

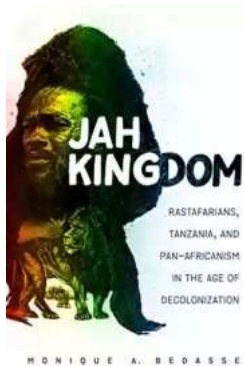
# Rastafarians Tanzania And Pan Africanism In The Age Of Decolonization



If there is one movement that stands out in the struggle for African identity and the fight against colonization, it is Rastafarianism in Tanzania. Emerging during the age of decolonization, Rastafarians played a significant role in promoting Pan Africanism and fostering a sense of unity among Africans. This article explores the relationship between Rastafarians in Tanzania and the Pan African movement, highlighting their shared goals and the impact they had on African societies.

## **Understanding Rastafarianism**

Rastafarianism originated in Jamaica during the early 20th century and quickly spread across the African diaspora. The movement was built upon the belief that Haile Selassie I, the former Emperor of Ethiopia, was the messiah and their interpretation of biblical texts. Rastafarians rejected the oppressive systems imposed by European colonial powers and sought to reclaim their African heritage and dignity.



## Jah Kingdom: Rastafarians, Tanzania, and Pan-Africanism in the Age of Decolonization

by Monique A. Bedasse (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 5954 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 263 pages



As Rastafarianism gained popularity in Tanzania, its followers embraced the principles of Pan Africanism, which aimed to unite people of African descent across the world. Pan Africanism emphasized the importance of African culture, unity, and self-determination in fighting against colonialism and promoting African identity.

### **Rastafarians in Tanzania: Embracing Pan Africanism**

Tanzania, under the leadership of Julius Nyerere, became a crucial hub for the Pan African movement. Nyerere, a staunch advocate of African unity, provided sanctuary and support for various African liberation movements, including

Rastafarian communities. Rastafarians found solace in Tanzania, where they could freely practice their religion and express their cultural identity without fear of persecution.

Rastafarian communities in Tanzania became centers of cultural exchange, education, and political activism. They organized events, music festivals, and intellectual discussions to promote Pan Africanism and raise awareness about the continuing struggles faced by Africans within and outside the continent.

## **The Impact of Rastafarians in Tanzania**

The presence of Rastafarians in Tanzania had a profound impact on the local society and the wider Pan African movement. Their ideology challenged the dominant narrative imposed by colonial powers and emphasized the importance of African spirituality, culture, and history.

Rastafarians played a crucial role in rejecting the Eurocentric standards of beauty. They embraced their natural hair and dreadlocks, challenging the notion that African features were inferior. Through their appearance and lifestyle choices, they inspired many Africans to reclaim their heritage, reject societal norms, and promote self-acceptance.

Furthermore, Rastafarian music and art became powerful tools for spreading their message of Pan Africanism. Reggae music, with its uplifting and empowering lyrics, resonated with Africans across the continent, inspiring hope and unity. Artists like Bob Marley and Peter Tosh became icons of the Pan African movement, using their platforms to raise awareness about social and political injustices.

## **Legacy and Continued Influence**

Decades after the age of decolonization, the influence of Rastafarianism and Pan Africanism still permeates African societies. In Tanzania, Rastafarian communities continue to thrive and contribute to the cultural fabric of the nation. Their emphasis on African spirituality and unity has helped shape the national narrative and promote a deeper connection with the continent's history.

The legacy of Rastafarians in Tanzania can be seen in the acceptance and celebration of natural African features, including hairstyles and fashion choices. The influence of reggae music, with its messages of justice and equality, can be heard throughout African communities, serving as a catalyst for social change and unity.

, Rastafarians in Tanzania played a vital role in the Pan African movement during the age of decolonization. Their unwavering commitment to African identity, culture, and solidarity challenged colonial narratives and continues to inspire generations. The impact of Rastafarianism in Tanzania and its alignment with Pan Africanism remains a powerful force in shaping an African future marked by unity, pride, and self-determination.



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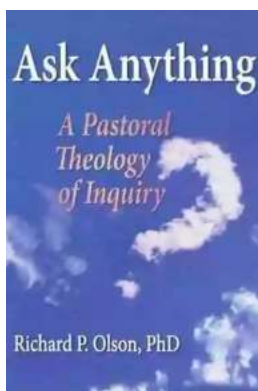
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From its beginnings in 1930s Jamaica, the Rastafarian movement has become a global presence. While the existing studies of the Rastafarian movement have primarily focused on its cultural expression through reggae music, art, and iconography, Monique A. Bedasse argues that repatriation to Africa represents the most important vehicle of Rastafari's international growth. Shifting the scholarship on repatriation from Ethiopia to Tanzania, Bedasse foregrounds Rastafari's enduring connection to black radical politics and establishes Tanzania as a critical site to explore gender, religion, race, citizenship, socialism, and nation. Beyond her engagement with how the Rastafarian idea of Africa translated into a lived reality, she demonstrates how Tanzanian state and nonstate actors not only validated the Rastafarian idea of diaspora but were also crucial to defining the parameters of Pan-Africanism.

Based on previously undiscovered oral and written sources from Tanzania, Jamaica, England, the United States, and Trinidad, Bedasse uncovers a vast and varied transnational network--including Julius Nyerere, Michael Manley, and C. L. R James--revealing Rastafari's entrenchment in the making of Pan-Africanism in the postindependence period.



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