

ABSTRACT

Lovelace's fiction is informed by an emergent political ideology. His political thinking develops from novel to novel, leading to a more and more subtle blending of art and politics. This growth in subtlety can also be seen in development from a straight-forward political nationalism to a more profound and wide-ranging cultural nationalism.

The thesis traces Lovelace's political thinking as he progresses from novel to novel, and the manner in which art and politics are blended into the body of his work.

The paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter explores the general characteristics of Lovelace's fiction. His political ideology is seen to develop through the changing perceptions of his characters in relation to their environment. The protagonist's psychological development takes place through the motif of the quest. The element of power is explored. In expressing his political ideology, Lovelace's style is seen to convey his political ideas as much as his themes.

The second chapter examines Lovelace's political themes. The main issues are found to be self-government versus dependence on the powers-that-be, true as opposed to false leadership, education and progress, and religion

and culture. Lovelace's political concerns are seen to pervade his art until politics and art become inseparable in his work.

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The third chapter is an exploration of The Dragon Can't Dance, the novel in which Lovelace's political themes come to a culmination. A study of the main characters of the novel, in the first part of the chapter, argues that Aldrick represents an emerging national consciousness. The character is used by Lovelace as a positive symbol of the assertion and affirmation of self. This is followed in the second part by an examination of the Trinidad Carnival as the greatest spiritual resource of the people and as an important ingredient in Lovelace's concept of cultural nationalism. The Dragon Can't Dance is shown to be the refinement and distillation of both the artistic and political visions of the author.