

Abstract

This thesis is essentially an attempt to examine the structural context, idea-content, and goal orientation of various movements and ideologies, which have emerged in the Caribbean since the 18th Century, which may be described as expressions of black consciousness because of their relevance to the political, economic, and cultural 'emancipation' of the black masses in the region.

Methodologically, the study seeks to apply social scientific analysis to a set of historical data and on this basis to develop a typology of 'partial' and 'total' ideologies of black consciousness, as well as to distinguish, in terms of levels of systematisation, between pre-ideological, proto-ideological, and secular ideological forms of such expressions.

As a background, an attempt is made to identify the legacies of colonisation, slavery and the plantation system in terms of economic dispossession, social deprivation, and psycho-cultural disorientation within the black community, and to show how these factors have stimulated the growth and development of movements and ideologies of black consciousness. In this connection a wide range of movements of black protest, including slave revolts, the St. Domingue Revolution, the Morant Bay Uprising, Garveyism, Negritude, Rastafarism, and more recent expressions such as the 'October Movement' in Jamaica in 1968 and the 'February Revolution' in Trinidad in 1970, are examined in relation to the theme of black consciousness. Finally, some attempt is made to assess the significance of current expressions of black consciousness.

for the future direction of political change in the region.