arriving in Antigua, emphasizing the initial sense of freedom and comfort they feel. As they move off the plane, Kincaid offers a clear picture of the island's warm climate, clean air and the comforting feeling being "cleansed" and "blessed", Kincaid (1988) writes:

You emerge from customs into the hot, clean air immediately you feel cleansed, immediately you feel blessed, you feel free. You see a taxi driver; you ask him to take you to your destination; he quotes you a price. You immediately think that the price is in the local currency for you a tourist and you are familiar with these things (rates of exchange) and you feel even more free for things seem so cheap but then your driver ends by saying "in us currency". (p.06)

This warm attitude is complemented by the surprising low taxi pace, which adds to the tourists 'pleasure and ease. Kincaid's imagery not only depicts Antigua's physical beauty, but also reflects its people's friendliness and kindness, creating a pleasant atmosphere in which tourists may rest and engage themselves in local culture. This initial impression of friendliness sets the tone for a deeper examination of the island's complexity as she contrasts the tourist's beautiful experience with the challenges endured by the locals.

Antigua has a rich cultural heritage that is vibrant and unique, with traditions passed down through generations, which is reflected in its traditional clothing. Kincaid reflects how

ordinary materials like a simple piece of cloth can be turned into something beautiful through creativity. The Westerners observe how Antiguan use what they have even if it seems cheap or unrefined to make something special, Kincaid (1988) argues:

And you look at the things they can do with a piece of ordinary cloth, the things they fission out of cheap vulgarity colored to (you) twine the way they squat down over a hole they have made in the ground the hope itself is something to marvel at and since you are being an ugly person thus ugly but joyful thought will swell inside you their ancestors were not clever in the way your were and not ruthless in the way yours were. (p.13)

This passage appears to be a stream of consciousness or a poetic reflection on theme of cultural differences showing how people from various backgrounds think and feel differently. It highlights the importance of understanding these differences to promote respect and harmony among different cultures, emphasizing how ordinary materials, like “a piece of ordinary cloth” can be transformed into something remarkable through human ingenuity and spirit. The ability to create beauty from “cheap vulgarity” suggests that value is not inherent in materials but rather in the imagination and skill of the creator .There is a kind of combination between the ancestors of the people being observed and the speaker’s own ancestors, implying a critique of perceived cleverness and ruthlessness associated with one’s own background compared to the simpler, perhaps more joyful existence of others.

Kincaid notices that Antiguan have a strong sense of community and connection with each other, which is very different from the individualistic culture seen in many Western countries contrast sharply with the communal values found in Antigua. Kincaid highlights that ordinary happenings in Antigua are elevated to significance, implying that the community finds joy and meaning in everyday interactions and experiences. This observation underscores how Antiguan prioritize relationships and shared moments, fostering a strong sense of connection and belonging that differs from the more self-focused perspectives common in Western societies. This represents a complex cultural tapestry, and even basic actions are valued. She affirms: “Antiguan is a very small place. In Antigua, not only is the event turned

into everyday but the everyday is turned into an event.” (Kincaid, 1988,p.33) This quote suggests that in Antigua, everyone is aware of each other’s lives, which fosters a sense of belonging and community. Kincaid uses this statement to convey how the unique social dynamics of Antigua enrich the lives of its inhabitants and how much its people are shaped by these forces, even in the simplest aspects of daily existence. Thus, cultivating a deep sense of belonging and cultural pride is important because it brings people together, makes them feel valued and helps them celebrate their shared traditions.

Additionally, the writer shows that Antiguanians have a remarkable capacity for patience and endurance, not as a sign of passivity but as a form of strength. Despite centuries of exploitation, they continue to live and thrive, holding onto their dignity. This endurance reflects their ability to withstand both external oppression and internal struggles without losing their sense of self. Kincaid (1988) states:

people in a small place [...]this enormous burden that is the event, SO that they cannot breathe properly and they cannot think properly and they say, “This thing that was only coming towards me is now on top of me”, and they live like that, until eventually they absorb the event and it becomes a part of them, part of who and what they really are, and they are complete in that way until another event comes along and the process begins again. (p.31)

This quote reflects a form of strength, but it is a complex and layered kind of strength. Jamaica Kincaid portrays the Antiguanians’ ability to endure and absorb traumatic events, suggesting resilience in the face of hardship. This strength comes not from active resistance or defiance but from an ability to survive and carry the weight of historical and ongoing oppression.

Kincaid claims that it is logical for locals to dislike tourists. This is because tourists come to enjoy a location without fully understanding or caring about the problems of the locals. Tourists frequently observe only the beauty and relaxation of a destination, while locals struggle with the realities of life there. This relationship causes friction, as tourists may

appreciate the culture and environment without realizing the deeper challenges faced by the inhabitants, such as economic hardship and the lasting effects of colonialism.

Moreover, she discusses the desire to romanticize the region, emphasizing how such depictions can obscure the realities of current Caribbean life and identity. This supports Said's claim that Western literature has historically created an immense image of the East, portraying it as irrational and essentially distinct from the West. "Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, West, 'us') and the strange (the Orient, the East, 'them')" (Said, 1978 , p.40)

Jamaica Kincaid emphasizes the delicate interaction between tourists and natives exposing the ignorance and Entitlement of tourists who see local culture and people as entertainment. She asks readers to think about how they would feel if their own everyday lives were shown as a joke to outsiders. This helps readers understand how Tourism can dehumanize local people and highlights how the industry takes advantage of local resources for the Enjoyment of visitors. Jamaica Kincaid reveals that: "When natives see you, the tourist they envy you, they Envy your ability to turn their own banality and boredom into a source of pleasure for yourself." (Kincaid, 1988, p.14)

This passage comes as Kincaid is making a point about how the natives of a place do not like tourists. She argues that everyone would like to get away sometimes, to tour a new place; the difference between Antiguan and the white tourists who visit them, though, is that Antiguan are simply too poor to escape their own lives. For this reason, Antiguan scorn the tourists who are able to escape their own boredom and turn the Antiguan's boredom into entertainment.

Kincaid's vivid vision depicts how the architectural environment of colonial Antigua, such as Government House, reflected and reinforced the repressive realities of British control.

The following statement reveals the psychological effects of colonial architecture on the colonized. She argues:

Government house the place where the governor the person standing in for the queen lived was on east street government house was surrounded by a high white wall and to show how coded we must have been no one over wrote bad things on it it remained clean and white and high . (p.16)

In this argument, Government House, surrounded by a “high white wall” serves as a physical representation of colonial power and exclusion. The wall symbolizes the barrier between the colonizers and the colonized, reinforcing the idea of dominance and misrepresentation of the Antiguans.

In Jamaica Kincaid’s *A Small Place*, the passage: “Even if I really came from people who were living like monkeys in trees, it was better to be that than what happened to me and what I became after I met you” (p. 23) criticizes Western representations of the Caribbean and the impact of colonialism on identity. The quote mirrors Kincaid’s broader concerns of the other in her writing, in which she criticizes Westerners’ oversimplified and frequently negative attitudes toward Caribbean communities. Kincaid underlines the harmful legacy of colonial forces and the ambiguities of Antiguan identity in a postcolonial setting by stating that it is preferable to be perceived as “monkeys” rather than live among the whites.

Jamaica Kincaid’s exploration of the Caribbean aligns closely with Edward Said’s concept of ‘Representation’ as articulated in *Orientalism*. Said critiques how Western narratives construct a distorted view of the East, portraying it as exotic and fundamentally different from the West. He states: “The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences.” (Said, 1979,p.01) .This quote exemplifies Said’s argument that colonial ideologies shape and influence Western perceptions of the East, romanticizing and

stereotyping Eastern civilizations. This statement is widely used to represent the concept of Orientalism, which is a discourse that asserts Western superiority and dominance over the East.

In addressing these misrepresentations, Kincaid not only reclaims Antigua's story, but also highlights the need of acknowledging its people's humanity and agency. Her work is a call to action for a more nuanced view of the Caribbean, encouraging both tourists and readers to confront the disturbing facts that lie behind the surface of paradise. Finally, *A Small Place* makes an important contribution to postcolonial discourse by calling for recognition of Antiguan reality and challenging untruths that have historically silenced their voices.

In conclusion, both Byron and Kincaid challenge dominant Western perspectives. Byron contrasts the western stereotypes by celebrating the cultural richness and the architectural beauty of the East. His narrative emphasizes the complexity and historical depth of the places he visits, encouraging Western readers to see beyond their own biases. Kincaid also opposes the Western viewpoint by depicting the beauty of the Island and the diversity of its culture.

Kincaid poignantly captures the complex relationship between beauty, history, and identity in Antigua. The perceptions of beauty can mask deeper truths about a society's past. Kincaid contrasts the idyllic image of Antigua, often romanticized by tourists, with the harsh realities faced by its inhabitants throughout history. By highlighting that this "unreal" beauty persists regardless of the island's colonial past or its present state of freedom, Kincaid challenges readers to confront the uncomfortable truths behind the surface allure of Antigua and to recognize that true beauty cannot be separated from the struggles and injustices that have shaped its people and their experiences. Kincaid (1988) writes: It is just a little island. The unreal way in which it is beautiful now is the unreal way in which it was always beautiful . the

unreal way in which it is beautiful now that they are free people is the unreal way in which it was beautiful when they were slaves.(p, 46). In this quote Jamaica makes a powerful observation about the perception of Antigua's beauty and how it has been shaped by the island's history of slavery, she begins by describing Antigua as 'just a little island', emphasizing its small size and geographic insignificance. However, she then goes on to highlight the paradox of how the island is perceived as beautiful, noting that this perception is 'unreal' in both the present and the past. The phrase 'the unreal way in which it is beautiful now' refers to the romanticized and idealized view of Antigua's natural beauty that is often presented to tourists. Kincaid suggests that this perception is 'unreal' because it fails to acknowledge the complex realities and struggles of the Antiguan people. She then draws a parallel between the present and the past, stating that the island was also viewed as beautiful 'when they were slaves'. This comparison highlights the continuity of this 'unreal' perception of beauty, even in the face of the island's history of oppression and exploitation under colonial rule. By juxtaposing the present and the past, Kincaid suggests that the perception of Antigua's beauty has remained largely unchanged, despite the island's transition from a slave society to an independent nation. The 'unreal' view of the island's beauty persists, obscuring the ongoing effects of the challenges faced by the Antiguan people.

V. Conclusion

This piece of research has allowed us to investigate the issue of power dynamics in Travel Writing, as illustrated in Robert Byron's *The Road to Oxiana* (1937) and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988). We have focused our analysis of possible affinities between the two novels, through the examination of colonial legacy and the representation of the East and Antigua. Through our research, our arguments are primarily supported by Edward Said's concept of 'othering' and 'representation' from his seminal work *Orientalism* (1979). Said's ideas illuminate how the West constructs the East as the 'other' to reinforce colonial domination and control, emphasizing how the West misrepresent the East in their narratives.

In the first chapter, we discussed how Byron and Kincaid engage with colonial legacy in the two novels in view of Said's concept of 'Othering'. We focused on how colonialism influenced and impacted societies on different fields. Such as the exploitation of local resources for the interest of colonial power. As well as, colonialism sought not only economic dominance, but also the eradication of old history and civilizations in the regions under their control, in favor of imposed norms, values, and governance systems. This erasure was a deliberate strategy to weaken local resistance and establish cultural hegemony. It had also profound psychological impacts on the colonized populations.

In the second chapter, we explored how the two authors challenge the Western perspectives in their portrayal of non-European societies relying on Said's concept of 'Representation', by highlighting cultural richness and history of both the East and Antigua, where the two authors urge for a more complex and critical examination of the non-European world. In contrast to how Western narratives have frequently depicted these cultures as backward, uncivilized, or in need of Western assistance, the two writers present a counter-narrative that praises the regions' diversity, resilience, and cultural depth.

To conclude, our current research does not cover all the issues that can be tackled in Robert Byron's *The Road To Oxiana* and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*. Throughout our study, we encountered several topics for further investigation. We invite other students to explore themes such as the role of cultural heritage by comparing the two narratives, in the light of different theoretical framework.

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