



Amy Jacques Garvey (1896-1973)

In 1919, she became the Secretary General of the UNIA, a post she held for over half a century proselytizing and propagating Garvey's philosophy of black consciousness, self-help and economic independence. From 1924 to 1927, she was the associate editor of the UNIA's newspaper, *The Negro World*, where she advanced her feminist/nationalist ideas with the inauguration of a new page entitled "*Our Women and What They Think.*"

Like Yaa Asantewaa, she chided the men to assert their manhood or else the women would have to pick up the struggle. She warned that "... *Negroes everywhere must be independent, God being our guide. Mr. Black man, watch your step! Ethiopia's queens will reign again, and her Amazons protect her shores and people. Strengthen your shaking knees, and move forward, or we will displace you and lead on to victory and glory.*"

While her husband was in prison on charges of mail fraud in connection with Black Star Line (his shipping line), she acted as his personal representative, rallying to his defence, making speeches to the branches of the UNIA and

lobbying for his release. In order to raise funds for his defence, she published two volumes of *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, a collection of his speeches and writings.

After his release from the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, he was taken to New Orleans and deported from the USA, never to return. She returned to Jamaica with him and they subsequently toured England, France and Germany, all the while continuing her writing as contributing editor of *The Negro World*. When Garvey moved to England, she remained in Jamaica with their one-year -old and four-year-old sons.

After Garvey's death in 1940, she continued the struggle for Black Nationalism, becoming contributing editor to *The African*, a journal published in Harlem in the 1940s, and founding the African Study Circle of the World in Jamaica toward the end of the decade. In 1944, she wrote her outstanding piece, "A Memorandum Correlative of Africa, West Indies and the Americas", which she sent to representatives of the UN pressing them to adopt an African Freedom Charter. In 1963, she published her own book, *Garvey and Garveyism*, and later published two collections of essays, *Black Power in America* and *The Impact of Garvey in Africa and Jamaica*.

On July 25, 1973, Amy Jacques Garvey died as she lived, active in the struggle for black empowerment and liberation.