



About Dreadlocks Story

[Dreadlocks Story](#) is a historical page which exhibits the bonds of survival of African and Indian culture in Jamaica in view of up-front anti-slavery and anti-imperialist struggles. Due to British colonists, Indians and African descendants have met in the plantations and created something absolutely unique and indispensable to express what they had been oppressed by.

The film has been shot in 4 countries (India, Jamaica, France and the USA), in 4 languages (Hindi, Jamaican Patois, French and English), with 4 local crews. That has sharpened the director's flexibility!

Dreadlocks Story opens up the history of Rastas in a new light. It shows the spiritual history behind the criticized dreadlocks hairstyle and the roots of the Rastafari culture, which is entangled with the Hindu tradition in Jamaica. This topic has never been addressed, but is now divulged! The documentary was filmed in four countries (France, India, Jamaica and the US) with four different languages (French, Hindi, Jamaican Patois and English) and four local crews. It covers a part of Jamaican and Indian history. It also gives a new approach to sensitive topics about beliefs and taboos.

There are many misperceptions and judgments about the Rasta way of life, but few have taken the time to understand the meaning behind their behaviour. Hairstyle is the most universal and unavoidable form of body art. It is also one of the most interesting and commonly misunderstood. How and why can it be subject to prejudice and massacre?

If most defend an African heritage, why did the first Rastas mingle with Hindus?

The uplifting Rasta movement began as slavery progressed. Rastafari pledges a response to African heirs to recover and rebuild their culture suppressed by brutal stultifying European domination. Within this context, it is an attempt for the survival of African culture and an up-front anti-slavery, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle. The British colonists ruled in Jamaica until 1962 and in India until 1947, slavery ended in Jamaica in 1838 and Indian workers were brought

to the island from 1845 to 1917. Both Afro-Jamaicans and Indians were kidnapped and sent to work on sugar and banana plantations throughout Jamaica where they created positive relationships through their common oppressive hardships. The role played by Indians in Jamaica reminds us that enslaved people have not come only from Africa...What is the original and unique way of life arising from the cross-cultural mixing between the sons of African slaves, as well as African and Indian forced workers "under contracts" in the plantations?

Leonard Percival Howell, known as the First Rasta was the pioneer to speak about Rastafari (1932). He empowered and promoted the belief that everyone is divine and equal through the figure of the Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia. His first followers were mainly very poor, mentally persecuted people. Jailed for two years by the Colonial Government, Howell wrote a pamphlet (1935) under a Hindu pen name, which unveiled relevance between the lifestyles of Rastas in Jamaica and Sadhus (Hindu Holy men) in India.

In 1939, Howell became the first Black man to purchase and own a piece of land called Pinnacle where he implanted a free self-reliant community for his followers. Since then, the murky persecutions have been incessant to him and to Rastas with the Jamaica Government acting to erase Leonard Howell from history. After many raids, Pinnacle community was destroyed and totally burnt down by Colonists in 1958. The destruction of this autonomous society caused an exodus of Rastas throughout Jamaica. To wear dreadlocks became a mean of defiance and a blanket of protection against the Establishment.

Today, dreadlocks are not confined to Jamaica but found throughout the Caribbean and Diasporas. Thus, their origins reveal to be secondary to the vital role they are playing to mirror the state of mind of the minority Rasta communities all over the world.

Although some accommodations have been made towards Rastas, the struggle against prejudice and discrimination are still prevalent.

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- See more at: <http://arcthemagazine.com/arc/2015/07/new-documentary-film-dreadlocks-story/#sthash.BW326iUM.dpuf>