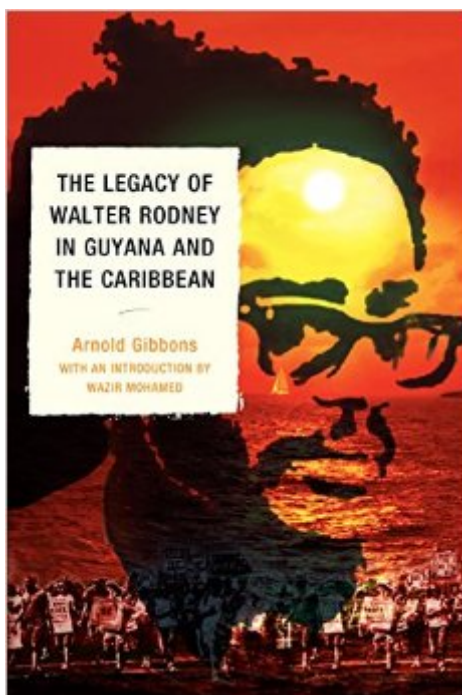


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The Legacy Of Walter Rodney In Guyana And The Caribbean



Synopsis

Walter Rodney claimed developing countries were heirs to uneven development and ethnic disequilibrium, including continued forms of oppression from the capitalist countries and their own leaders. In Guyana, ethnic chauvinism persisted before and after independence from Britain. Rodney was disturbed by the inability of intellectuals to share common cause with the masses, thus ensuring that they would be unable to contribute to uplifting their talents or participate in the growth of the nation. Guyana and the Caribbean were subject to sugar and slave traffic that constituted cheap labor for the plantations and buttressed the capitalist-industrial system. A significant byproduct of that system was the master-slave relationship; a no-less iniquitous consequence was an active racism. Thus, social inequality became the heritage of Guyanese and Caribbean history. These social evils have influenced all of the social, economic, and political institutions in Guyana. Race, class, and color became the determinants of social value and how the various racial groups responded to them is both the triumph and the tragedy of Guyanese nationalism. Rodney belongs in that pantheon of philosophers whose names adorn the history of the Caribbean and elsewhere. He has sought to lift the Caribbean people from the victimization of history and the poverty of material circumstance.

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