

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

THE SECULARIAZATION OF THE
RASTAFARIAN MOVEMENT

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE RELIGION DEPARTMENT
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN RELIGION

BY
TURA FOSTER

SAINT PETER, MINNESOTA

JANUARY 2006

CONTENTS

Chapter

INTRODUCTION.....	4
1. THE MOVEMENT’S EARLY HISTORY.....	8
Early Jamaican History	
The Stage is Set for Revolution	
A Believable Religion	
2. RASTAFARIANISM AS A RELIGION.....	19
The Basics	
Rastafarian Religious Symbols	
3. RASTAFARIANISM BECOMES A SECULAR CULTURE.....	28
Functional Rastafarians	
Rude Boys	
Marley-ites	
The Ethiopian Orthodox Church	
“True” Rastas	
Internet Rastafarians	
4. ONCE THE FIGUREHEADS ARE GONE.....	36
CONCLUSION.....	41

Appendix

1. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH A RASTAFARIAN “AUTHORITY”.....	44
2. GROWTH OF THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH.....	47
3. A WOMAN IN THE UNITED KINGDOM EXPLAINS HER VERSION.....	54
WORKS CITED.....	57

INTRODUCTION

When most Americans are asked to picture Jamaica the immediate response is a tropical paradise full of resorts and palm trees and sand and sun. When the average American encounters the word “Rastafarianism” he either asks for a definition or pictures Bob Marley and marijuana smoke and reggae. Many people are surprised at the codependency of these two words. They are intertwined so intricately intertwined. When the American vacationer travels to Jamaica for spring break or as a stop on their honeymoon cruise, the only part of Jamaica they see is the paradise. If they spend a little more time there, they realize that the people serving their food or cleaning their rooms have a similar aura about them as the street vendors selling hemp hats and wood carvings of men with dreadlocks. This aura that is in and around them is Rastafari. Though most of the islanders are nominally Protestant, the small cult-like religion of Rastafari has infiltrated all of Jamaican society. The “Peace and Love” mantra of Rastafarianism has become a trait of the island. While religion tends to fall under the umbrella of culture, culture can be independent of religion. In Jamaica, the Afro-Jamaican tribal spirit is so deeply seeded that ingrains itself in both. The Rastafarian religion derives from that. Because in Jamaica this feeling has infiltrated throughout society, it is hard to define the line between culture and this cult-like religion.

The always small and always changing and growing cult-like messianic-millenarian religion of Rastafarianism has persisted through over seventy-five years of

existence without any authoritative leaders or institutions. Though it still thrives throughout the island of Jamaica and is now practiced in many other countries, Rastafarianism has moved on a large scale from surviving as a religion to thriving as a culture. Most of its innately religious philosophical tenets have been altered to move them from the theological world to the world of secular society.

In the first chapter, the history of oppression is examined through the hundreds of years of colonization. It takes the reader from the slavery of the indigenous peoples through the trade of slaves from Africa and into the free yet victimized population of African decent in the late nineteenth through twenty-first centuries. From there the chapter makes a case for the Rastafarian belief that the twentieth century Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie I was in fact the messiah for the black people.

The second chapter is a primer of the Rastafarian religion. The basic tenets are covered as well as the hierarchic order of the small communities. The sacramental and ritual actions, music, and symbols are explained and examples are given.

The development of the movement away from its religious roots is the topic of the third chapter. In the 1970s Dr. Leonard E. Barrett, a college professor at the University of the West Indies, made predictions for the future of the movement. He expected to see four changes for the future of Rastafarianism: a Rastafarian church, a body of “functional Rastafarians,” Rastafarians turning toward the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and a movement of further resistance (if the government changed directions).¹ The third

¹Leonard E. Barrett, Ph.D., *The Rastafarians: Sounds of Cultural Dissonance* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1977), 219.

chapter examines these predictions and assesses the accuracy of them at a stand of twenty-five years later. From the direction of the movement since then, chapter three makes predictions about the next twenty-five years.

Chapter four introduces the final dissemination of the movement examining the world of Rastafari after the movement's major figureheads—Haile Selassie I and Bob Marley—have disappeared from the picture. It addresses the lack of religion in the forward movement of Rastafari. Many of the writings from the 1980s to the turn of the new millennium have been sociological studies of the movement of the culture. Less and less of the religion of the Rastafari is apparent. As the chapter further unfolds, more and more of a case for Rastafari as culture, not religion comes forward.

The resources used in the writing of this document came from a wide assortment of people. Some of the older documents about the religion come from the white British colonials on the island. Only a little later come texts from men who can be described as “white in every aspect but their skin.”² There are a few primary sources from Rastas who are learned enough to write academic volumes about their religion, history, and culture. Other sources are from a Jamaican, non-Rastafarian outlook. Wider in variance than the above are the black and white foreign individuals who are completely separate from the island as a whole who have come to experience the culture and learn more about the religion and its philosophy. The most recent additions to the “authorities” on Rastafari are the internet communities that have been started across the globe. These self-made elders lead the ignorant to the “truth” through their version of Rastafari. The research for

²Barrett, 1977, xv.

this project was hard to locate; once located, it became more difficult to differentiate the good sources from the bad.

This essay was written to attempt to explain the phenomenon of secularization. Many religions—or parts of religions—have reached a point of secularization in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MOVEMENT'S EARLY HISTORY

Early Jamaican History

Before the arrival of Europeans to the “New World,” *Xaymaca*, “land of wood and water,”¹ was inhabited solely by a native, “friendly,” “ingenious” and “well made”² people named the Arawak. They grew tobacco on a large scale as well as fruits and vegetables like corn and cassava. They were a mainly peaceful people having only fought—usually only armed with sharp ended sticks—when they were challenged by other tribes from surrounding islands. On his second voyage to the “West Indies” in 1494, Christopher Columbus came to Jamaica to claim the island, and its gold, for Spain. He respelled the Arawak name for the island in Spanish: *Jamaica*. He soon learned that there was no gold to be had on the island. (The gold that the Arawaks wore came from their ancestors’ previous places of habitation.) Columbus originally thought the people were hostile, as they attacked his ship with their crude weapons, but they were easily

Note: All biblical texts quoted in this paper will come from the King James Version of the Christian Bible unless otherwise noted.

¹Douglas R. A. Mack, *From Babylon to Rastafari: Origin and History of the Rastafarian Movement* (Chicago: Research Associates School Times Publications Frontline Distribution Int’l Inc., 1999), 38

²Christopher Columbus, *First Voyage to America: From the Log of the “Santa Maria”* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1991), 72-73.

scared by the dog that had been aboard ship. Columbus quickly learned the true character of the people.

As the Spaniards swiftly and aggressively conquered and colonized the island, the Arawaks were killed, worked to death, or ravaged by disease until the entire Arawak nation disappeared. The island was kept by Spain only as a stopping point they would use for refueling and resting, where they could plan further conquests of the mainland. The first Spaniards to stay on the island as a colony came in 1509. Because their native slaves died rather quickly, the Spaniards sent for slaves from Africa to sustain the growth and export of sugar from the island. The lack of support from their homeland, problems with leaders of the church, and pirates all contributed to the demise of the Spanish rule of Jamaica.³

In 1655, the British armada invaded Jamaica and the Spaniards freed their slaves and then escaped to their already colonized Cuba. Their freed slaves made a home in the mountains and subsisted on their own small self-sustaining farms. They were unknown to the early British settlers, but would come to cause problems for the later farm owners. They were known as the “Maroons.”

Jamaica soon became the home and headquarters of many pirates. Sir Henry Morgan, a notorious pirate and privateer, was the first English governor of the island. Queen Elizabeth I wanted to increase the volume of slave trade and commissioned another fleet of ships to satisfy her business needs. The *S.S. (Slave Ship) Jesus of Lubeck* was the flag ship under the command of Sir John Hawkins, who had already founded the West India Slave Trading Company. He was more crude and violent in his ways of slave

³Jamaica Information Service, “Government of Jamaica” (Jamaican Information Service: 1996), <http://www.jis.gov.jm/gov_ja/history.asp>

trading than any of his predecessors. He merely went to the Gold Coast of Africa and took what he needed. If he found out later that the slaves he had captured were not strong enough, or for any reason weren't good enough, he simply killed them. If they became unwanted during the passage across the Atlantic, he just threw them overboard. They were forcefully taught as much English they could comprehend on the voyage. Upon arrival in Jamaica, they were told that they would work "until Jesus came." The slaves assumed that this meant that they would work until the *S.S. Jesus of Lubeck* came back to port and would take them home to Africa. Unfortunately, that ship and other ships from Hawkins' fleet were sunk in battles with the Spaniards. The slaves hoping for its arrival continued to work hard in various stages of the production of sugar, molasses, and rum, as well as mining copper, building houses and roads. They would never see "Jesus" again. As the slaves lives were becoming more difficult, the island was turned into a holiday paradise for English gentry.⁴

The slaves, stolen from their homes in Africa, resented their captivity. They often rebelled. When they could escape, small numbers at a time, they joined the "Maroons" in the mountains. The "Maroons" also often joined in the rebellions. Slave masters ignorantly settled large numbers of slaves from Fanti and Ashanti tribes from the Gold Coast together. These groups of slaves had a common language. They easily banded together against the British. They also joined the "Maroons" and together fought for decades to win and keep their independence on small parts of the island.⁵ In 1808, the

⁴Mack, 38-39.

⁵Ibid., 40.

Abolition Bill was passed proclaiming the trade of slaves to be prohibited in all of Jamaica. Their emancipation and apprenticeship status did not come until 1834, and they were not granted full freedom until 1838.

Though the slaves were fully emancipated, there was a major rift between the status of the ex-slaves and the ex-masters. Hatred for the white colonialists grew among the black masses. One's blackness acted as a disqualifier for participation in business or politics in Jamaica.⁶ Though the majority of the population of the island was black, they had no say in politics. Any reason for black empowerment was welcomed by the destitute former slaves.

The Stage is Set for Revolution

In the 1920s, Jamaican black nationalist Marcus Garvey began to preach an Africanist interpretation of the Judæo-Christian scriptures⁷ and founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association.⁸ Garvey was the first to declare that Jesus Christ was black, though his predecessor Bishop Henry McNeal Turner had proclaimed God to be black in 1898.⁹ Though Garvey was not Rastafarian, he greatly influenced the black

⁶William F. Lewis, *Soul Rebels: The Rastafari* (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, Inc., 1993), 5.

⁷Nathaniel Murrell and Lewin Williams, "The Black Biblical Hermeneutics of Rastafari," *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 329.

⁸Lewis, 4.

⁹Murrell, 329-330.

community into action. Pride in African heritage had diminished.¹⁰ Garvey taught not only pride in his race, but a need for unity, a need for the race to be self-reliant, and a need for politics to support and represent the mass of the working class. In one of his more remembered speeches, Marcus Garvey instructed his listeners to look to Ethiopia for a king. Ethiopia is the only all black nation to have never been fully under European control.¹¹ It was a strong heritage to in which to have pride.

The black population of Jamaica was poor or unemployed. They needed a messiah. In 1930, that messiah came. The black king that Garvey promised was accepted by the world leaders at large—and importantly for the Jamaicans, England's Prince of Wales—Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia. He was not the first black ruler of Ethiopia; he came from a long line of them. He was, however, the first to invite dignitaries from around the world to his coronation.¹² A black man in power was acknowledged by the powerful white community. Selassie put Ethiopia on the white man's map. He joined the League of Nations—the first African country to do so—making Ethiopia a rather respectable place. Ethiopia is the only Christian country surrounded by Islamic countries. In Jamaica, Ethiopianism (a belief that Ethiopia is the biblical Zion) ran wild.

¹⁰Lewis, 4.

¹¹Mack, 55.

¹²Lewis, 13.

A Believable Religion

Ethiopian legend explains that Haile Selassie I comes from the Solomonid line.¹³ The bible gives reference to the Queen of Sheba, now Ethiopia, visiting King Solomon (1 Kings 10:1-10; 2 Chronicles 9:1-9). It is in these few verses that the Ethiopian legend springs forth.

The Kebra Nagast, or the Glory of the Kings, the Ethiopian history book, tells how the Queen became pregnant during her visit and bore to Solomon a son, Menelik, the first Emperor of Ethiopia. The imperial line of Ethiopia comes directly from this union.¹⁴ In fact, Article 2 in the 1955 constitution of Ethiopia states, “The Imperial dignity shall remain perpetually attached to the line of Haile Selassie I, descendant of King Shale Selassie, whose line descends without interruption from the dynasty of Menelik I, Son of the Queen of Ethiopia, the Queen of Sheba, and King Solomon of Jerusalem.”¹⁵ The idea for this article comes directly from article 33 of the Kebra Nagast. It states that Ethiopia’s laws had required it to be run only by virginal women. After the conception of Solomon’s son, she decreed that all rulers from thence forth should be men of the seed of Solomon.¹⁶ However, the Kebra Nagast was compiled in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century C.E., and its patriotic, religious, and political agenda are rather obvious, as Clinton Chisholm notes. At the end of the book,

¹³Gerald Hausman, *The Kebra Nagast: The Lost Bible of Rastafarian Wisdom and Faith from Ethiopia and Jamaica* (New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 20.

¹⁴Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek (Kebra Nagast)*, (Cambridge, Ontario: In parentheses Publications, Ethiopian Series, 2000), 117.

¹⁵Murell, note 62, 347.

¹⁶Budge, 34-35.

one of the compilers left a note, “for I have laboured much for the glory of the land of Ethiopia [patriotic], for the going out of the heavenly Zion [religious], and for the King of Ethiopia [political].”¹⁷ There have been logs from Muslim commentators referring to this union but it is hard to say whether they were influenced by the Ethiopic writings or the Ethiopic by the Arabic.¹⁸

Haile Selassie’s birth and life are surrounded by mystical legends. Astrologers and chaplains supposedly predicted his birth, much like the birth of Jesus Christ. At the precise moment of his birth, Neptune and Pluto were said to have intersected each other in the heliocentric line, something that only happens every 493 years. His day of his birth was also the first day of Leo, the zodiac sign of the lion.¹⁹ In legend, he was also able to converse with animals, especially the leopards and lions that he kept as pets. This skill is something that his ancestor King Solomon also had, according to legend. The lions that he kept and that he could talk to and calm also seem to fulfill a prophecy of the lion lying with the lamb. It is also said that his birth was “heralded by thunder and lightning”²⁰ that brought with them a storm that caused floods after a long period of draught. Some also claim that he was the only surviving child of his mother’s seven pregnancies.

¹⁷Budge, 199, quoted by Clinton Chisholm, “The Rasta-Selasie-Ethiopian Connections,” *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 168.

¹⁸Chisholm, 169.

¹⁹Kelleyana Junique, *Rastafari? Rasta for You: Rastafarianism Explained*, (London: Athena Press, 2004), 12.

²⁰Eleanor Wint in consultation with members of the Nyabinghi Order, “Who Is Haile Selassie? His Imperial Majesty in Rasta Voices,” *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 162.

Most Rastas would claim that God put Haile Selassie on the throne, making Ethiopia a theocracy lead by God under the anointed head of the Emperor.²¹ The official title given to the new ruler of Ethiopia upon coronation in 1930 was His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie I, Negus Negusti (king of kings), Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Lebena Denghel (incense of the virgin), Keeper of the Faith of the Dynasty of Judah, Keeper of the faith of the Dynasty of David, Elect of God and Light of the World. *Haile Selassie* means “Might of the Trinity” in Amharic, the modern language of Ethiopia.²² Selassie was also coronated as the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church at this time as well. He had been previously known as Ras Tafari, *ras* meaning “head of an army”—the equivalent of a British duke or prince—in Amharic and Tafari the family name.²³ Though “King of Kings” was a common title for past kings of Ethiopia—the country in medieval times was made of smaller regions each run by a king, so the king of it all would be the king of kings—but it took on a messianic significance with Selassie. “Light of the World,” however, had never been included in the title before. In fact, Abuna Yesehaq, an Archbishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church notes:

This is not a traditional Ethiopian title for kings and Emperor Haile Selassie I was the first Ethiopian king known as Light of the World—in fact, Rastafarians note very

²¹Murrell, 341.

²²Leonard E. Barrett, Sr., *The Rastafarians* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988), 81.

²³Lewis, 2.

carefully that the title belongs to Christ and therefore justifies their argument regarding who the returned Messiah is.²⁴

Black supremacist and Kingston native Leonard Howell was the first to preach the emperor's divinity. Referred to as the "First Rasta," Howell took the stories and history of Ethiopia and applied them to life in Jamaica. He is also said to have witnessed the coronation himself. Howell had easily converted the slum population of Kingston by 1933 and then decided to move on to make believers of the whole island. Howell sold pictures of the Emperor, promising that he would help them be repatriated to Ethiopia. He grabbed the media's attention in 1934 when he was arrested for preaching the following six tennents at an open air meeting in St. Thomas: hatred for the white race; the superiority of the black race; revenge on whites for their "wickedness;" the negation, persecution, and humiliation of the Jamaican government; preparation for repatriation to Africa; and claiming Haile Selassie I to be the messiah and only ruler for black people.²⁵ Howell also began a well known commune just outside of Kingston called the Pinnacle. He was arrested again there in 1941.²⁶

As ex-slaves, most citizens of Jamaica had a firm Christian background with a special tie to the stories of the Old Testament.²⁷ "Ethiopia" is mentioned many times in

²⁴Chisholm, 171.

²⁵Barrett, 1988., 85

²⁶Lewis, 8.

²⁷Lewis, 10.

the King James Version of the Bible.²⁸ With more biblical study, more passages became clear allusions to Selassie, three scriptures in particular. The First, Isaiah 43:3, “For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.” Second, St. John 16:7 as Jesus says, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.” Finally, Revelations 5:5 upon no man being able to open the book, “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” Through more spreading of the new biblical interpretations, Ethiopia was claimed to be the cradle of life, the home of Eden and Abraham.²⁹ Many “black power” originators had already stated God as black or Christ as black, partially based on Jeremiah 8:21 where God says, “I am black.”³⁰ Rastas also find a theme of blackness in other biblical texts.³¹

The followers of the new movement found a connection to the Falashas as well.

The Falashas, or the Black Jews, of Ethiopia are also supposed descendents of the people

²⁸ According to the search function on <http://bibleontheweb.com>, “Ethiopia” or derivatives thereof are mentioned 40 times in the Old Testament and once in the New Testament of the King James Version of the Bible. In other translations, the land is called Cush or Nubia, Sheba and Seba. The Septuagint translated “Cush” as “A’ithiopia” which explains the later English translation.

²⁹ Murrell, 329

³⁰ The King James Version of the Bible is the only version to translate this verse with the word “black.” Others include “crushed”(NIV, TEV), “heartbroken”(The Message), “stunned,” (Living), “mourn” (NRSV) but not “black.”

³¹ Some other biblical passages that Rastas identify with blackness other than Jeremiah 8:21 are Song of Solomon 1:5, Lamentations 4:8, Joel 2:8, Habakkuk 2:10, Job 30:30, Psalm 119:85, Jeremiah 14:2, and Revelations 1:4.

of Menelik I. The Falashas' practices are the most true to ancient Judaism that exist today. To walk into a Falasha village is like walking backward in time into an ancient Jewish village. When intellectuals discuss this people, it is often said that they live as if the history in the Bible following Solomon's reign doesn't exist. They have been living this way for thousands of years. Their culture is untouched by the development of Western religion. When the Rastas claimed to be the Israelites³², the existence of the Falashas and the possibility of a relationship between them became very important.³³

³²Murell, 333.

³³Murrell, 336.

CHAPTER TWO

RASTAFARIANISM AS A RELIGION

The Basics

A very unique thing about Rastafarianism as a religion is that there is not, and has never been, a central doctrine or official religious hierarchy. There are many innately religious actions, sacraments, and practices involved and many of the small sects use the same practices, but they are not overseen by any institution. The system of beliefs seems to be rather uniform across all sects.¹ In his field research, Leonard Barrett found that the following principles seemed basic in Rastafarianism (they are similar to Howell's):

- Haile Selassie is the living god.
- The Black person is the reincarnation of ancient Israel, who, at the hand of the White person [Babylon], has been in exile in Jamaica.
- The White person is inferior to the Black person.
- The Jamaican situation is a hopeless hell; Ethiopia is heaven.
- The Invincible Emperor of Ethiopia is now arranging for expatriated persons of African origin to return to Ethiopia.
- In the near future Blacks shall rule the world.²

Rastas fit themselves into small groups for fellowship and learning. Each individual is usually “own-built”³ (self-taught) and has chosen the religion for themselves. They each are responsible for their own following of the philosophies and

¹Murell, 350.

²Barrett, 1988, 104.

³Murrell, 350.

his own connection to *Jah*, their name for God, and the “earthforce,”⁴ a form of cosmic energy. As the Jews have substituted “LORD” for the tetragrammaton, the name of God, the Rastas use *Jah*.⁵ The older more adept brethren who have a stronger connection to *Jah* tend to be leaders, or elders. Being an elder is an assumed position for those who have met two requirements: they must show a steadfast dedication to and defense of the Rastafarian principles, even and often to the point of imprisonment by Babylon. They can be easily identified because they have longer dreadlocks and beards than other Rastas. Elders also tend to have a better ability to “speechify.” A group that follows an elder is called a house or a yard.⁶

A house normally ranges between ten and twenty men in size. A very large house of men is referred to as a mansion. If groups take a formal form, they often establish themselves as either “churchical,” more religious, or “statical,” more involved in politics. Houses gather for sacrament and discussion. Discussions either relate to current events and interpretation, historic events and why they are still important, or follow the sacrament of *ganja* and concern a specific Rasta’s connection to *Jah*.⁷ Meetings of a small house are called groundings. Groundings take place at least once a month and are generally held at the home of a house member. A *Nyabinghi* is a large meeting of several houses or a mansion. These happen less often and go on for a full day or sometimes as long as a week. “Music, prayers, and exhortations” as well as

⁴Ibid., 350.

⁵Tracy Nicholas, *Rastafari: A Way of Life* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1979), 38-9.

⁶Murrell, 350.

⁷Ibid., 350-1.

meditation are common at groundings.⁸ It is also a time of informal education about the Rastafarian philosophy.⁹ At *Nyabinghi*, several elders are present and more education and discourse occurs. Ritual smoking of the herb (*ganja*) is also done communally at gatherings.

Rastafarian Religious Symbols

Ganja is the most sacred sacrament of Rastafarianism. It is brewed in teas, soaked in rum for medicinal purposes, used in dishes as seasoning, and smoked ritually and socially. Its physical, psychological, and social therapeutic powers are highly valued by the Rastafarians, who emphasize the importance of herbal healing.¹⁰ It is said to ensure perpetual health.”¹¹ It is also viewed to be the key to unlock the boundaries of Babylon, the world of the White man, and allow a Rastafarian to experience *Jah*. In a *ganja* induced meditation, a Rasta can more fully connect with *Jah*. Also under the inspiration of *ganja*, brethren “reason,” which is considered to be open-ended, informal dialogue between brethren discussing their visions. Jamaican *ganja* is said to be more potent than the marijuana found in the United States. It was outlawed early in its history on the island—brought over from East India in 1845—but about 60% of those in a lower social or economic echelon use it regularly.¹²

⁸Barrett, 1988., 120.

⁹Ennis Edmonds, *Rastafari: From Outcasts to Culture Bearers*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 74.

¹⁰Murrell, 354.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 354.

¹²Robert Roskind, *Rasta Heart: A Journey Into One Love*, (Blowing Rock, North Carolina: One Love Press, 2001), 4.

Another very important part of gatherings—and personal prayer—is the drumming.¹³ At *Nyabinghi*, there are at least three drums that help create a call and response pattern for chanters and dancers alike. The largest is the bass drum, usually twenty-two inches in diameter and twenty-two inches deep. The bass drum is played with a stick with some sort of head, usually either a wad of cloth or a tennis ball. The next is the *funde*, a long and narrow drum, usually measuring about nine inches in diameter. This creates an alto, mid-range tone. The *funde* is played with both hands in closed positions. These two drums keep the beat for the chanting, singing, and dancing. They are both usually made of wood with a ram skin which gives them a lower tone. The last and smallest drum also has the highest pitch. It is called the *peta*, or repeater. It is narrow and short and is made of wood, usually with a ewe goat skin for the higher soprano pitch. It is played with both hands with open fingers. The repeater is the drum of rebellion, of freedom. While the lower toned drums carry the steady rhythm or “lifeline,” on counts one and three for religious music or two and four for more upbeat, secular music, the repeater creates the “melody.” It adds color, staying within the rhythm of the lifeline, yet shades the music with its own agenda, freely moving in and out of the “*ridim*” (rhythm). Rastas say that often there is no “rising of the *irix*” (spiritual peaking) if the “*ridim*” is not right for the moment or the prayer. The qualities of the “*ridim*” define the statement of the song.¹⁴ The repeater creates the polyrhythmic quality that

¹³Lewis, 10.

¹⁴VerenaReckord, “From Burru Drums to Reggae Ridims: The Evolution of Rasta Music,” *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 250.

Jamaican music is known for. Count Ossie, whose many records also made him popular in the United States, was one of the best drummers and most well known. He is also the main person responsible for the cross over of *Nyabinghi* drumming from religious to popular music. This “*ridim*” has transformed into mento, ska, reggae, dub, and dancehall music.¹⁵ For Rastas, music is a vital part of life, most homes own a set of drums and if not at least have a repeater. As in the Hebraic Psalms, praising *Jah* with instruments is one of the most appropriate ways.

To the Rastas, the Bible was written for black people by black people. Most Rastas are not schooled in Western theology so they cannot possibly interpret the Bible in a European/American fashion.¹⁶ Though they believe that the book was written by black men, it has been translated by white men. Anything left out or changed by the white man was purposely hidden to change the message to the black man. Therefore, they believe that the apocryphal texts are important.¹⁷ This also leads to their claim that the Bible is holy, but not all parts of it are acceptable.¹⁸ They believe they are the Israelites, but to them the Israelites are Ethiopian. “Israelite” is just another word for holy people. They believe that they were punished for their sins through slavery; they have been absolved, but are now under the white man’s reign because the white man has the power of the devil. Rastafarians even keep Mosaic laws.¹⁹ Leonard Barrett found that they tend to

¹⁵Ibid., 232-233.

¹⁶Murrell, 326

¹⁷Ibid, 328.

¹⁸Barrett, 1977,127.

¹⁹Ibid., 111.

live by a ten point moral code that is based in the Mosaic laws. They are very reminiscent of the Jewish kosher laws of the same root. As Barrett saw them:

1. We strongly object to sharp implements used in the desecration of the figure of Man; e.g., trimming and shaving, tattooing of the skin, and cutting of the flesh.
2. We are basically vegetarians, making scant use of certain animal flesh, outlawing the use of swine's flesh in any form, shell fishes, scaleless fishes, snails, etc.
3. We worship and observe no other God but Rastafari, outlawing all other forms of Pagan worship yet respecting all believers.
4. We love and respect the brotherhood of mankind, yet our first love is to the sons of Ham.
5. We disapprove and abhor utterly hate, jealousy, envy, deceit, guile, treachery, etc.
6. We do not agree to the pleasures of present-day society and its modern evils.
7. We are avowed to create a world of one brotherhood.
8. Our duty is to extend the hand of charity to any brother in distress, firstly for he is of the Rastafari order—secondly, to any human, animals, plants, etc.
9. We do adhere to the ancient laws of Ethiopia.
10. Thou shall give no thought to the aid, titles and possession that the enemy in his fear may seek to bestow on you, resolution to your purpose is the love of Rastafari.²⁰

Most Rastas also live according to the principles of *ital livity*. *Ital* is translated as coming from the earth, natural and often interpreted as organic. *Livity* is considered living the life of a true Rasta, obeying completely the philosophies and principles. Together, *ital livity* is a commitment to the use and intake of only organic and natural things. Many Rastas are vegetarian. Processed foods and drinks, including alcohol, are thought of as “Babylon’s plan to destroy the minds of Black people.”²¹

Dreadlocks are a very visible—and now stereotypical—attribute of the Rastafari lifestyle. There are “churchical” and “statical” reasons for the dreads.²² As the Rastafari

²⁰Ibid., 126.

²¹Murrell, 354.

²²Lewis, 13.

follow the Lion of Judah, lions are often found in their symbolism. Dreads are an imitation of the lion's mane.²³ As a Rastaman gets wiser and older and more important in the house, he allows his dreads to get longer, as well as his beard. To cut off a man's dreads and/or his beard is to cut off his spiritual being. The more "statical" reason for the dreads was that, in the early days, having long hair, especially in dreadlocks, made a man ineligible for work in a factory. Having dreads— and smoking *ganja*— made for an inability to participate in the workings of Babylon.²⁴

As visible as the dreadlocks are a Rastafarian's tattered clothing. Many Rastafarians have the eventual goal of repatriation. In order to get ready to go "back to Africa," many Rastas live a life of African peasantry. In the early days there were multiple communes on the island, each consists of an elder, his followers and their queens, and other wives and children. On these communes the women make the clothing, usually from hemp or cotton grown at the commune. The men most often wear the *dashiki*, which is suitable for both the Jamaican and Ethiopian climate. Their womenfolk like to display their femininity. They are often found in dresses. They wear their clothing tattered as yet another protest of Babylonian standards. The dashiki and their styles of dresses are a rejection of the British fashions. Their clothing is a "celebratory overcoming" of colonialism.²⁵

²³Lewis, 15.

²⁴Lewis, 2.

²⁵Adrian Anthony McFarlane, "The Epistemological Significance of 'I-an-I' as a Response to Quashie and Anancyism in Jamaican Culture," *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 110.

Another stereotypical association with Rastafari is the use of red, yellow, and green—African colors. The obsession with repatriation has made the colors of Ethiopia very popular among Rastas. Wearing these colors—whether in a hat or a wristband or on his clothes—reminds a Rastaman that he is constantly working his way toward getting back to Ethiopia. He is also showing a pride in his people by wearing or showing these colors.

The lion is a common symbol among the Rastafari. The main reason is the reference in the king's title, the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah. It is also a symbol that Ethiopia uses. The African lion is a representation of repatriation. Common connotations of the lion in Western culture usually include beauty and strength, nobility and pride. For the Rastafarian community, the lion means even more, "power, dignity, beauty, fearlessness, and wholesome integrity that come from self-realization."²⁶ The lion is imitated not only in appearance, but in attribute. A lion goes where it pleases and claims control.²⁷ The Rastafari would like to be able to go where they please and be accepted and accept others to join them.

A very unique part of Rastafarianism is the language. To non-Rastas, their speech may seem very odd and may be incomprehensible. One reason may be that it is a Jamaican dialect originally spoken by the uneducated, that is now used in philosophical conversations for which the language is not well suited.²⁸ Rastafarians are very

²⁶McFarlane, 115 quoting Dennis Forsythe, *Rastafari: For the Healing of the Nation* (Kingston: Zaika Publications, 1983), 101.

²⁷McFarlane, 116.

²⁸Barrett, 1977, 143.

conscious of their word choices. For example, a true Rasta will never say, “I returned home.” The first part that should be changed is the word “returned.” Rastas do not use words like “returned” or “back.” The Rasta always moves forward. The other missing piece to that sentence is I as plural. A Rasta would usually start, “I and I.” Not only does “I and I” replace “you and me,” it is also when used speaking of just the self, the Rasta is never alone, it includes the spirit of *Jah*.²⁹ It not only includes *Jah* as a part of the self, it also reminds a Rasta of *Jah*’s care and serves as an everyday language statement of his faith in *Jah*.³⁰ The example sentence as said by a Rasta would be more like, “I and I came forward home.” This unique language—sometimes called *patois*—can be seen and heard not only in their prayers and speech, but also in their music, including Jamaican ska, reggae, dub, rap, and dancehall.

A large part of the attraction to Rastafarianism can be attributed to a tradition of resistance in African and Afro-Christian religions.³¹ These faiths tend to be focused on an effort for freedom from oppression, so Rasta’s political concerns easily fit into this culture. The Jamaican population is over 90% black.³² That means that more than 90% of the population can, through their ancestors’ if not their own experience, relate to oppression. Many of the Protestant churches in Jamaica are like the churches Americans correlate with the American South, associated with a similar stereotype of people who come from a history of oppression.

²⁹Murrell, 19. 333.

³⁰McFarlane, 108.

³¹Edmonds, 32.

³²Information Please Database, “Jamaica” (Pearson Education, Inc., 2005)
<<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107662.html>>

CHAPTER THREE

RASTAFARIANISM BECOMES A SECULAR CULTURE

By the time of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1936 there were around 3,000 Rastafarians in Jamaica.¹ The worldwide economic depression of the 1930s, the Panamanian plant disease that led to the destruction of the banana industry, and plummeting sugar prices led to severe unemployment rates. This was accompanied by a skyrocketing rate of population growth.² The depression on the island made it easy for the Rastas to remove themselves from society and still make money with their crafts.³ Before December of 1944, the black population—though fully emancipated since 1838—still did not have the right to vote. They needed to show themselves, be in power, be part of the country even though they were non-voting citizens (and when they could vote nothing changed about equality between classes, even with Jamaica's independence from Britain in 1962). The selling of their crafts made them even more visible in society and to tourists. Jamaica was known for its Rastafarian culture by the 1960s and Rastafarian crafts became a tourist industry. The world soon only thought of Jamaica as Rastafarian and that is all they wanted to see.

¹Lewis, 5.

²Jamaica Information Service.

³Lewis, 7.

Functional Rastafarians

Those who did not live a Rastafarian lifestyle or adhere to the philosophies or religion still somehow associated themselves with it. Dr. Rex M. Nettleford coined a term for the middle class youths who clambered to the Rastafarian ways because it was the popular thing to do.

A group of such young people are to be found among the University undergraduates and may be termed *functional* Rastafarians, who have served to secularize the movement away from its strongly religious orientation and to blur the lines yet further between those who want deliverance in Ethiopia and those who desire it in Jamaica.⁴

Through 1965, the membership of the movement came completely from the lower class. As of 1977, though the movement's main components were still "the uneducated, the unemployed, and the unemployable"⁵ people—some intentionally so, some not—the membership began to include the elite and the schooled.⁶ Some of these functional Rastafarians joined for the drug culture. Others were youths who wanted to get further education, but were denied. Many are what Barry Chevannes and Gregory Stephens refer to as "Fashion Dreads,"⁷ those who joined in the fad of the dreadlock hairstyle. Many who fit into these categories share the value system, but want to be able to provide for their families. Tourists may encounter these Rastas in their vacation travels. They work as waiters and tour guides. When asked why they do not sport the dreads, they reply that

⁴Rex M. Nettleford, *Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica* (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc. 1972), 94.

⁵Barrett, 1977, 220.

⁶*Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁷Barry Chevannes, *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1994), 274.

their cut hair enables them to work.⁸ Functional Rastafarians are probably the largest and most consistently growing group of the Rastafari movement.⁹

Rude Boys

The birth of reggae helped the culture spread; its message was that of the Rastafari philosophy. The young people of Jamaica were enchanted by it.¹⁰ Many of Jamaica's top pop artists decided that they would follow the Rastafari. More and more Rastafarian elements were on the radio. Rastafarianism infused into society.¹¹ The late 1970s and early 1980s brought political warfare to the streets of Jamaica's cities; in just 1980 more than nine hundred people—mostly youths—were killed during the general elections. The specifically violent groups of these kids were nicknamed “rude” boys, from slang on the island referring to anyone who is “openly defiant of constituted authority.”¹² Many young people were lucky enough to emigrate to the United States.

They took with them not only the fearlessness of seasoned gunmen and a high level of organization but also the trappings of Rasta symbols that were all part of the youth culture up to the beginning of the 1980s—the dreadlocks, Rasta colors, I-talk, and the hatred of Babylon. What they could not take, because they did not have them, were Rastafari religious values.¹³

⁸Roskind, 2.

⁹Barrett, 1977, 220.

¹⁰Verena Reckord, “Reggae, Rastafarianism and Cultrural Identity,” *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997), 11.

¹¹Isaac Fergusson, “‘So Much Things to Say’: The Journey of Bob Marley,” *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997), 52.

¹²Nettleford, 95.

¹³Chevannes, 264.

By 1987, other east and west coast white suburban adolescents were joining them. Nikke Finke of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote two articles about Rastafarianism; the first explained the beliefs and roots of the movement; the second compared the culture movement among the young people to that of the hippies of the 1960s.¹⁴ As of 1992, a talent scout for Sony, Maxine Stowe stated, “the Rastafarian culture and Afrocentric talk started dispersing. Kids became less Afrocentric and more New York-centric.”¹⁵ The New York center of things was partially reaffirmed by the New York State appeal court. In 1986, they ruled that “New York prison officials could not constitutionally require inmates who adhere to the Rastafarian religion to cut their hair.”¹⁶ This ruling was upheld in the Supreme Court in 1990.

Marley-ites

Reggae began as a religious music. It sprang directly from the *Nyabinghi* drumming beats and chants. The religion had made its way into pop culture.

...nowhere else in the world is the popular music a basically religious music. Nowhere else do the people in the popular sense dance and shake their bodies exulting in a deity of their own making. And nowhere else is the popular music an integral part of the people’s way of life as is reggae in Jamaica.¹⁷

Whether or not the Rastas realized it, this music was a weapon. It could gain power and numbers for Rastafarianism from the outside. It could speak to Babylon in ways that the average Rasta could not. Jamaican music guru Verena Reckord states that “Rasta music

¹⁴Ibid., 269.

¹⁵John Leland, “When Rap Meets Reggae.” *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997), 187.

¹⁶Chevannes, 269.

¹⁷Reckord, “Reggae...” 11-12.

is at once a music of peace and love, protest and hope, as well as a music of attack.”¹⁸

Though reggae was important in Jamaica, when it hit the United States it exploded.

American producers wanted to make it international and they did. Soon reggae was not religious at all; now it was “world” music. Bob Marley became a figurehead for

Rastafarians around the world. Marley fans wanted to emulate his lifestyle. They wanted to smoke like Marley, wear dreads like Marley, feel that they were as spiritual as Marley.

A Rastaman named Cedric Brooks said, “People are band-waggoning...they stop at the level of protest as if there were no deeper philosophy.”¹⁹ Soon reggae artists began a campaign of inclusiveness. Bands even changed their names to represent their change of doctrine. They no longer wanted to exclude anyone from the love of *Jah*. According to them, he “made us all and we ALL are members of HIS UNIVERSAL FAMILY.”²⁰ This “universal family” included all races and creeds. Marley’s “One Love” became a universal love. White Rastas were coming out of the woodwork. Instead of freedom from Babylon, Rastas now included Babylon. Many of these white Rastas were ex-hippies finding a connection from their counter culture to Rastafari. Some came to Jamaica to find out more. Some stayed.²¹

The music became more commercial; world music genres—like reggae—began to ignore their roots.²² The new generation of popular musicians let Rastafarianism slip

¹⁸Reckord, “From Burru...” 245.

¹⁹Sebastian Clarke, *Jah Music: The Evolution of the Popular Jamaican Song*. (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd. 1980), 95.

²⁰Chevannes, 274.

²¹Roskind, 9.

²²Reckord, “Reggae...” 3.

from its influence.²³ New forms of reggae became popular. It eventually found its way to “dancehall” reggae. The sexual theme of the dancehall music quickly replaced the spiritual message of Marley.²⁴

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) was the official Christian church led by Selassie. Branches of this church sprouted in Jamaica. The most famous of them was lead by a Rasta man named Prince Emmanuel Edwards. He took the church under his own charge and made it Rasta friendly. As Rastafarianism spread, the church fluidly changed its doctrines. By the late 1970s, after the death of Selassie, the Rastafarians who had changed to fit the church now changed the doctrine to more closely fit them as well. One way to easily identify members of Edwards’ EOC is the way they cover their dreads. They wear turbans to cover their locks.²⁵ Drumming, dancing, and sacramental herb are still a part of this church.²⁶

“True” Rastas

Some Rastas have not lost their faith in the “King of Kings.” Some have changed their ways in order to continue to grow. Many have begun to accept white brethren. In 1977, people claiming to be Rastafarian included Chinese, East Indian, Afro-Chinese,

²³Louis Chude-Sokei, “Postnationalist Geographies: Rasta, Ragga, and Reinventing Africa,” *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub* (New York:Schirmer Books, 1997), 215-227.

²⁴Leland, 187.

²⁵Barrett, 1977, 221.

²⁶Ibid., 219.

Afro-East Indian, Afro-Jews, mulattoes and whites.²⁷ Samuel Brown, in his *Treatise on the Rastafarian Movement*, states that Rastafarians can be “those who are destined to be free not only the scattered Ethiopians (Black man) but all people, animals, herbs and all life forms.”²⁸ A poll in 1977 shows that only about 50% of the movement are hopeful of repatriation; the other half longed for freedom in Jamaica.²⁹ They tend to be very welcoming to all who wish to know more or wish to join their movement. They can be found by tourists also, but usually in more rustic service settings such as bus drivers and tour guides for the rural parts of the island. Many rural Rastas are found speaking *patois*, “Rasta talk” as described earlier.³⁰ These “true” Rastas continue to meet at a large *Nyabingi* every year. While being very accepting—into their community and outside of their community—the only people that the “true” Rasta cannot understand are those who were Rasta but cut their hair and left their beliefs because they wanted to fit in with Babylon’s society. They believe that their teachings should allow for an ignorance of Babylon’s opinion.³¹

Internet Rastafarians

Those who have become internet savvy in the last decades have been helpful to anyone wishing to join in their ways. It seems that many of them have a changed view of

²⁷Ibid., 3.

²⁸Ibid., 105.

²⁹Ibid., 110.

³⁰Roskind, 3.

³¹Junique, 17.

Rastafarianism, whether that comes from their own change or if it comes from a lack of knowledge of roots. Merely typing “Rastafari” into an internet search engine brings up a myriad of pages all declaring the true path. Many have question and answer logs or forums for new brethren to seek answers. One can learn a great deal of how the movement is supposedly changing in different areas of the world by reading just a few of these pages. Most of them declare the divinity of Haile Selassie I, but do not claim Rastafarianism to be a religion; several, in fact, rebuke this idea all together. More details about internet Rastafarian authorities can be found in the included appendix.

CHAPTER FOUR

ONCE THE FIGUREHEADS ARE GONE

The biggest changes in the movement occurred after the deaths—or disappearances—of the two main figureheads of the movement, H.I.M. Haile Selassie I (1975) and Bob Marley (1981). Many changes happened in Jamaica in the 1970s and 1980s. The birth and spread of reggae changed the worldview of the movement and the island.

The socio-political environment of the movement had changed greatly since its inception. The two new political parties, the Jamaican Laborer's Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP), finally gained independence from the British and were able to claim leadership of the island in 1962. This seemed like a positive turn for the Rastafari. However, Jamaica was still run with a British colonial influence. The class system was still fully discriminatory. The poor were still getting poorer. The Rastafari ideal hadn't yet taken hold.

The sight of breakthrough came in 1972 with the fourth Prime Minister, Michael Manley. He used reggae in his campaign and specifically targeted Rastafari and other impoverished voters. Manley made many changes in the way Jamaicans viewed the Rastafari. They were now legitimate citizens.¹ What Michael Manley saw in these

¹Stephen A. King, "International Reggae, Democratic Socialism, and the Secularization of the Rastafarian Movement, 1972-1980." *Popular Music and Society*, Vol. 22, No. 3, Fall 1998, 87.

people that his predecessors had missed was an opportunity for capital. Under his care, “Jamaica apparently embraced Rastafari as a ‘cultural treasure.’”² However, most of the promises he made to the Rastafarians were never fulfilled. He did not follow up on possible repatriation agreements with African nations, agreements that had been made under previous administrations (two visits to Africa for these reasons were made by committees in 1961 and 1965 and a visit from Haile Selassie to the government for this discussion in 1966). He also refused to recognize *ganja* as a religious sacrament and therefore refused to legalize it. Between Manley’s broken promises to the Rastafari and the broken promises that lead to economic stress, the entire nation became politically upset. This is part of what lead to the political warfare described in chapter three that is responsible for the creation of “rude boys.”

For “true Rastafarians,” the death of the Ethiopian emperor in 1975 was not troublesome. Many simply refused to accept the idea. When shown the newspaper articles, they merely attributed it to another trick of Babylon.³ Other, more spiritual Rastas claim that with his death, the Rasta can now commune with him more closely as his spirit can now be everywhere all the time.⁴ The less religious Rastas just took his death or disappearance as time to let go of that tenet of the movement.

As discussed previously, the 1970s were a hard time for Jamaica. They did, however, bring the reggae revolution. Jamaican celebrity icons were created. Bob

²King, 82.

³Ernest Cashmore, “More than a version: a study of reality creation.” *British Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 30, No. 3, September 1979, 315.

⁴Barrett, 1977, 215.

Marley and the Wailers were the strongest influence. The 1970s also held the international breakthrough of reggae with Bob Marley leading the pack. Reggae became Jamaica's ambassador to the world. The friendly reggae, Rastaman identity of Jamaica that Michael Manley had nurtured became the official front of Jamaica. This exotic, foreign culture interested the tourists more and more. It also gained fellowship across the world.

The English had been exposed to Rastafari since the 1950s, but now, with reggae, a new generation of Rastafari had a chance to spring forth. As Ernest Cashmore investigated in one of his 1979 sociological studies, a generation almost equivalent to the "rude boys" began itself in England without any migration. These boys seemed to get the gang structure as well as the image of "One Love." Many of these new Rastafari were self taught. They took from Rastafari what they wanted and interpreted what they wanted and left what they wanted. Another strong pull to the movement was the use of *ganja*. All together, some "true Rastas" and some "rude boys" were created overseas without any real contact to the movement.⁵

In Cuba, the movement came in a similar fashion to that of the English. The Cubans had one disadvantage: language. Cubans by and large do not speak English. Their communist regime controlled most of the import, but somehow a little reggae was shared with the neighboring island country. The sounds and images of the Rastafari are what hit Cuba, not the message. Some of the new adherents said that even though they could not understand the words of the new music, they could understand the meaning through the beat. Jamaican students visiting Cuba brought more of the music and

⁵Cashmore.

lifestyle with them. The Cubans began to follow their fellow black brothers' ways. But, just as the English, they also had very little contact with "real" Rastas. They also took the tenets and philosophies into their own interpretations. Rasta not only touched the philosophical and drug cultures in Cuba, it became a fashion trend. Those who did not commit themselves to the whole lifestyle of Rasta enjoyed the dreadlocks and Rastafarian colors.⁶

Many sociologists have studied Rastafari in the last twenty years. The focus off of religion has lead to more anthropology and less religion. As such a "decentered"⁷ movement, a phrase coined by AlemSeghed Kebede to discuss movements with no authority figures or whole movement leaders, it is amazing that the Rastafari have survived. This seems to be a popular phenomenon to discuss and theorize. Many of these papers only discuss the religion as a part of the movement's history if they mention it at all.

Since the death of Marley, the lack of any public figure for the movement has affected its message. Each pocket of Rastafari now has its own version of the philosophies and character of the movement. Many of these wide reaching groups have taken Marley's "One Love" as far as they can stretch it. It now encompasses all men, all living creatures. Rastafari sisters who are scarce in Jamaica are now found across the globe. The new authorities on Rastafari can be found online at such addresses as <http://Rastafarian.net> or <http://www.rasta-legalhighs.com>. A simple Google search of the

⁶Katrin Hansing, "Rasta, race and revolution: transnational connections in socialist Cuba." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Vol. 27, No. 4, October 2001.

⁷ AlemSeghed Kebede, "Decentered movements: the case of the structural and perceptual versatility of the Rastafari." *Sociological Spectrum*. Vol. 21, 2001.

word Rasta or Rastafarian brings up hundreds of websites each declaring their own Rastafarian truth. Many specific examples of these experts are listed in the appendix. In the appendix a few statements are rather obvious. The most interesting is an answer given to an inquirer stating that “Rastafari is not a religion, it’s a culture.”⁸

Dreadlocked hair has become an outward showing of African heritage, not just of the Rastafari. The colors are a symbol of African pride. In Jamaica, Rastafari is just how the country is seen and is supposed to be portrayed. Each Jamaican plays his part. Tourism is the largest and most stable industry on the island, all Jamaicans have to do their part to keep it stable.

⁸See appendix case one.

CONCLUSION

“It would be an egregious affront to the Rastafarians as well as the cultural life of Jamaica if ‘Rasta culture’ were trivialized and packaged only for tourism.”¹

With the prevailing fall of the religion into a secular culture, I do not foresee the movement surviving in the same ways that Leonard Barrett had predicted: the emergence of “a unique Rastafarian church,” “functional Rastafarians,” the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and governmental resistance.^a I see how these predictions have panned out, but I feel that the two extremes—the “true” Rastas and the cultural Rastas—will only pull themselves farther from each other. As long as there are a few faithful members continuing to praise *Jah* in traditions of the original Jamaican Rastafarianism, the religion will not fully die. However, like Christmas in the United States, Rastafari is no longer studied for its original message but is just enjoyed as it is currently, secularly presented. Jamaica now celebrates the Rastaman the same way the people of the United States celebrate Santa Claus.

Jamaica should have other things to worry about. As of 2001, the average Jamaican income was the equivalent of \$3,300US. The cost of living in Jamaica is similar to that of the United States.² This information makes clear the level of poverty

¹McFarlane, 116.

^aBarrett, 1977, 219.

²Roskind, 6.

suffered by many Jamaicans. The government has shown some promise to its people. The poverty rate has actually declined over the last twenty years and though the literacy rate was only 75.4% in 1994³, it was estimated at 88% in 2003.⁴ The major problem is still unsolved.

The Jamaican lower class is engaged in a positive feedback cycle with the tourism industry. The Rastas began the cycle by having crafts for sale to the early tourists. The tourists took the peasant, craftsman life as the normal Jamaican condition. Soon the dirty, peasant, lower class embraced the stereotype that tourists expected. When tourism is a city's largest industry, society feels the need to give the tourist what they desire, what they expect. The peasant, craftsman lifestyle became the lifestyle of the entire lower class. They realized that even though they were no longer slaves, there was still a major gap between the classes. (There is hardly a middle class in Jamaica.) Some of the poor just gave up. Why not give into the stereotype and smoke and weave? The loss of the religion as a major part of this lifestyle has become detrimental. Though the religion was very relaxed, it was very much about empowering the poverty-stricken, black Jamaican. It gave them a reason, a purpose, a personal strength. Living the lifestyle of the Rastaman without the faith of a Rastaman cannot help the destitute leave their poverty. The lower class Jamaicans will continue this cycle of poverty until they have another dynamic leader or model to help them stop.

Rastafarianism began as a religion. As shown in Chapter Two, all of the normal

³Jamaican Information Service, "Education," (Jamaican Information Service, 2003), <http://www.jis.gov.jm/gov_ja/education.asp>

⁴ Information Please Database, "Jamaica" (Pearson Education, Inc., 2005) <<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107662.html>>

trappings of a religion—perhaps a cult-like religion—are present in early Rastafarianism. However, it has disseminated into a culture. The hasty spread of the Rasta culture beyond its Jamaican roots and the loss of religious icons diluted the religious meaning until, for many, it was lost all together. The religious symbols still exist but, for many, these no longer have any deeper meaning. The rituals are taken for granted and enjoyed by most only for the music and dance. Rastafarianism gave hope to its adherents in the beginning. That hope was dashed by the government and has not been given back.

This thesis has taken the reader through the history of Jamaica, the creation of a religion, and the inevitable demise of the religion into popular culture.

Appendix 1: Questions and Answers with a Rastafarian “authority”

Some examples from <http://Rastafarian.net> as of 1/01/06

Q: I have been reading a lot about the teachings of JAH, and the history and beliefs of Rastafari. I have a Question, you see I am 16 years old and I am white. I would like to know, are white people allowed to be Rastafarians? because if they are I would very much like to be one. I started learning about Rastafarians I guess because of Bob Marley, I consider him my hero! I would appreciate a reply as soon as possible. Thank you and peace, Tim.

A: Rasta is only concerned with your heart

Q: Greetings from Yugoslavia! I'm G (nickname), now... I have a problem, I truly want to be a Rasta, but I don't like smoking, I used to smoke for a couple of years, but I was always bad tripping so I decided to quit. I thought it was the best thing that ever happened, The point is: do I really have to smoke herb in order to get closer to JAH?
JAH BLESS.

A: Some Rasta smoke/drink herbs, some don't. I don't feel that you must smoke to be a Rasta, or to get close to JAH. Ixudah

Q: Hello, I'm just wondering if you have any feelings towards white men using your religion as a means so they can legally smoke marijuana, I'm not sure if they practice the religious acts, I'm not sure if it would really be appropriate, but to see people, especially caucasians wearing t-shirts that say 'I am a Rastafarian, which means I believe in the religious belief to smoke marijuana and hash'. What are your opinions on the matter? I s this common practice among the white man, to still be kind of 'using' the Black man to acquire more of a stance in society? thanks for your time! Adrienne

A: I would not appreciate anyone- Black or White to 'use' Rastafari for other means than love. Also to be Rastafarian does not mean a belief in smoking anything, just belief in JAH. Ixudah

Q: Is it acceptable for a white person to pursue a place in the Rastafarian religion? Are dreadlocks on White people offensive to black Rastafarians? lauren

A: I think it is ignorance to judge anyone by appearance alone it is all about the heart. Ixudah

Q: Why is Haile Sellassie regarded as JAH?

A: Not all Rastas regard H.I.M. as JAH. Some think that HE is the Messiah, son of JAH like the Jesus concept while others see HIM as the King of the world and not directly son of Jah. Other theories exist, it is the individuals quest to find his own overstanding.

Q: How does the Rastafarian mind place me, as White and beneficiary and freedom fighter and African?. Heinrich

Q: If a White can turn Rastafarian please let me know.. Also let me know how this can be accomplished.

A: If you have a clean and honest heart and do the works of the Father, you are a Rasta. Colour is not an issue. We need to learn about what has happened between our cultures and work to re-unit them.

Q: ..there are people saying that I can not be a Rastafarian because I am White they feel they must show hate towards me and other people that do not fit in with the cesspool of popularity so I was just wondering that because I am White, does that mean I can not be a Rastafarian.

A: Rastafari deals with clean hearts not with colour. people will try oppose your lifestyle but do not allow your faith to be shaken. This question is asked frequently so do not feel you are alone.

Q: Does RASTAFARI come from JUDAISM? Archem

A: No, JUDAISM comes from RASTAFARI, as it is the most ancient tradition. ENOCH the ETHIOPIAN is the 7th descendant of ADAM.

Q: What is the RASTAFARIAN view of the conflicts in AFRICA and between ISRAEL and PALESTINE?

A: All conflicts derive from the Devil, conflicts like these are caused by powers much greater than themselves in these times. "...He who feels it... knows it."

Q: Hello, I am incredibly interested in the culture known as RASTAFARI, I am only 15 years of age and my father has told me that I can be whatever I wish to be. I have picked RASTAFARI because I believe the european white man is killing the earth. I myself am not African, I am ethnic yet I feel that we are living in a society which is evil. The main purpose of my email is that I have a problem and was wondering if you could give me some advice. Through the way of RASTAFARI I have come across the fact that GANJA is taken into consideration. I have only just recently tried this HERB and have enjoyed it on all occasions, but my dad does not support my choice of wanting to join the RASTAFARI way because he is very anti GANJA. He also believes due to the fact he is old and semi ignorant (racist in no way) that RASTAFARI is for outcasts and not a true religion, even though he himself is a Buddhist. Please give me some advice, is it still alright by JAH to smoke GANJA without the consent of my elders , even though to me it does not matter as long as I can honor the way of JAH.

Thank you and PEACE! from Julian

A: JAH LOVE, and greetings Julian, thank you for your email, RASTAFARI is not a religion, it is a Culture, see: (SAY WHAT YOU MEAN!) in RASTAFARIAN.NET Menu. On the question of GANJA, I think you need to check your conscience for the answer to that one, after all, it is there to show right from wrong, GANJA has many many positive uses of which smoking is just one. GANJA is a Cultural healing HERB, and is an important gift from JAH. JAH GUIDE! Ixudah

Appendix 2: Growth of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church

A sample from <http://www.rasta-legalhighs.com/rastafarireligion.html>

Presently a large number of the Rastafarians are members of the Ethiopian Orthodox church, and many new recruits are in a state of great ambivalence. Looking into the near future it would not be difficult to predict that, if the membership of the church becomes predominantly Rastafarians, they will eventually reject the Christian element of this denomination and institute the Rastafarian doctrine alongside those rituals of the church believed to be basically African. Already some Orthodox rituals are adapted in most Rastafarian communities. Such syncretism is not new to Jamaican religious movements. This process of ritual adaptation began in Jamaica as early as the late eighteenth century when the Black Baptist church entered Jamaica and grafted itself onto Kumina. Later, it evolved into present-day Pukumina and the Native Baptist church of which Bedford was one of its best known leaders. All Revival churches in Jamaica are syncretisms of African and Christian rituals. In present-day Africa this kind of syncretism has yielded six thousand new movements since the last research was done.⁸ Most missionary churches in Africa are now seeking ways to make the church more relevant to an African religious expression. One of the setbacks in Jamaican institutionalized religion has been their rejection of the drum, which represents all things African. Most denominations represented in Jamaica are also in Africa, but while the African branches of the church are moving toward an incorporation of the African ethos, the Jamaican churches remain plastically colonial. It would be a great mistake, then, for the Ethiopian Orthodox church to copy the attitudes of these churches for the outcome would be unfortunate. Counterculture movement such as the Rastafarians do not easily submit to any

organization whose attitudes remind them of aspects against which they have developed psychic resistance. Any cues of the oppressive society are like waving the proverbial red cloth in front of a bull. Traditional missionizing psychology needs special refinements in dealing with a movement that has developed for itself alternative modes of religious expression more suitable to their status in life. This has already been achieved by the Rastafarians; whatever else they accept should be aimed at enriching their experiences, broadening their visions, and building upon foundations already laid. This then will be a syncretism, not a conversion. Anything less than this approach will be a fission. What the Rastafarians need at the moment is an organization that can provide for them a at home; should this vision be grasped by the new denomination, it could be an instant success. The Rastafarian phenomenon is merely an infant. Many more books will be written on them in the future. From humble, despised beginnings they have emerged with a new and vital message to the Jamaican society. They have proved themselves to be a vital socioreligious movement for necessary change, which has been heeded by the larger society. Although the implementation of some of their social visions has yet to be accomplished, Jamaica is moving toward a more equitable society. For the first time in the island's history there is a conscious attempt to grapple with the problems of the dispossessed mass in such things as land reform, education, housing, medical care, and equitable justice.

Jamaica is presently a leader of the Third World ideology advocating that those who have had the privilege of amassing great wealth at the expense of the poor must now see that a portion of this wealth is utilized in lifting the economic levels of the "have nots"—the alternative of which will certainly bring on a social Armageddon. It is useless to state that

this kind of philosophy is unpopular to the privileged class. Most of the present struggles in Jamaica revolve around this radical sociopolitical philosophy which was declared by the Manley government. There is no question in the author's mind that the present trend to a more equitable society is an ambiguous adventure, filled with many risks and pitfalls, but then all social change will initially involve disagreeable situations. But with steady, resolute, and imaginative leadership, backed up with the enlightened self-interest of those who have for generations enjoyed the "fruits of the land," there could emerge in Jamaica a society never before attained.

Social movements such as the Rastafarians are signs of deep social commotion, a stirring among people, an unrest, a collective attempt to reach a visualized goal, and a change in social institutions,- neglected, they can become volcanic. An attempt to remedy these conditions is the responsibility of imaginative leadership which can be overlooked only at the peril of the wider society. One of the causes of revolutionary movement resistance is the frustration of high expectations. This frustration may come about in several ways; first among these may be the ambiguous language of desperate politicians—the multivocality of whose language, though reassuring to the traditionally privileged, may dangerously threaten the high expectations of the oppressed. If a society such as Jamaica is to move toward equitable democracy, it must speak a single language, a language of love and hope, a language that gives assurance to the weak and hopeless. Any leader perceived to cater to the privileged class, ignoring the poor as a whole, may expect to see a deterioration of movements such as the Rastafarians into pockets of resistance. The ambitious politician, whose sole aim is power, may be blind to his image reflected in the eyes of the poor. Jamaican society today cannot afford the luxury of political

ambivalence; the high expectation vested in national independence is fast dying out. Many of the sociopolitical and economic conditions before independence persist. The symbols of wealth and affluence are still in the hands of those who had them before independence, and color and class preferences remain glaringly obvious. Present trends toward equity of opportunities need the support of the enlightened elite if a catastrophe is to be avoided. The Rastafarian movement with its unorganized militancy could be fertile ground for guerrilla resistance, solidifying deep-seated emotional resentment.

A second ingredient for the frustration of high expectation may come from outside pressures. Covert intelligence activities often carried out by the developed nations seek to maintain the status quo of developing nations. This misreading of the internal Zeitgeist of developing nations often lunges a small country into social and economic turmoil. The shortsightedness of the developed nations, insensitive to the hopes and aspirations of Third World peoples, cause them to back the party or politicians who support foreign exploitation at the expense of the future. Such leaders are strawmen whose future is generally short-lived. The Rastafarians are highly aware of this possibility of foreign infiltration. My experience at the Nyabingi service referred to in Chapter 4 proves without a doubt that the movement is well aware of the dangers of outside pressures such as those against Cuba, Mozambique, and Angola. Any such pressures in Jamaica can expect resistance of a high intensity by the Rastafarians, meaning serious setbacks for social and economic advancement.

Any party or politician choosing to be the instrument of foreign pressures may for a short while receive the accolade of foreign multinational corporations and other agents of the status quo, but the social and economic problems that brought about the emergence of the

Rastafarian movement will remain. Nothing short of political despotism could offset the terrorism of a civil war. Examples of this kind of frustration may now be seen in Ireland, Lebanon, Argentina, and Africa. Outside pressure and chaos are often brought to the Third World by withdrawing viable industries from operating in a country when levels of profits decline. Behavior of this type has only punitive intent and results only in upheaval. In present-day Jamaica, a potentially frustrating situation is growing—it bodes further ills.

The message and visions of movements like the Rastafarians often point the way to new patterns of society. Though often unheeded, new movements generally have clear visions of where society should be going. The constant cry of Rastafarians is for land on which to live and work; as one of their leaders put it "lands on which to pitch the tents of Jacob." Any social scholar will agree that new movements possess a dynamic which, if given the right channeling, can create possibilities beyond expectations. This can be documented among the members of the Black Muslims of America whose motto—"do for self"—has changed the psychology of Black communities in America. They have attempted to develop grassroots industries in the cities and rural areas, staffed by their members, giving incentives to Blacks to exert themselves for their own good. Today, the movement operates a multimillion-dollar industry. Other examples are numerous the world over where socio-economic development has been generated by new religious movements without outside help. If there is one thing that the Rastafarians have taught Jamaica, it is that one must accept what one has and seek to make the best of it. No one can do for Jamaicans except Jamaicans. The messianic-millennarian syndrome is deeply rooted in the Jamaican psyche. Throughout the island's history, there has ever been a looking to the

outside for the redeemer and for the "cargo," which would bring about miracles and plenty. This philosophy can bring only disenchantment. Mes-sianism and millenarianism are useful only to a society as instruments of revitalization toward self-fulfillment.

The Rastafarians have passed through the rhetorical stage of their movement; they have shown what a revitalization movement can do; their examples must be capitalized on for the good of all. They have rejected stagnation in a country where the zest for life and creativity had grown placid; their examples should now be promoted by making them models for the masses. The good book tells us that "where there is no vision the people perish." This is especially true of building a nation. The future growth of the Rastafarians into a well-respected cult may in the long run mean more to Jamaican history as a people than all the multinational corporations in the world. Their farms would mean much to the hungry; their art would bring much revenue to the economy; their music would lift the drabness that now exists in all parts of the island.

Worth mentioning is the fact that the Rastafarian movement is more capable of dealing with the neurotics, the maladjusted, the unbalanced, and the psychotic personalities than any government institution. Anyone who reveals a lot to the Jamaican researcher. Most of the author's colleagues who have migrated from Jamaica left the island because they were unable to feel at home. Many of the elite Jamaicans now living in the island would rather be somewhere else. It is somewhat surprising that the Rastafarians who emerged with the strong desire to repatriate to Africa now echo the contradictory statement, "this is fi wi country." This contradiction is felt by all Jamaicans who are abroad. The love for Jamaica can never be erased but, despite the deep longing for our country, there is that ever-present contradiction that deters us from wholly casting our lot to reside there. The land

we love has never been ours, we have never been accepted fully as citizens. Like split personalities we have sought a home outside our home, seeking but never finding. The Rastafarians are showing us the way. The way is reflected in their sculpture and expressed in their songs. For the first time, Black faces are being appreciated and not lampooned in cartoons by foreigners, projected in all their sorrows, aspirations, and dignity. For the first time Jamaican people, aspirations, and protests are being expressed in songs—not songs of caricature but experiences of sorrows.

Where go the Rastafarians? No one can tell for sure, but one thing can be said: they have brought us a long way toward understanding ourselves and our possibilities. Great social developments are not always made in the halls of parliament or in the citadels of learning. These institutions merely react to the dreams of the creative mass. Some of the most creative trends in nations' development are bom in the dreams of the visionaries, the radicals, the seers, and the charismatic prophets. This is the cunning of history. It may yet be true that the heretics of today will be the saints of tomorrow.

Appendix 3: A Woman in the United Kingdom Explains Her Version

As posted at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/birmingham/faith/rastafarian.shtml>

Life as a Rasta woman

Written by Margaret Polack (Sister Tree)

The basic beliefs of a Rastafarian are to uphold the truth, defend good over evil and to do the will of God here on earth.

Being a Rastafarian means different things to different people. As for me, being a Rasta woman means that I am ordained by God to emanate his will here on earth and to keep the 10 commandments.

Faith is hope in the unseen, to know that the Lord Almighty God will never let us down come what may. When we are in need of peace, strength, courage and solutions, if we have faith and do his will he will never fail us.

Rastafarianism is not a religion...

Rastafarianism is not a religion, it is a group of people who go under the the name of rastafari.

Many people view Rastafarian as a none Christian faith. This is a myth!

The name Rasta comes from a shorten version of Rastafarian being one of the names of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, who directs his people to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.

His Majesty is the head of the Orthodox Church and on many occasions he has encouraged all God's people to keep the 10 commandments. These speeches are recorded and written down.

As stated above the basic beliefs of a Rasta is to uphold the truth and defend good over evil, to do the will of God here on earth. These are the teachings of God.

About Haile Selassie I

Born 1892 in Ethiopia, in the royal house of David, his bloodline is descendent from Solomon and Sheba and related in the family bloodline to Jesus Christ.

Emperor Haile Selassie I is the only foundation stone of the Rastafarian faith and the modern day descendent and defender of the biblical faith.

Haile Selassie is a devout Christian. He is a follower and disciple of Jesus Christ and an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian.

Haile Selassie accepted the Holy Bible and had a translation made in 1952 - "all the scriptures were written for our instruction, we desire that the light which comes from the scriptures may shine to all", (taken from a selected speech of His Imperial Majesty, 23/7/1961.

Prayer and worship...

Every day I pray as it is written in the good book of life - the Bible, which instructs us to watch and pray.

Fasting as a Orthodox Christian is imperative to build and strengthen the spirit. Christ and his apostles fasted always, as did his imperial majesty. We do many fasts: some, in remembrance of past prophets and saints and holy men of times passed by.

Wearing my locks with pride...

I wear my locks as an outward sign of what I represent - a women who loves and serves almighty God.

I got my locks by not combing my hair. I didn't add anything neither did I twist it, I just let it locks up naturally.

As for caring for my locks, I wash them regularly with shampoo nothing special, I also use an olive oil spray to keep them soft.

Don't have to be dread to be Rasta...

Having dreadlocks is not central to being a Rasta - rendering your heart is what is required. Note that Emperor Haile Selassie I the 1st, who is the foundation stone of the Rastafari faith and movement which has been founded on his name, wears no dreadlocks.

When going to church, it is expected of us to cover our heads.

The origin of dreadlock comes from the times of Moses when there was a tribe called the Nazarenes (read in the Bible: Numbers: chapter 6) who wore dreadlocks, as did Samson as a sign of their covenant to the almighty God.

The Flag...

The red, gold, and green coloured flag is the Ethiopian Orthodox flag. Religious symbols include:

► The Lion of Judah - Taken from the heraldic symbol of the biblical Tribe of Judah, Genesis 49: 8-10.

▶ Star of David - The Star of David, or also called the Star of Solomon, is used many times to symbolize the Rastafarian religion. Haile Selassie was descendant from King Solomon and King David, hence the use of the symbol.

▶ The cross - symbolises The cross of Jesus Christ saviour of the world.

Do's and Don'ts...

Rastafarians live by loving thy neighbour as you love yourself and to do unto others as you'd have them do unto you, irrespective of race colour or creed.

Personally I don't eat pork due to its uncleanness, although Christ said that all is good - it's just a matter of choice.

Being a vegan I don't eat meat, fish or dairy products, this is as I said is a matter of choice. I choose to be vegan due to healthy eating reasons.

Being a member of the Orthodox church we have various types of fasting. One of those is to fast from dairy products and meat. At other times, we exercise total fasting: nothing to eat or drink before Holy Communion.

Smoking the herb...

Smoking is not an healthy option. The Bible does tell us not to use our nostrils as a chimney. Still everything, like I said, is about choice and some chose to smoke while others refrain.

For most Rastas, ganja goes with the territory, it opens the mind and is good for meditation. It was found on Solomon's grave and the Bible says all herbs are for the healing of the nation and it's a fact that ganja is a herb.

Becoming a Rasta ...

Anyone can become a Rasta by following the teachings of His Imperial Majesty who directs us to Christ's teachings. Therefore we must uphold all that is require of us and that is by doing the will of God here on earth.

WORKS CITED

- Barrett, Leonard A. 1977. *The Rastafarians: Sounds of Cultural Dissonance*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- _____. 1988. *The Rastafarians*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Budge, Sir E. A. Wallis. 2000. *The Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek (Kebra Nagast)*. Cambridge, Ontario: In parentheses Publications, Ethiopian Series.
- Cashmore, Ernest. 1979. More than a version: a study of reality creation. *British Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 30, No. 3, September, p 307-321.
- Chevannes, Barry. 1994. *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology*. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Chisholm, Clinton. 1998. "The Rasta-Selasie-Ethiopian Connections," *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Chude-Sokei, Louis. 1997. "Postnationalist Geographies: Rasta, Ragga, and Reinventing Africa," *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub*. New York: Schirmer Books
- Clarke, Sebastian. 1980. *Jah Music: The Evolution of the Popular Jamaican Song*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.
- Columbus, Christopher. 1991. *First Voyage to America: From the Log of the "Santa Maria"*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.
- Edmonds, Ennis. 2002. *Rastafari: From Outcasts to Culture Bearers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002
- Fergusson, Isaac. 1997. "'So Much Things to Say': The Journey of Bob Marley," *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- Forsythe, Dennis. 1983. *Rastafari: For the Healing of the Nation*. Kingston: Zaika Publications.

- Hansing, Katrin. 2001. Rasta, race and revolution: transnational connections in socialist Cuba. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Vol. 27, No. 4, October, p 733-747.
- Hausman, Gerald. 1997. *The Kebra Nagast: The lost bible of Rastafarian wisdom and faith from Ethiopia*. New York City: St. Martin's Press.
- Information Please Database. 2005. "Jamaica" Pearson Education, Inc.
<<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107662.html>>
- Jamaican Information Service. 2003. "Education," Jamaican Information Service.
<http://www.jis.gov.jm/gov_ja/education.asp>
- _____. 1996. "Government of Jamaica" Jamaican Information Service.
<http://www.jis.gov.jm/gov_ja/history.asp>
- Junique, Kelleyana. 2004. *Rastafari? Rasta for You: Rastafarianism Explained*. London: Athena Press.
- Kebede, AlemSeghed. 2001. Decentered movements: the case of the structural and perceptual versatility of the Rastafari. *Sociological Spectrum*. Vol. 21, p 175-205.
- King, Stephen A. 1998. International reggae, democratic socialism, and the secularization of the Rastafarian movement, 1972-1980. *Popular Music and Society*. Vol. 22, No. 3, Fall, p 39-60.
- Leland, John. 1997. "When Rap Meets Reggae." *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- Lewis, William F. 1993. *Soul Rebels: The Rastafari*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Mack, Douglas R. A. 1999. *From Babylon to Rastafari: Origin and History of the Rastafarian Movement*. Chicago: Research Associates School Times Publications Frontline Distribution Int'l Inc.
- McFarlane, Adrian Anthony. 1998. "The Epistemological Significance of 'I-an-I' as a Response to Quashie and Anancyism in Jamaican Culture," *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader*. Philadelphia Temple University Press.
- Murrell, Nathaniel and Lewin Williams. 1998. "The Black Biblical Hermeneutics of Rastafari," *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Nettleford, Rex M. 1972. *Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica*. New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc.

- Nicholas, Tracy. 1979. *Rastafari: A Way of Life*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books.
- Reckord, Verena. 1998. "From Burru Drums to Reggae Rhythms: The Evolution of Rasta Music," *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- _____. 1997. "Reggae, Rastafarianism and Cultural Identity," *Reggae, Rasta, Revolution: Jamaican Music From Ska to Dub*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- Roskind, Robert. 2001. *Rasta Heart: A Journey Into One Love*. Blowing Rock, North Carolina: One Love Press.
- Wint, Eleanor in consultation with members of the Nyabingi Order. 1998. "Who Is Haile Selassie? His Imperial Majesty in Rasta Voices," *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.