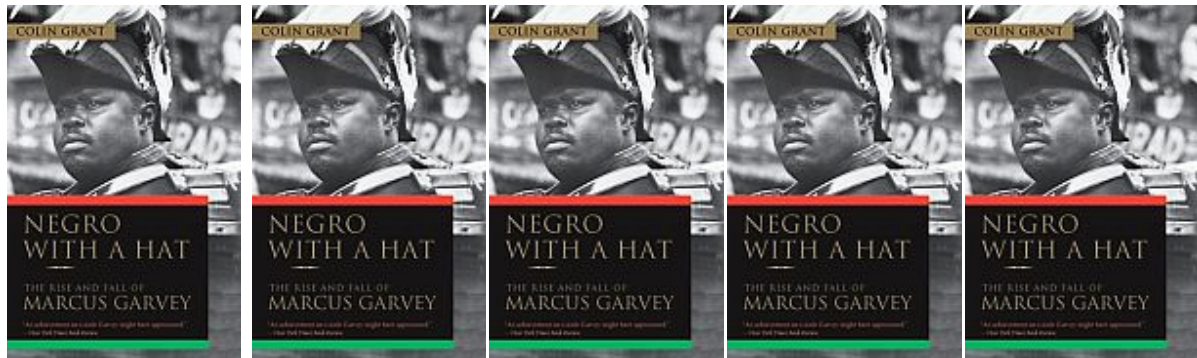


Colin Grant. *Negro With a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 544 pages; 35 halftones on 16 pages; ISBN13: 978-0-19-539309-5 ISBN10: 0-19-539309-0.

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The Jamaican born Colin Grant's *Negro with a Hat* is the first extensive biography of Marcus Garvey in more than two decades. Marcus Mosiah Garvey was born on August 17, 1887 in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. He was a descendant of African Maroons who directed a series of successful revolts. This led them to set up fortified communities that provided opportunities for self-government. Garvey's Maroon heritage shaped his concept of self-rule. Before his twenty-third birthday, Garvey was a well known participant in Jamaica's first pro-self-government organization, The National Club. This nationalist association was founded in 1909 to address issues concerning majority rule. Garvey was elected as one of the organization's secretaries in April of 1910. Garvey's push toward nationalist politics was also shaped largely by Joseph E. Love, a Pan-African politician and a staunch advocate for Jamaican independence Garvey stated that much of his early "education in race consciousness" came through Love's influence. As an advocate for Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism, Love's impact was widespread throughout the West Indies, and the United States. Love had been close friends with an array of well known Pan-Africanists such as the AME Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and Bishop J. Theodore Holly, who both urged Africans living in the Diaspora to emigrate either to Haiti or Africa.

In 1914 Garvey founded The Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL) in Jamaica. The organization's motto was, "One God, One Aim, One Destiny." In 1916, he traveled to Harlem, which was quickly becoming a thriving African metropolis and by 1918 Garvey moved the UNIA to Harlem from Jamaica after a successful three-month tour through the American South.

During the apex of the movement that Garvey headed, the UNIA had more than 1,500 branches scattered all over the world, in which Garvey boasted more than 10 million members. Outside of the United States, which held more than half of the branches, Cuba had more than fifty. There were also branches in Ghana, Australia, Venezuela and Liberia to name a few. Properly the most convincing aspect of Grant's biography is Garvey's attempt to make the West African nation Liberia, the base for an African empire. Although his imperialistic plan failed, two decades after Garvey's death, Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, championed Garvey's cause by calling for continental decolonization and unity.

Grant's use of scholarship that has appeared over the last three decades forms the strongest aspect of this biography. Fusing an amazing amount of research, Grant has produced a portrayal of Garvey which is richly detailed on both Garvey and the members that followed him in the UNIA. By making good use of secondary works such as Tony Martin's *Race First*, Robert Hill eleven volume series on Garvey and the UNIA, and Winston James's work on West Indian Pan Africanism in the United States, Grant has replicated the lives of Garvey and his associates in a way that only a seasoned journalist could. As Ismael Reed has recounted, "Colin Grant has not only written the best biography of one of the most fascinating persons of the 20th Century, but, for a historical work, an exciting read, part romance, part big screen political thriller."