

ABSTRACT

The Political Thought of C.L.R. James (1934-1950)

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This dissertation examines the political thought of C.L.R. James (1934-50). It contends that James's political thought was a significant contribution to Marxist social and political theory and that C.L.R. James successfully developed an "independent" Marxism for the immediate post World War II period. The work suggests that James's political theory was a totality and that his activities as political theorist, literary critic, sports commentator and historian were elements of an integrated view of human nature, society and its possibilities. It focuses on the period (1934-50) and argues using new material, that James's contribution although shaped and influenced by his West Indian formation reached a climax in this period. The work explores issues of political theory, ideology and classical Marxism, the Black radical tradition and submits that James's political theory synthesizes significant radical currents. It finally posits the notion that C.L.R. James should be located as one of the major Marxist thinkers of the 20th century.