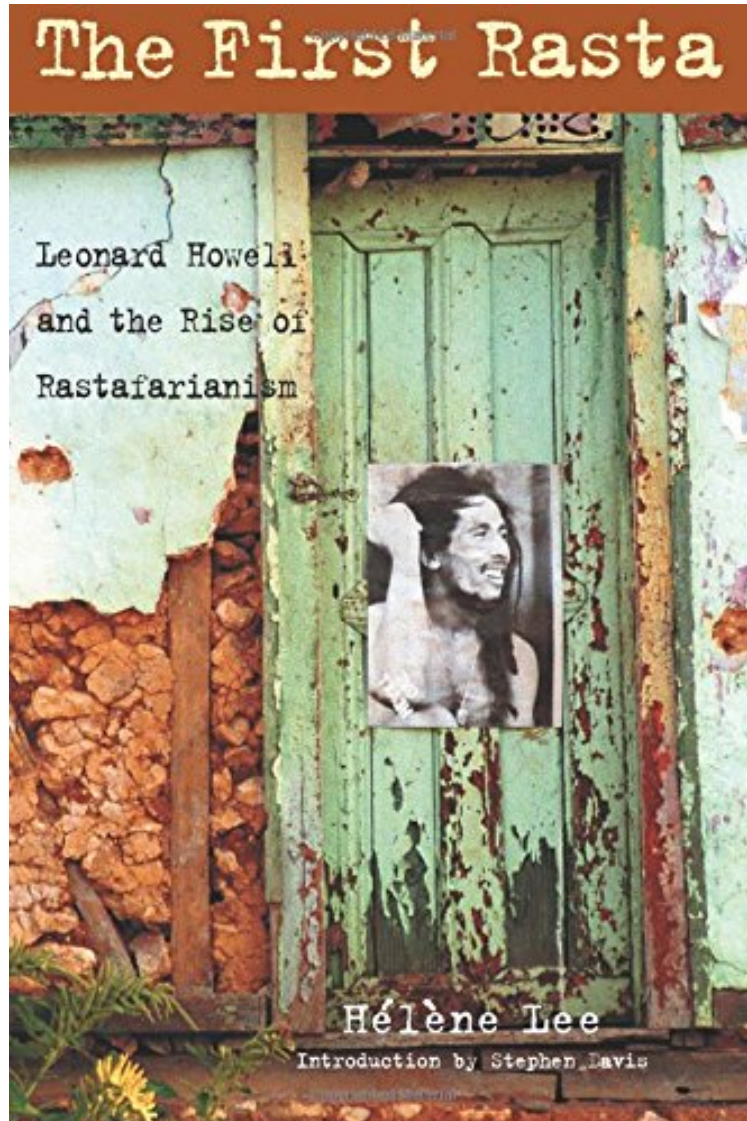


[FREE] The First Rasta: Leonard Howell and the Rise of Rastafarianism

The First Rasta: Leonard Howell and the Rise of Rastafarianism

Hlne Lee

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Hlne Lee : The First Rasta: Leonard Howell and the Rise of Rastafarianism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The First Rasta: Leonard Howell and the Rise of Rastafarianism:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful Look At Modern JamaicaBy ChimonsoThe first Rasta! The subject promises readers a thrilling ride, and Lee does not disappoint. Other major figures associated with Rastafari (Haile Selassie, Marcus Garvey, Bob Marley) are well-known and documented, but Lee had to dig deep into Jamaican communities and memories for a full biography. Frequent personal anecdotes are quite relevant to research

founded on oral history and the trust of informants. Lee describes Howell's path to Rastafarianism, along with plenty of Jamaican social and political history. Interestingly, Howell spent many years as a Hindu, and many more womanizing, both signaling his marked charisma. Perhaps not all details are reliable (e.g. England captured Jamaica in 1655, not 1665), but the overall patterns are clear. Rastafari responds to Afro-Jamaicans' sense of oppression and marginalization, founded in slavery and sustained through emancipation and independence. This is apparent in mainstream disapproval and longstanding conflicts with authorities, not least because marijuana use is a key sacrament. Despite many parallels with other religions of the oppressed (cf. V. Lanternari on this subject), Rastafari earns wider appeal---not always from the devout, but among hedonist lovers of ganja and reggae. All the more reason to recommend this lively book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. THIS BOOK IS NOT ABOUT BOB MARLEY BUT ABOUT MY ...By fay richards-smith THIS BOOK IS NOT ABOUT BOB MARLEY BUT ABOUT MY DEAR UNCLE--LEONARD PERCIVAL HOWELL-- THE FIRST RASTA AND THE FOUNDING FATHER OF RASTAFARI.THE FRENCH WRITER--HELENE LEE IS A PERSONAL FRIEND OF MINE AND OF THE HOWELL FAMILY. THE BOOK IS WELL WRITTEN AND VERY FACTUAL. EVERY RASTAFARIAN, FOLLOWER, BELIEVER AND ESPECIALLY THE HOWELL'S SHOULD READ THIS BOOK AND VISIT PINNACLE IN JAMAICA W. I.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Mz SugaVery good book, I learn a lot things I didn't know from this book.

Going far beyond the standard imagery of Rastaganja, reggae, and dreadlocksthis cultural history offers an uncensored vision of a movement with complex roots and the exceptional journey of a man who taught an enslaved people how to be proud and impose their culture on the world. In the 1920s Leonard Percival Howell and the First Rastas had a revelation concerning the divinity of Haile Selassie, king of Ethiopia, that established the vision for the most popular mystical movement of the 20th century, Rastafarianism. Although jailed, ridiculed, and treated as insane, Howell, also known as the Gong, established a Rasta community of 4,500 members, the first agro-industrial enterprise devoted to producing marijuana. In the late 1950s the community was dispersed, disseminating Rasta teachings throughout the ghettos of the island. A young singer named Bob Marley adopted Howell's message, and through Marley's visions, reggae made its explosion in the music world.

From Publishers WeeklyPowerful historical and social forces come together in Libration journalist Lee's extraordinarily useful book, which appeared in 1999 to acclaim. Jamaican prophet Leonard Howell's revelations in the 1920s about the symbolic portent for the African diaspora of Ras Tafari's crowning as Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia led to the birth of one of the 20th century's most enduring and influential religious awakenings. The colonial forces that ruthlessly suppressed Howell and Rastafarianism in his lifetime have also hidden much of his biography, which Lee has reconstructed through impeccable research and dogged sleuthing. Partly a record of its author's journey in search of those who knew and followed Howell, *The First Rasta* moves with a truth seeker's determination through the slums of Trenchtown and Jamaica's back country, revealing a dauntingly complex landscape and history in which oral history is often more reliable than the written record. Between his part in the intellectual ferment of the Harlem of Langston Hughes and Marcus Garvey, and the destruction of his religious compound in the late '50s, Howell endured lengthy stays in both prisons and mental hospitals, but emerges in these pages as confident and vindicated. Lee's passionate biography, which includes 11 bw photos, should draw in not only for students of religion, reggae or Jamaican history but has something to offer to anyone interested in the people and ideas that continue to shape the postcolonial world.

Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistLee, a French journalist, draws on extensive knowledge about the Rastafarian movement made famous by Jamaican reggae star Bob Marley. Considerably less famous is Leonard Howell, the man who developed the movement, cobbling together African culture, divine adoration of Ethiopian ruler Haile Selassie, and the aspirations of African diaspora of the Americas. Lee visited the remains of the Pinnacle, the Rasta compound maintained by Howell in Jamaica in the 1940s with more than 4,000 members and an independent agricultural enterprise that produced and exported marijuana. She recaptures the history of the religion and culture, spawned from the grinding poverty and a people hungry for a god and a place of their own. Howell lived for a while in New York, crossed paths with Marcus Garvey, and eventually returned to the turbulent Jamaican political and economic environment that influenced the spread of Rastafarianism with its trademark dreadlocks, ganja, and reggae. Readers interested in Jamaican culture and the Rasta movement will appreciate this insightful look at one of the most influential mystical movements of the twentieth century. Vanessa BushCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved