

ABSTRACT**THE EMERGENCE OF THE THINKER ACTIVIST:
AN EXPLORATION INTO THE NATURE OF CARIBBEAN
INTELLECTUAL HISTORY AND THE LITERARY DIMENSION
OF THE HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY OF C.L.R. JAMES****John Fitzgerald Campbell**

This thesis links the historical methodology of C.L.R. James firstly to his Trinidadian origins and secondly, to deconstructionalist methodology as often encountered in literary analysis. In his historical methodology James discounted the modernist notion of historical objectivity, and sought instead to redirect methodology towards focusing on a philosophy of historical empathy. His historical approach allowed the subject personas of the historical discourse to maintain a voice in the articulation of their history. In this regard his Trinidadian roots, being based in the "literary" struggles of the nineteenth century Afro-Trinidadian "aspiring class", provides a useful insight into the understanding of the historical philosophy that guided him. A further insight into the evolution of James' methodology is gained through his private letters to Constance Webb over the years 1937-1948. Through these letters one understands not only the basis for his unique historical methodology and the relevance of his Trinidadian origins, but also how he used his unique perspective to shape the Marxist discourse. Validating our claim for the peculiar reading of James's historiography as an "emplotted" power discourse, will be the example of his interaction with his Caribbean student Eric Williams in the years 1956-1970.