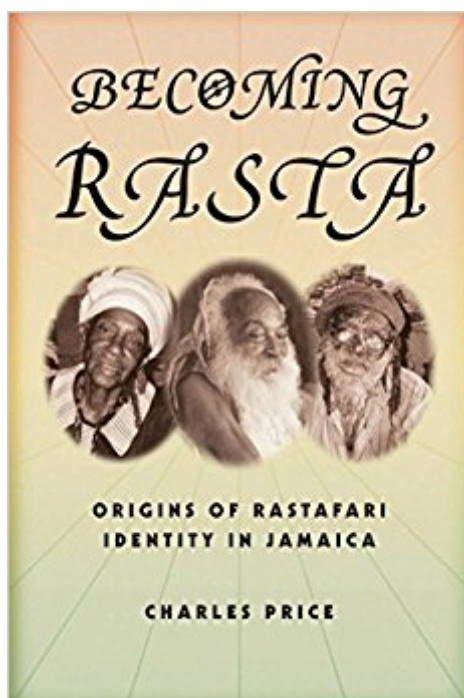


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# Becoming Rasta: Origins Of Rastafari Identity In Jamaica



## Synopsis

So much has been written about the Rastafari, yet we know so little about why and how people join the Rastafari movement. Although popular understandings evoke images of dreadlocks, reggae, and marijuana, Rastafarians were persecuted in their country, becoming a people seeking social justice. Yet new adherents continued to convert to Rastafari despite facing adverse reactions from their fellow citizens and from their British rulers. Charles Price draws on in-depth interviews to reveal the personal experiences of those who adopted the religion in the 1950s to 1970s, one generation past the movement's emergence. By talking with these Rastafari elders, he seeks to understand why and how Jamaicans became Rastafari in spite of rampant discrimination, and what sustains them in their faith and identity. Utilizing new conceptual frameworks, Price explores the identity development of Rastafari, demonstrating how shifts in the movement's identity—from social pariah to exemplar of Blackness—have led some of the elder Rastafari to adopt, embrace, and internalize Rastafari and blackness as central to their concept of self.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A cutting edge exploration of the complex process of black identity transformation, Becoming Rasta also brings us emotionally closer to the diverse individuals who share their life stories with the reader." -Serena Nanda, author of *Neither Man Nor Woman: The Hijras of India* "Becoming Rasta will therefore interest scholars of black identity and add to the already huge

literature on Rastafari."-Barry Chevannes,History of Religions – "Price deploys his life history material most artfully in developing these themes. I have not done justice to his theoretical sophistication and synthesizing abilities, qualities enhanced by accessibility and grace. – Anthropology News – "Anthropologist Price unites the personal and the social in his exploration of identity formation among Rastafarians in Jamaica, where the Rastafari religion originated in 1930. . . This well-written, sophisticated, and continuously engaging account belongs in all libraries. – Choice "Price succeeds at exposing the Rastafarian diversity...[he] challenges the readers 'to realize these men and women have at least the courage of their conviction.'" -Michael D. Royster,Equinox Online "A refreshingly non-otherizing take on the establishment of the character of the Rastafari worldview."-New West Indian Guide "Becoming Rasta is a testament to the lived experience of Rastas, from their first encounters with Rastafari, through conversion, to commitment. It deserves both a scholarly and a general readership."-Hugh Hodges,Nova Religio "Price's work is a significant addition to scholarly work on Rastafari, offering a unique initial foray into discussion of why Rastafari remains such a powerful identity while also presenting an important illustration of the process of transformation of Rastafari identity."-Erin Macleod,Social Anthropology "One can recommend this accessible book for undergraduate and graduate surveys in twentieth-century Caribbean history as well as for similar classes dealing with the formation of racial identities."-Charles H. Ford,Historian – "In an otherwise voluminous literature on Rastafaria, Price fills a void by presenting and critically analyzing the testimonies of Rastafarian men and women that narrate how they discovered, why they entered, and how they sustained membership in the culture, resistance, and theater that is Rastafaria. This book is one of the most important additions to the discourse on the Rastafarian movement to appear in years. Price reveals himself to be both a skilled cultural anthropologist and superb storyteller; the volume reads as much like a piece of literature as social scientific treatise. – William E. Cross, Jr.,author of Shades of Black: Diversity in African American Identity

Charles Price is Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

If you want to know more about how the Rastas came about, this is a great read. I enjoyed learning about the time, place and circumstances that brought about such an amazing way of life. I really enjoyed the writing style as well. Great insight and analysis. Thank you for shedding some light on the subject. Lili

Excellent book

Greeting.Ises, I & I Blessed. Jah Rastafari. Love de book. The wonderful insight, rasta share in this book. Irie Mon. All should Know this. All Love, Respect to the rastaman. One Blood, One Heart, One Destiny. I'll be sharing this book with I & I Idriends.

THIS IS MY GUIDE TO THE WAY OF LIFE THAT IS FILLED WITH LOVE &  
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