

The Journey of Decolonization in Kamau Brathwaite's The Arrivants

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Abstract

Due to Western colonization, the African people in the Caribbean region have suffered from an identity crisis because of the colonial attempts to erase their history, traditions, and heritage. Decolonization, then, is an effort to recover and to repossess the pre-colonial past of the colonized people which was damaged or distorted by colonialism.

In writing *The Arrivants*, Brathwaite sought to decolonize the devastating effects of colonization on the African people in the Caribbean region through reidentification with his ancestors and ethnic roots in Africa, the recreation and renewal of the African heritage such as beliefs, customs, rituals, and traditions to reclaim self-discovery and the search and assertion of a genuine identity out of dispersal, dispossession, fragmentation and exile in the Caribbean region.

This paper aims to trace Kamau Brathwaite's physical, cultural, and spiritual journey in his long poem *The Arrivants* to decolonize the devastating impact of Western colonization on the African descendants in the Caribbean region.

Key words: Decolonization, Kamau Brathwaite, Africa, the Caribbean, the Arrivants,