Walter Rodney and the Development of the Postcolonial anti-Imperial Struggle

Lawton Salley, Class of 2012

Lawton Salley spent his senior year studying Walter Rodney. He used the large Nyhus grant to travel to London and Atlanta for archival research. The London Metropolitan Archives are home to the Huntley Archives, containing Eric and Jessica Huntley’s personal and professional records. The Huntleys were Walter Rodney’s publishers through Bogle L’Ouverture Publications as well as his friends. The drafts and correspondence of Rodney’s major published works in this archive revealed the familial proximity of the black intellectual cadre surrounding Bogle L’Ouverture and demonstrated the evolution of Rodney’s thought and method in his most prominent works. London also enabled visits to historically significant sites in Rodney’s life, such as the School of Oriental and African Studies, where he earned his doctorate, and Red Lion Square, where a major protest was held in response to his banning from Jamaica in 1968. The Woodruff Library in Atlanta serves Clarke Atlanta University and Morehouse College, and is home to The Walter Rodney Papers. His wife, Patricia Rodney, donated these materials, including Rodney’s personal correspondence, lectures, speeches, published and unpublished papers, to the Woodruff Library after Walter Rodney’s assassination in 1980. They form the most comprehensive assemblage of material on Walter Rodney in one place. With the help of archivist Kayin Shabazz this archive proved invaluable in uncovering Rodney’s Pan Africanism and his views on the importance of education in achieving lasting socialist revolution.

Faculty Mentor: Professor David Gordon

Funded by The Nyhus Travel Grant