

Garvey, Garveyism, and Their Influences on Black Consciousness and Political Thought

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The 20th century was one of great change in both the social condition and the intellectual thought of Black people. Great Black intellectual figures such as Booker T. Washington, W.E.B Du Bois, Kwame Nkrumah, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King Jr. all added to the growing body of works and body of knowledge that influenced Black thought. Lesser heard of but no less important is Marcus Garvey, a political activist, speaker, and orator who, during the 1920s, created waves in Black race consciousness. Although the Garvey movement failed to bring about major change in political policy or the living conditions of Black people in America, his unique rhetoric and ideology ultimately served as the foundation for future Black Nationalist and Pan-Africanist groups and ideologies.

Marcus Garvey was born in 1887 in Jamaica. Garvey left public schooling at the age of fourteen to learn printing from his grandfather, which became his career for the greater part of his youth. He happened to be a member of the island's first union, a printers' union, and struck with them in 1907<sup>1</sup>. Afterwards, Garvey was forced to work at the Government Printing Office when other printers refused to hire him. Inspired by his time in the printers' union, Garvey helped form the first political club in Jamaica, the National Club, and helped to print its publication, *Our Own*. Inspired by his youth witnessing the struggles of the Black working class in Jamaica, Garvey began to become involved in local activism, helping "to train young men and women in elocution." Eventually, Garvey quit his printing job in favor of these more political activities and published his own paper called *The Watchman*<sup>2</sup>. To support himself, or perhaps as he later claimed with the intention to "discover whether the black condition in other places was

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<sup>1</sup> Amy Jacques Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism* (1963; repr., Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 2014), <https://research.ebsco.com/c/bq4orh/search/details/oicze6btif?db=nlebk&db=nlabk.>, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism*, 18.

the same as in Jamaica,” Garvey travelled throughout Central and South America, learning about the harsh laboring conditions and the exploitation of Black men and women<sup>3</sup>.

After his travels in South and Central America, Garvey returned to Jamaica and, after seeing the plight of West Indians and the exploitation of their labor in Central America, he petitioned local British consuls for better protections and rights for these people. He was unsuccessful and, rather than stay in Jamaica, he travelled to Europe. In London, Garvey took courses at Birkbeck College but also learned by listening to different people speak in the House of Commons<sup>4</sup>. However, one of the most important influences for Garvey in London was that of Duse Mohammed Ali, a scholar from Egypt. From him, Garvey learned not only about African history but also about the history of colonialism and imperialism that was perpetrated by the European continent. Ali himself was also the publisher of the *African Times and Orient Review*, a magazine which “expressed abuses in British colonies, promoted African businesses, and reported the major achievements of the black and colored world”<sup>5</sup>. Garvey himself published an essay in the 1913 issue of the magazine, detailing the colonial history of Jamaica and the subjugation of the majority-Black population by the minority-White elites of the island. In particular, Garvey laments the barring of Black youths from schools despite “white youths.... [being] intellectually inferior to the Black”. Even in this early writing, Garvey prophesied that “there will soon be a turning point in the history of the West Indies; and that the people who inhabit that portion of the Western Hemisphere will be the instruments of uniting a scattered race who, before the close of many centuries, will found an Empire on which the sun shall shine as

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<sup>3</sup> Judith Stein and American Council of Learned Societies, *The World of Marcus Garvey : Race and Class in Modern Society* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), <https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/dz010q22v?entityID=https%3A%2F%2Fidp.wm.edu%2Fentity>, 26.

<sup>4</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 28.

<sup>5</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 29.

ceaselessly as it shines on the Empire of the North to-day.<sup>6</sup>” It was from these teachings that Garvey’s own unique Black nationalist ideology began to form.

This ideology is best seen in the goals of Garvey’s newly created organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association, also known as the UNIA. Garvey established August 1, 1914, less than a week after Garvey returned from his studies in Europe, alongside Amy Ashwood, who would later become his wife<sup>7</sup>. Garvey states the objects of the organization in a pamphlet published in August of 1914:

“To Establish a Universal Confraternity among the Race. To Promote the Spirit of Race Pride and Love. To Reclaim th[e] Fallen of the Race. To Administer to, and help the Needy. To Assist in Civilizing the Backward tribes of Africa. To Strengthen the Imperialism of Bas[u]toland, Liberia, etc. To Establish [C]ommissionaries in the Principal Countries of the World, for the Protection of all Negroes, Irrespective of Nationality. To Promote a Conscientious Christian Worship among the Native Tribes of Africa. To Establish Universities, Colleges and Secondary Schools for the Further Education and Culture of our Boys and Girls.<sup>8</sup>”

Garvey’s UNIA embraced a pan-Africanist message of racial unity across national boundaries for the sake of the uplift of the race as a whole. The goals of the UNIA also hash out some examples of how the organization plans to uplift the Black race, such as through education and through welfare or charity programs to “help the needy”. However, there are also a few problematic throughlines that would continue to appear in Garvey’s philosophy and ideology, such as the idea of “civilizing the Backward tribes of Africa” and “promot[ing] a conscientious christian worship

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<sup>6</sup> Robert A. Hill and Carol A. Rudisell, eds., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers. Volume 1, 1826–August 1919*, 1st ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/jj.5973078>, 30-31.

<sup>7</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 30.

<sup>8</sup> Hill & Rudisell, *The UNIA Papers, Vol.1*, 62.

among the Native Tribes of Africa.” These problematic views of Africa as an underdeveloped nation whose inhabitants had to be “civilized” to be saved from British imperialism and be worthy of equality with white people are still deeply reflective of Western viewpoints of Africa and Black people as a whole.

Garvey spent two years trying to build support for his cause in Jamaica, but with little success. By 1916, the UNIA only managed to attain 100 members. This is largely attributed by Garvey to the “colored gentry” of Jamaica who had managed to climb up the socio-economic ladder and currently benefited from the white capitalist system that was in place<sup>9</sup>. Finding little success hosting meetings and making speeches in Jamaica, Garvey turned to a different approach. Having read Booker T. Washington’s autobiography *Up From Slavery* during his travels, Garvey was inspired to create a trade school like the Tuskegee Institute, believing that a similar school in Jamaica would “give practical help to the masses... [and] at the same time... inculcate them in race love, and strengthen his African program in the entire island.” Garvey wrote to Washington and asked for his advice, with Washington writing back and inviting Garvey to visit if he ever came to America. Garvey then planned to visit America and establish a chapter of the UNIA before returning to Jamaica to establish a trade school there with the support and advice of Washington behind him<sup>10</sup>.

Garvey’s arrival in the United States marked the beginning of the height of his influence and career. Upon his arrival in 1916, Washington had unfortunately passed away<sup>11</sup>. However, Garvey still maintained the goal of creating a UNIA chapter under American leadership. After travelling and visiting cities across the United States, speaking and lecturing, Garvey returned to

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<sup>9</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 32.

<sup>10</sup> Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism*, 21.

<sup>11</sup> Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism*, 21.

New York and established the New York Chapter of the UNIA<sup>12</sup>. At the time, Garvey still intended on returning to Jamaica to establish the trade school he had dreamed of. However, there was still a lack of financial support<sup>13</sup>. Garvey also found that the United States was a premier site of opportunity for agitation and racial change. In light of World War One, the necessity of the cooperation of American citizens, and in particular the “new demand for and value of black labor” to support the war effort made listening to their voices and demands more important than ever<sup>14</sup>. The war also created a sense of disillusionment about White power and authority, with “Western European nations fighting among themselves and even needing Blacks to secure victory”. Furthermore, those Black people who did serve in the war were “not prepared to passively accept American postwar racism,” opening the door for more radical Black activism such as Garvey’s<sup>15</sup>. After establishing a UNIA chapter in New York in 1918, Garvey decided to remain, both to help grow the chapter, keep it from breaking apart due to political interests, and pursue the growing racial discourse in America after World War One.

During the period between 1918 and 1924, the UNIA and its influence grew rapidly in the United States. In 1920, the UNIA hosted their first international convention, inviting representatives from across the globe with the goals of “discussing the great problems that confront the Negro... framing a bill of rights for the [N]egro peoples of the world... [and] laying plans for the redemption of the great continent of Africa.<sup>16</sup>” The resulting resolution was the “Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World”, which illustrated the complaints of

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<sup>12</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 41.

<sup>13</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 36.

<sup>14</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 39.

<sup>15</sup> John T. McCartney, “Marcus Garvey and the Resurgence of Black Nationalism,” in *Black Power Ideologies : An Essay in African-American Political Thought* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1992), 74–90, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt14bt4c9.9?seq=1>, 78.

<sup>16</sup> Deborah Forczek, Robert A. Hill, and Emory J. Tolbert, eds., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers. Volume 2, 27 August 1919–31 August 1920*, Reprint 2019 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/ji.5973080>, 476.

the UNIA and made demands of what rights should be ensured of them<sup>17</sup>. It is also notable that during this convention, Garvey also proclaimed himself the “Provisional President of Africa,” emphasizing even more his ideal of creating a fully Black nation in Africa and cementing that he planned to be the leader of that nation<sup>18</sup>. Both Garvey and subsequently the UNIA as a whole promoted the pan-Africanist and Black Nationalist ideology that would come to be known as Garveyism.

Garveyism as an ideology was deeply rooted in Pan-Africanist ideas of the connection of the Black race across national lines for the improvement of the race as a whole. Garvey combined this Pan-Africanist idea with a staunchly Black Nationalist rhetoric, with the goal of uniting Black people across the diaspora to create an entirely Black nation that would guarantee equal rights and powers to other imperial nations to Black people. Garvey detailed many of the U.N.I.A’s, and consequently many of Garveyism’s, principles in a speech on November 25, 1922, entitled “The Principles of the Universal Negro Improvement Association”. Garvey states that the UNIA

“adopts an attitude not of hostility to other races and peoples of the world, but an attitude of self-respect, of manhood rights on behalf of 400,000,000 Negroes of the world... We represent peace, harmony, love, human sympathy, human rights and human justice, and that is why we fight so much... Because of that injustice, because of that denial of our rights... we are marshaling the 400,000,000 Negroes of the world to fight for the emancipation of the race and of the redemption of the country of our fathers... We of the U. N. I. A. believe that what is good for the other folks is good for us. If government is something that is worth while; if government is something that is appreciable and helpful

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<sup>17</sup> Forkzek, Hill, and Tolbert, *The UNIA Papers, Vol. 2*, 571-578.

<sup>18</sup> Forkzek, Hill, and Tolbert, *The UNIA Papers, Vol. 2*, 627.

and protective to others, then we also want to experiment in government. We do not mean a government that will make us citizens without rights or subjects without consideration. We mean a kind of government that will place our race in control even, as other races are in control of their own governments... We are not engaged in domestic politics, in church building or in social uplift work, but we are engaged in nation building.<sup>19</sup>”

Garvey’s idea of a new government that was run by and in the interests of Black people stood at the center of Garveyism’s ideology. Garvey’s uplift of the race rested on the premise that it could not be done within the governmental structure of another already established non-Black nation. Within the same speech, Garvey stated “We have allowed ourselves for the last 500 years to be a race of followers, following every race that has led in the direction that would make them more secure. The U.N.I.A. is reversing the old-time order of things. We refuse to be followers any more. We are leading ourselves.<sup>20</sup>” Garvey was determined to create an entirely new structure that would serve only the interests of Black people and not have to cater to the interests of other races.

Garvey was also a staunch anti-imperialist who was extremely critical of the way that imperial powers were created on the backs of the labour of Black nations and individuals. Speaking on the Principles of the UNIA, Garvey criticized the way that Black people were mistreated and oppressed in times of peace, but “in the time of trouble, they make us all partners in the cause... and we were told that we must forget everything in an effort to save the nation.<sup>21</sup>” This was particularly relevant in the aftermath of World War 1, where Black soldiers and laborers were instrumental to the war effort but were still targets of post-war racism and discrimination.

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<sup>19</sup> Marcus Garvey and Amy Jacques Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey, Or, Africa for the Africans*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 1967), <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203041468/philosophy-opinions-marcus-garvey-amy-jacques-garvey>, 93-94.

<sup>20</sup> Garvey and Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, 97.

<sup>21</sup> Garvey and Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, 96.

This criticism of labor exploitation went far beyond the bounds of the United States. In 1927, while Garvey was imprisoned, he wrote a short poetry collection titled “The Tragedy of White Injustice” which was created with the intention of “inspiring [the Negro] toward the freeing of himself from the ugly octopus of race prejudice and exploitation, which has been devouring him in his universal association with certain members of the white race.<sup>22</sup>” The pamphlet itself is highly critical of the white imperial exploitation of other nations and the lack of credit which is given to them as the foundation of the power of White empires, especially the British. Within the poem, Garvey states, “They have stolen, murdered, on their way here, / Leaving desolation and waste everywhere; / Now they boastingly tell what they have done, / Seeing not the bloody crown they have won.<sup>23</sup>” Garvey’s indictment of White empire building as the source of Black suffering and exploitation was integral to his message of Black Nationalism and race pride.

Garvey’s ultimate goal was of uniting Africans across national boundaries and creating a united African empire which could rival the power and influence of other non-Black imperial powers. Garvey was also deeply invested in repatriation and the reclaiming of Africa for Africans only, founding the Black Star Line Steamship Company to do so. The Black Star Line was meant to “join African-descended people from the United States, the Caribbean, and West Africa in a new triangular exchange intended to foster commerce, cooperation, and racial unity.<sup>24</sup>” The creation of the Black Star Line served many purposes: it was at once a way to fulfill ideas of Black Repatriation to Africa that Garvey had long idolized, a way of fostering communication and collaboration across national borders, and a way to “make [Black peoples’]

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<sup>22</sup> Marcus Garvey, *The Tragedy of White Injustice*, reprint of 3rd ed. (1935; repr., Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1979), 2.

<sup>23</sup> Garvey, *The Tragedy of White Injustice*, 5.

<sup>24</sup> Ronald Jemal Stephens and Adam Ewing, eds., *Global Garveyism* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2019), <https://academic.oup.com/florida-scholarship-online/book/31024?login=true>, 2.

power felt in the great industrial and commercial balance.<sup>25</sup>” Garvey’s slogan was “Africa for the Africans,” with the ultimate goal of bringing Black people Back to Africa<sup>26</sup>.

Like many influential Black political leaders, Garvey was heavily monitored by the Bureau of Investigation and the United States government. He was noted by the Justice Department as the “foremost pro-negro agitator in New York” in January of 1920<sup>27</sup>. His actions and speeches were often monitored and recorded by agents. In January of 1922, Garvey was arrested for Mail fraud having to do with advertising and funding his Black Star Line<sup>28</sup>. He was eventually tried on May 21, 1923 alongside three other officers of the Black Star Line<sup>29</sup>. Garvey was found Guilty and, on the 21st of June, he was sentenced to “five years imprisonment, \$1,000 fine, and the costs of the case.” Garvey made an appeal, but it was eventually denied<sup>30</sup>. He was sent to prison in 1925. Garvey’s sentence was commuted by President Coolidge in 1927, after which he was deported<sup>31</sup>.

Although a radical and groundbreaking figure in his time, even Garvey’s contemporaries were critical of both Garveyism as a philosophy and movement and of Garvey himself. Garvey was frequently compared to other Black intellectuals of his time, but was most compared with and had the greatest rivalry with W.E.B Du Bois and other members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Garvey saw Du Bois as someone who simply wished for assimilation into the white race and whose philosophy of integration would eventually lead to the same outcome as the current system. Garvey criticized Du Bois’ sympathy towards and cooperation with White people, even going so far as to say that the man “represents

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<sup>25</sup> Forkzek, Hill, and Tolbert, *The UNIA Papers, Vol. 2*, 30.

<sup>26</sup> Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism*, 13.

<sup>27</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 84.

<sup>28</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 137.

<sup>29</sup> Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism*, 75.

<sup>30</sup> Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism*, 76.

<sup>31</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 1.

a group that hates Negro blood in its veins.<sup>32</sup>” Garvey was also highly critical of the fact that Du Bois’ philosophy encouraged Black elitism and appealed mainly to middle and upper-class Black people, not incorporating the working-class people into his intellectual movement<sup>33</sup>.

Du Bois was critical of Garvey in turn, stating in an interview in 1920 that Garvey “is a demagogue, and... his movement will collapse in a short time. His movement is not represe[n]tative of the American negro.<sup>34</sup>” This is likely in reference to the fact that Garvey insisted upon emigration from the United states and the relinquishing of control of the nation as a whole to White people. Many Black people “felt that America was their homeland and were not prepared to leave to go to Africa.<sup>35</sup>” Du Bois and many others saw Garvey’s strictly separatist approach as dangerous and ineffective. He sought that black people “stop preaching and advocating the doctrine of ‘social equality,’ meaning thereby the social intermingling of both races, intermarriage and general social co-relationship. The two extremes will get us nowhere, other than breeding hate, and encouraging discord, which will eventually end disastrously to the weaker race.<sup>36</sup>” Though made with the intention of preserving Black culture, Garvey’s discouragement of interracial mixing and insistence on blood purity strikes a tone that is eerily similar to eugenicist and fascist speaking points. In a writing entitled “Race Purity a Desideratum”, Garvey Writes:

“It is the duty of the virtuous and morally pure of both the white and black races to thoughtfully and actively protect the future of the two peoples, by vigorously opposing the destructive propaganda and vile efforts of the miscegenationists of the white race, and their associates, the hybrids of the Negro race. Miscegenation will lead to the moral

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<sup>32</sup> Garvey and Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, 57.

<sup>33</sup> McCartney, “the Resurgence of Black Nationalism”, 75.

<sup>34</sup> Forkzek, Hill, and Tolbert, *The UNIA Papers, Vol. 2*, 620.

<sup>35</sup> McCartney, “the Resurgence of Black Nationalism”, 79.

<sup>36</sup> Garvey and Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, 3.

destruction of both races, and the promotion of a hybrid caste that will have no social standing or moral background in a critical moral judgement of the life and affairs of the human race.<sup>37</sup>”

His rhetoric on interracial mixing conflicts with his insistence that he sees all races as equal and contributes to ideas of isolationism and the monitoring of peoples’ behaviors.

It is important to note that Garvey was also heavily influenced by colorism that was rampant throughout the African diaspora at the time. Garvey, as a dark-skinned man from the West Indies, was often criticized for being less intelligent or refined than his African-American counterparts. Even Du Bois stated in an interview that Garvey and his followers were “the lowest type of negroes, mostly from the Indies.<sup>38</sup>” Garvey also witnessed the “privileges afforded to those with lighter skin tones and saw how some had been incorporated into the management of imperialism.<sup>39</sup>” Garvey’s association of racial-mixing with the imperialist structure was born from experience over time. Rather than promoting a superior race, Garvey wanted all races to be equal. The form of racial purity pushed by Garvey was not the same as that of the Western fascists who believed in a superior race, but was instead meant to be a call for the preservation of the Black race as a whole in the face of assimilation into whiteness.

Garvey was also highly criticized for his sympathies and acceptance of white prejudice against Black people. Garvey wrote in his “Appeal to the Soul of White America” in 1923, “prejudice we shall always have between black and white, so long as the latter believes that the former is intruding upon their rights.<sup>40</sup>” For those African-Americans who were born and raised

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<sup>37</sup> Barbara Bair, Stephen Gil de Montes, and Robert A. Hill, eds., *the Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers. Volume 6, September 1924–December 1927* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/jj.5973116>, 216.

<sup>38</sup> Forkzek, Hill, and Tolbert, *The UNIA Papers, Vol. 2*, 620.

<sup>39</sup> Kehinde Andrews, “Beyond Pan-Africanism: Garveyism, Malcolm X and the End of the Colonial Nation State,” *Third World Quarterly* Vol.38, no. 11 (2017): 2501–16, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26616442?sid=primo&seq=1>, 2510.

<sup>40</sup> Garvey and Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, 3.

on American soil and whose national identity was solely American, the idea of justifying racism and oppression rather than fighting against it was demeaning and nonsensical.

Garvey was particularly questioned by both his rivals and followers alike for his association with Southern white separationists, in particular the meeting between Garvey and Edward Clarke, second-in-command of The Ku Klux Klan<sup>41</sup>. This comes after he had “used opposition to the Klan as a unifying device” in previous years<sup>42</sup>. This meeting was ostensibly an attempt by Garvey to win favor in the South where he was having trouble gaining a foothold. He did so by appealing to deeply separationist viewpoints and even encouraging and praising Jim Crow, having at one point “thanked the white South for having ‘lynched race pride into the Negroes’.”<sup>43</sup> Post-meeting, Garvey defended the Klan, stating that it “represented the ‘spirit, the feeling, the attitude of every white man in the United States.’” Even when this was met with opposition from UNIA members, Garvey justified his acquiescence to the Klan by stating that they were too powerful to oppose<sup>44</sup>. Garvey’s association with and defense of the KKK was an extremely controversial choice and drew large amounts of criticism from both enemies and allies.

Even outside of his meeting with Clarke, Garvey was particularly sympathetic towards white separationists. He stated in an essay in July 1925 entitled “The Negro, Communism, Trade Unionism and His Friend”, that

“Between the Ku Klux Klan and the Morefield Storey National Association for the Advancement of ‘Colored’ People group, give me the Klan for their honesty of purpose towards the Negro... I regard the Klan, the Anglo-Saxon Clubs and White America

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<sup>41</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 154.

<sup>42</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 159.

<sup>43</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 154.

<sup>44</sup> Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 159.

Societies, as far as the Negro is concerned, as better friends of the race than all other groups of hypocritical whites put together. I like honesty and fair play. You may call me a Klansman if you will, but, potentially, every whiteman is a Klansman, as far as the Negro in competition with whites socially, economically and politically is concerned, and there is no use lying about it.<sup>45</sup>”

Garvey’s particularly scathing indictments of the NAACP and integrationist groups and figures as “Negro baiters” who were “imprisoning him in the whiteman’s civilization; to further rob his labor, and exploit his ignorance, until he is subsequently ground to death by a newly developed superior white civilization.<sup>46</sup>” Garvey was so invested in the idea of a wholly Black nation, and so convinced that integration and racial equality was an impossible feat, that he was willing to associate with radically racist White groups who had the same aim that he did: to keep the two races separate. In some ways, Garvey’s sentiment rang true: even a century later and in a largely integrated society, there are still deep racial barriers and systemic inequalities which years of activism and education have yet to fix. However, his own ideas also failed to produce results in turn and encouraged (or at least were accepting of) continued racial prejudice.

Although Garveyism was one of the largest Black mass movements of its time, it still never managed to get its feet off the ground. Despite his best attempts at mobilizing Black people across the world, none of Garvey’s activism ever managed to create meaningful change in American policy as a whole. Even Garvey’s ideas of repatriation through the Black Star Line were an abject failure. Furthermore, the movement that he had organized failed to maintain itself without Garvey at the helm. After the arrest and deportation of Garvey, the movement largely fizzled out in the United States. Similarly, following Garvey’s death in 1940, the movement of

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<sup>45</sup> Bair, de Montes, and Hill, *The UNIA Papers*, Vol. 6, 216.

<sup>46</sup> Bair, de Montes, and Hill, *The UNIA Papers*, Vol. 6, 216.

Garveyism as a whole became ineffective. However, that is not to say that Garvey and his ideology had no effect on Black political thought and action. In fact, there are many groups and figures from both the 20th and 21st centuries whose ideologies were inspired by or have throughlines back to Garvey and Garveyism.

As an early Black Nationalist movement, Garveyism has inspired many other radical Black groups and figures. First and foremost among these is the Nation of Islam (NOI), one of the “largest and longest-lived institutionalized nationalist movement[s] among Blacks in the United States.”<sup>47</sup> The Nation of Islam’s quest for self-determination among African-American people is largely linked back to the self-determination principles of Garvey’s own movement. These groups also both were proponents of separatism, though in different forms, with Garvey espousing the importance of emigration whereas the NOI never made that a tenet of their philosophy. The greatest difference between the two is where their Black Nationalist identities were founded, with Garveyism being based in Pan-Africanist ideals while the NOI was based in “the spiritual and material redemption of African Americans” through religious practice and intellectual teachings<sup>48</sup>.

The ideology of Malcolm X in particular has connections to Garveyism. Malcolm’s father was a Garveyite and member of the UNIA, and Malcolm’s politics were inspired by some of the tenets of Garvey’s own philosophy. Even after breaking from the NOI, Malcolm continued to express Black Nationalist views consistent with parts of Garvey’s own ideology. He “saw the African diaspora as [a] nation which transcended Westphalian borders”, having stated that Black people were “‘not American’ but ‘Africans *in America*’<sup>49</sup>”. Malcolm’s movement was also

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<sup>47</sup> Ernest Allen Jr., “Religious Heterodoxy and Nationalist Tradition: The Continuing Evolution of the Nation of Islam,” *The Black Scholar* 26, no. 3-4 (1997), <https://www.proquest.com/docview/229772433/fulltextPDF?pq-origsite=primo&accountid=15053&sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals>, 2.

<sup>48</sup> Allen Jr., “Religious Heterodoxy and Nationalist Tradition”, 4.

<sup>49</sup> Andrews, “Beyond Pan-Africanism”, 2510.

“intrinsically connected...to the wider Third World movement...The Black revolution also included supporting anti-colonial struggles around the world because Malcolm understood that imperialism was a global system.” His ideas of Black self-determination and pride also deeply echo those of Garvey. However, Malcolm also moved past some of the limitations of Garvey, “mov[ing] away from Black capitalist ideas of advancement” and focusing on Black uplift within the United States rather than emigration<sup>50</sup>.

Another more contemporary viewpoint that has roots in Garveyism is that of Hotep culture. Hotepism is “committed to pro-Black political rhetoric that decenters white dominant culture.” Hotepism is particularly focused on Egypt or ancient Kemet, with the term “hotep” coming from the Kemetetic term meaning “to be at peace with”. It has deep roots in Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanist beliefs, including those of Garvey and the UNIA<sup>51</sup>. This includes ideas of Black self-determination and empowerment, but also those of Black separatism. In recent times, hoteps have become increasingly active on social media and within internet culture. One of the most famous hotep figures in the modern era is Dr. Umar Johnson, a “self proclaimed Pan-Africanist and social media personality”<sup>52</sup>. The major issue with hotepism is that it promotes pro-Black rhetoric while itself being socially conservative. Mako Fitts Ward writes in his study on the subject:

“On the surface, [Johnson] advocates for the unity and self-determination of African people across the diaspora and promotes the building of a Black owned social and economic infrastructure. Yet, he also promotes a cisheteronormative Black monoracial family formation, Black male patriarchal leadership within the family and community,

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<sup>50</sup> Andrews, “Beyond Pan-Africanism”, 2511.

<sup>51</sup> Mako Fitts Ward, “Hotep Anti-Blackness: Misogynoir and Queer Exclusion in Online Conspiracy Theorizing,” *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 2024, 1–24, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10714413.2024.2410407>, 5.

<sup>52</sup> Ward, “Hotep Anti-Blackness, 10.

the subservience of Black women to Black men, and the homophobic rejection of Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-conforming, and queer individuals as part of his version of Black liberation.<sup>53</sup>”

While embracing some of the positive aspects of Garvey’s ideology like Black pride and race-love, hotepism also closely identifies with the more controversial elements of Garvey like his stagnant view on economics, his condemnation of miscegenation, and his lack of sufficient discourse or examination of gender.

Garvey’s influence isn’t just seen in American political thought but around the world. Garvey influenced Kwame Nkrumah, the leader of the decolonization movement in Ghana which ultimately became “the first territory in sub-Saharan Africa to become a sovereign nation-state” and its first president<sup>54</sup>. Nkrumah’s ideology heavily inspired Nkrumah’s activism and ideology, with him stating that “of all the literature that I studied... the book that did more than any other to fire my enthusiasm was *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* published in 1923.<sup>55</sup>” Furthermore, Ghana’s shipping fleet was named the Black Star Line after Garvey’s own company, and the soccer team of Ghana was also named the Black Stars<sup>56</sup>.

Garvey’s ideas, though controversial, were radical both in their time and in contemporary times. His upbringing put him in a unique position, seeing firsthand the effects of racism and colorism and the suffering of members of the Black diaspora throughout the world. Through his education in Central and South America and Europe, Garvey developed his unique ideology and founded the UNIA to help spread that ideology and achieve his goals of race unity, self-determination, and the creation of a nation where Black people could be free and equal to

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<sup>53</sup> Ward, “Hotep Anti-Blackness”, 18.

<sup>54</sup> Stephens and Ewing, *Global Garveyism*, 267.

<sup>55</sup> Stephens and Ewing, *Global Garveyism*, 268.

<sup>56</sup> Stephens and Ewing, *Global Garveyism*, 269.

those of other races. Despite not affecting major change, Garveyism promoted race-consciousness and reignited a spark of Black Nationalist and Pan-Africanist thought that would permeate Black political thought even into modern day. Garvey's contributions to the long Civil Rights Movement and to Black political thought as a whole cannot be underwritten.

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