

ABSTRACT

A Study of Walter Rodney's Intellectual and Political Thought

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This study traces the evolution of Rodney's intellectual and political thought, in the Caribbean and Africa, during the early years of the post-colonial era. It also examines his political activities and their relationships to his thought. Rodney is seen, as contributing to an emergent Caribbean intellectual tradition, that has benefitted from the efforts of C.L.R. James's pioneering work, as well as from the development of the University system in the Caribbean and Africa, which in the case of Tanzania gave him freedom to work, but in Jamaica and Guyana political intervention denied him the right to do so. Rodney deepened the work of C.L.R. James, and added to it an entirely new dimension in his study of African history. Rodney's work on African history broadened his understanding of the transatlantic slave trade and the significance of empire for the modern world economy and politics but equally gave him insights into the way power was wielded by the new ruling elite in Tanzania, Jamaica, and Guyana. It is in this context that his own ideas on politics evolved, and were played out in these locations and his own intellectual identity shaped.