Story of Jamaica and Rastafari, Ethiopianism and Pan-Africanism, pt 2nd

Leonard Howell, who is said to have been a Garveyite himself, had cut out a picture of Emperor Haile Selassie from the local Jamaican newspaper and promoted it all over the Island. He was able to organize a mass following based on the idea that Haile Sellasie was the return Messiah. While Mr Garvey was the one who refocused our attention to Africa and recentered it on Ethiopia. His program stops short of the kinds of Heru Worship and techniques that are effectively used by the West.
There have been many offshoots and splinter groups of Garveyism.
Grover Cleveland Redding or "The Great Abyssinian," was a 1920s Black nationalist, religious leader, and early Pan-African activist. He is best known for founding the short-lived **Star Order of Ethiopia** (and the Ethiopian Missionaries to Abyssinia) in Chicago, which became a foundational milestone in proto-Rastafari consciousness and Black radicalism.

Influenced heavily by the 1919 diplomatic mission sent to the United States by Ethiopian Regent Ras Tafari (later Emperor Haile Selassie I), Redding rejected United States citizenship under the oppressive Jim Crow system.

On Sunday, June 20, 1920, Redding led a small procession through

Chicago's South Side while riding a white stallion and wearing symbolic, regal robes. The parade ended on East 35th Street, where Redding produced an American flag, poured gasoline over it, and set it on fire in open defiance of the United States government.

When police officers and bystanders tried to intervene, a violent street skirmish broke out. Shots were fired, resulting in the deaths of two white men (including an American sailor) and injuring several others

Redding and several of his followers were arrested and charged with murder. According to police records, Redding confessed to instigating the event and burning the flag. He maintained during his trial that he was a prince of Abyssinia simply trying to lead his people back to their true homeland. He was found guilty and executed by hanging in Illinois in 1921.

His recorded final words right before his death were, *"I have something to say, but not at this time."*.

Perceval Leonard **Howell was a Jamaican who had traveled to the United States as a seaman. He was exposed to Garvey/s philosophy and many of the ideas that stemmed from it.**
He emphasized the fact that in the King James Version of the Bible, the book of Psalms also references the emperor's titles. Titles such as King of kings and lord of lords. Elect of God, conquering lion of the tribe of Judah, when describing the king of Israel. It goes on to say Seelah.

This was enough to convince many of the early Rastafarian leaders.

When the plane landed in Jamaica on April 21 1966.

All protocols were broken.

Thousands of people descended on the tarmac even before the plane landed. Tens of thousands of people lined the streets of Kingston to witness the motorcade. The visit became a celebration the moment the Ethiopian plane touched the ground at the Palacedos airport. Rasta men began drumming, singing, dancing, and smoking weed.

Looking back, one might wonder about the safety involved while smoking the Chalice under the wings of a jumbo jet.

The Euphoria took the Jamaican Government and the Emperor by surprise. Initially, the Emperor hesitated to disembark because of the breach in protocol. He may have thought this was a coup being organized in his name without his knowledge.

The Jamaican officials had to reorganize. They requested an esteemed elder and member of the Rastafari community to enter the plane and explain to the Emperor what was actually going on.

His name was Martimo Planner. He became a key leader of the Niabingi house of Rastafari.

He had visited Ethiopia and had met the Emperor as part of a Governmental delegation a few years prior.

The visit gave legitimacy to the movement and created an understanding among the Jamaican Grassroots and so-called elite of Jamaica.

The Ethiopian monarch's mission to Jamaica accomplished many things. The Emperor

met with Jamaican government leaders, including then-Prime Minister Hugh

Shearer, cementing diplomatic ties between the two nations.

• He established the Shashamane Land Grant and welcomed Africans in the diaspora to

relocate to Ethiopia.

After the visit, the Rastaman and women somewhat had a voice; they enjoyed less persecution and more respect. The men were able to come out of the hills and walk the streets of Kingston.

The Emperor practiced the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian faith. Therefore, he sent an Abuna or High priest to Jamaica and established the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo church in Kingston.

Today, the anniversary of the visit is celebrated as Foundation Day. It strengthened the foundation of Rastafari and rooted it in Jamaica.

A common misunderstanding about the Rastaman was that he was a Blackheart man. Many people assumed that many of the rumors and the Government smear campaigns were true.

They interpreted the term Black Heart man to mean a man who ate people's hearts.

From the Rastafari view, this simply meant to love Black people from the heart. Generally, the word Dread is also rejected. It suggests that the person is Dreadful.

All this culminated in the wholesale social exclusion of a significant portion of the Jamaican community.

Today there are different ideas and approaches within Rastafari culture and the movement in general.

The Ethiopian World Federation was set up by His Imperial Majesty to organize into one body Africans all over the world. It was headed initially by Malaku Bayen. Dr. Bayen was a brilliant organizer.

He received his medical degree at Howard Medical University in Washington, D C. During his years at Howard, he forged lasting friendships with members of the black community and, at Emperor Haile Selassie's request, he endeavoured to enlist African American professionals to work in Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian World Federation, Incorporated as an intergovernmental organization on August 25, 1937, but unfortunately, Dr. Bayen passed in 1940.

The E W F was in line with the vision and work of the U N I A. It had gained many of Mr. Garvey's followers. It was the organization that Haile Sellasie founded to help organize and strengthen the Pan-African organizations around the world.

The E W F issued a charter to the Rastafari leaders. They set up the first chapter in

Kingston. As a splinter of the first chapter, the Twelve tribes of Israel was established.

This house within the Rastafari mansion was greatly responsible for the growth and

development of Reggae Musik. Bob Marley being its most famous member. The Twelve

tribes of Israel was established by Vernon Carrington. He became the prophet Gad. The Twelve tribes managed to incorporate from an earlier stage many educated Rasta within its movements.

The Youth Black Faith was the direct historical precursor and catalyst that evolved into the modern Nia binghi Order and the other houses.

The Youth Black Faith represented the radical, foundational aspect of the Nyabingi movement in the late 1940s and 1950s.

It was inspired by anti-colonial literature and pan-African pamphlets that were smuggled into Jamaica. A young Bongo Watto started the Youth Black Faith in Trench Town, Kingston. Now home of the Legendary Reggae music.

Music has been a feature in the Nyabinghi order; its early leaders were Ras Boanerges, otherwise called Bongo Watto, and Mortimo Moplano.

Moplano was a mentor to Bob Marley; he was the man who had explained to Haile Sellasie what was happening on the ground before he disembarked. The movement developed over time and adapted a strong anti-colonial African rallying cry. However It does not appear that this house has ever been formally incorporated. Many of the elders were at one point considered Binghi and operated under its unofficial banner.

The name comes from a legendary African Queen Niabinghi who may have lived in the Kongo region of East Africa.

The Niabingi order is considered to be the oldest of the three often mentioned houses of the Mansions of Rastafari. It had operated traditionally and helped to establish the theological foundation of the movement.

The E A B I C, Ethiopia Africa Black International Congress. Bobo Shanty Order. Was founded in Jamaica in 1958 by Prince Emmanuel Charles Edwards, otherwise known as Bongo Eddie. Many had dispersed from Pinnacle and from the St Catherine hills where they had established the commune, and moved to Back a Wall in west Kingston.

Under the JLP government, again this settlement was destroyed in order to set up what is now Tivoli Gardens.

The Bobo Shante then moved to its existing location in the hills of 9 Mile, Bull Bay, overlooking the ocean. Bobo Shanty is distinct in this particular aspect; most obvious is that they wear long flowing robes and cover their hair with bright turbans. Its founder and leader, Prince Emanuel, was one of the elders who met with and received a gold medal from the Emperor. This explains why Rastafari artists, upon entering the stage, often chant Holy Emanuel I, Jah Rastafari. He also popularized the saying Blessed my lord, usually with a touching of the heart. This recognizes divinity within the person. This is Ubuntu again being established in the West.

The name Bobo Shante or Bobo Ashante references two powerful kingdoms in west Africa before The Colonial era.

The Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church is generally referred to as Judah Coptic, though not often considered as one of the official houses of Rastafari. It Became a viable economic entity in the 1970s as a result of its overseas Ganja trade.

Its founder, Keith Gardener, established a commune in the St Thomas parish in Jamaica. It was called the gospel camp.

His philosophy was anchored in the doctrine of Garvey's teachings, combined with an Afrocentric reading of Christian scripture, and also the requirement of cannabis as a holy sacrament.

Niah partnered officially with some white foreigners from the US, and in 1975, the organization was officially incorporated as a church in Florida,

Eventually, it controlled a massive commercial network. Before legal challenges arose, the Coptics had acquired luxury compounds in Miami, a fleet of shipping containers, and thousands of acres of land in Jamaica.

Its beliefs are based on both the Old and New Testaments of the bible, as well as the teachings of Marcus Garvey, self-reliance, Afrocentricity, and Ethiopianism.

What the houses and organizations have had in common is a strong sentiment for Ethiopia, reverence for the Emperor, and references from Marcus Garvey.

In 1958, Rastafari elders came together and organized a protest at the National Hero's park in Kingston.

It was designed to strengthen the Unity among Rastafari, especially among Bobo Shanty and the Nyabinghi order. It was designed to be a peaceful protest against conditions at the time. However, it got out of control, and a statue of Queen Victoria was broken in the park. Again, the police response was brutal.

Several of the leaders and organizers were badly beaten. Since then, progress has been gradual.

In February 2026, the Pan African world celebrated 100 years since the reemergence of our story on the National Scale. At this time the U N I A was in its high days.

The Rastafari movement and its development over the past decades is comparable to the struggles described by the writers of the early church.

It is important here to step back a little in order to see the progression.

Alexander Bedward was born around 1850; this was after the Sam Sharpe revolt but before the Morant Bay rebellion.

He was active in the times after Paul Bogle and might have been inspired by him. Bedward lived and organized his congregation in August Town, Kingston.

It appears he was raised as a Baptist slash revivalist, but eventually he established his own brand and delivery method. Often, his movement is referred to as Bedwardism.

He served as an inspiration to Marcus Garvey; he attracted large crowds and conducted healing ceremonies by the river. At one point, it was said that his movement had more followers than the Baptist church at that time.

He was before Leonard Howell, but he faced a similar treatment, as he was also arrested many times and sent to the Asylum. He passed 1930 on November 8th.

Another notable contributor to the development of Jamaican culture pre-independence was Archibald Dunkley; he had travelled to the Caribbean and became a seaman for the United Fruit Company. He too was moved by the idea of the crowning of a black king in Ethiopia and was convinced that the Emperor was the return messiah. He assigned biblical references to the circumstances in Jamaica and likened it to the Babylonian captivity of the Judahites in the 6th century BC.

He, like his contemporaries, traveled from the town to the country, parish by parish, preaching their conviction that the king of kings was the return messiah.

Archibald Dunkley was among the early preachers of the Rastafari faith; he is mentioned along with Robert Hinds and Joseph Hibert, and Howell for establishing the idea of the Divinity of Haile Sellasie and the foundations for Rastafari.

Robert Hinds was born in Linstead St. Catherine. He became a follower of Bedward; he was also a revivalist and considered among the first Rastas.

He led a march in 1921 which tested the colonial Authorities. He was also a kind of Lieutenant with Leonard Howell; they were both sentenced to hard labor in St Thomas.

Robert Hinds, at one point, had the largest Rastafari following in Kingston.

Joseph Nathaniel Hibert was born in 1894; he spent a lot of time abroad, mainly in Costa Rica.

He belonged to a Masonic lodge called the Ancient Mystic Order of Ethiopia. A branch connected to the Prince Hall Free Masonic order. Howell recruited Hibert and allied him to preach in Kingston. It appeared that they might have had some differences in approach regarding doctrine.

All these circumstances and ideas converged, creating the movement that we call Rastafari today. One thing all of these men shared in common was how the authorities responded to them.

Sending the leaders to the Madhouse was the second resort when they failed to

convict. They were leaders who advocated strictly from the position of religiosity.

They were also men and Women like Una Marson, J A Rogers, John B Russwurm and

Amy Jacques Garvey. These men and women were organizers in their own right; however, their background was more intellectual and less religious.
Born on Feb 6, 1905, in Santa Cruz, Una Victoria Marson was a Jamaican activist and writer. She produced poems, plays and radio programmes.

She travelled to London in 1932 and became the first black woman to be employed by the BBC; this was during World War II. She passed on May 6th 1965 in Kingston.

Joel Augustus Rogers was a Jamaican-American author, journalist, and professional historian who focused on the history of Africa, as well as the African diaspora. After settling in the United States in 1906, he lived in Chicago and then New York City.

He was born on Sep 6, 1880, in Negril, Jamaica, and passed on Mar 26, 1966, in New York.

John B. Russwurm (1799–1851) was a trailblazing abolitionist, journalist, and one of the first Black men to graduate from an American college. He co-founded *Freedom's Journal*, the first African American-owned and operated newspaper in the U.S. He later relocated to Liberia and became the first Black governor of Maryland in Africa.

Miss Honorable Amy Jacques Garvey was Born

In Dec 31, 1895, in Kingston, Jamaica

Amy Euphemia Jacques Garvey was a Jamaican-born journalist and activist. She was the second wife of Marcus Garvey. She was one of the pioneering female Black journalists and publishers of the 20th century.

She passed on Jul 25, 1973.

Any had remained in Jamaica to take care of the children while Mr. Garvey went to England, where he passed in 1940 on June 10th during World War Two.

It is significant to mention that one of the first stops that Emperor Sellasie made upon his arrival in Jamaica was a visit to the shrine of the Honorable Marcus Garvey at the National Hero's park.

He also met with the prominent elders of the Rastafari movement at the time at King's house.

There, the King of Kings placed gold medals around the necks of Rastafarian grassroots leaders and thanked them for the resistance and for the outstanding work that helped to usher in Jamaica's independence. Strengthening the cause of PanAfricanism.

There have been many elders and teachers over the years; however, it is Reggae music that has served as the main vehicle for popularizing the culture.

Musicians have always played a special role in shaping African culture. They often acted as the griots and Njelle in West Africa.

They documented the victories and helped to amplify myths and stories about the kings. They also kept records in a society where writing was sometimes frowned upon, and the power of memory was emphasized.

Reggae music often bears striking similarities with West African classical sounds. Particularly the Malian classics.

Salif Keita said in an interview in French that Reggae music is the highest form of African music. image.png

The Musik has documented and has popularized a lot of the grassroots events since its inception.

After the 1966 visit of the Emperor, the Musik took on a whole other tone. Since then, more and more lyrics were dedicated to the Emperor.

The Local Jamaican music genre, through the years, can also provide a time stamp in terms of what was happening on the ground in Jamaica during the 60's, 70's, 80s, and up to the present.

By the 90s, Dancehall became more popular in Jamaica itself; it is still considered a form of Reggae, it introduced the synthesized beat, and over time the topics shifted; however, the African sentiment has not been lost entirely.

Jamaican music itself can be cataloged in order to provide a chronology of the local culture.

Jamaicans as a whole have never given up the Idea of Pan-African Unity and the African cultural Identity.

Many still hope that one day we will return to live and help develop the Motherland.

Mr. Garvey's Grand vision has been limited and defined as a back-to-Africa movement. Often today it is talked about as if the plan was to just pack up and leave. The program involved reclaiming identity, culture, and international trade. Community organizing, Small and large-scale business management, and a thought program for development. Importantly, the Garvey program taught African Philosophy.

Ironically, Mr. Garvey never set foot on the continent; however, it was his program that encouraged and inspired the early African Independent leaders.

He sought to repair the psychological challenges and unite African people all over the world.

Jamaican Scholars today have also worked closely on the Issue of Reparations in modern times.

Recently, Ghana's President John Mahama presented a formal grievance and statement of redress to the United Nations. The 10-point plan may be a remedy to mitigate the

ongoing systemic imbalance. Professors at the University of the West Indies Mona Campus in Jamaica have been directly involved in crafting the language of this redress.

Many Caribbean leaders and intellectuals have also been involved in the Pan-African struggle over the years. One In Particular, Professor Walter Rodney, experienced grounding with the Rastafari and Jamaica's inner city communities. He was born in Guyana and came to Jamaica after spending a few years as a professor in Tanzania.
He was a student himself at the University of the West Indies, and in 1968 he returned as a lecturer.

He soon ran into issues with the local government, mainly because of his Pan-African stance.

A Guyanese historian, he first attended the University of the West Indies U W I Mona campus as an undergraduate in 1960. He returned in 1968, but his tenure was abruptly cut short.

Unlike many academics at that time, Rodney lived in West Kingston and worked directly with the poor and the marginalized. He deeply engaged with the Rastafari community to raise cultural and political consciousness.

These groundings directly inspired his famous work, The Groundings With My Brothers, which documented the struggles and African consciousness in the Caribbean. He states in this book that he was shocked by the way Jamaican's and in particular the Rastaman, were able to comprehend the world with limited reading and effort. And this while never leaving the Island. He also complains a little about a certain unwillingness and general assumptions within the group at the time.

In October 1968, while attending a Black Writers Conference in Montreal, the JLP government (led by Prime Minister Hugh Shearer) declared him persona non grata and barred him from re-entering the country.

His banning sparked a massive outrage at the University of the West Indies that morphed into violent civil unrest in Kingston. This became known as the Rodney Riots. This unrest demonstrated his immense influence on the working-class students and Rastafari.

Walter Rodney, C L R James, Stokely Carmichael, and others have embraced a unique brand of Marxism mixed with Pan-Africanism.

Walter Rodney's core theory, and most famous book, is "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa," It posits that Africa's poverty is not a natural state of backwardness, but the deliberate result of centuries of unequal exploitation by Western capitalist and colonial powers. He famously argued that "Africa developed Europe at the same rate that Europe underdeveloped Africa. This view is also supported by Dr. Chiek Anta Dlop, the African Renaissance man from Senegal.

We have arrived at another juncture in the road of freedom and cultural expression, and

the focus today is on historical clarity, identity, and operational unity.

It requires Sankofa and careful review of some of the mistakes made in the past.

It also requires an updated narrative and taking into account the information that was not available at the time to many of our esteemed elders and greatest leaders at that time. And at the same time, we must continue to build upon the very foundation.

In its most active days, the movement did not distinguish between the conscious mind, Matted hair and the Bearded man. It was based on the social consciousness of the people.

Bob Marley used the term crazy bald head, it was used symbolically to represent an anti-African attitude and lack of awareness in the song chace those crazy bald heads out of Town. The vision and the narrative of Pan-Africanism as expressed by the Honorable Marcus Moziah Garvey and His Imperial Majesty is best described as the vision to unify and strengthen the position of African people worldwide.

Technology helps us to link up via WhatsApp and the internet.

A major obstacle in the way of operational unity and progress is the lies that they told us about them and the lies that they told them about us.

Today we enjoy easier access to information and the continent; as a result, we can employ a new fact-finding mission.

We must utilize the analytical approach and the methodology of research and fact-checking.

Today, programs can be facilitated online or in person; the key is to use established references and experienced facilitators.

The challenge is to Transition From Negritude to the Renaissance.

At this juncture, a more pragmatic approach is needed to establish the kind of collective thinking that is based on practical solutions and strategy. This renewed psychology is centered and based on African Philosophy.

On this journey, there are forks in the road. We are at a point where, in order to advance, we must revisit the question of Cultural and historical identity.