



MAGIC & MELANIN DIASPORA DISCUSSIONS

Juneteenth, 2020

DECOLONIZE & UNLEARN: SUSTAINABLY RETURNING HOME



@magicandmelanin

#DiasporaDiscussions

#Juneteenth

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@magicandmelanin



@OsazeAkil

Hey everyone! My name is Osaze Akil Stigler and I'm many things But I'm primarily visual artist and urban planner based in Atlanta, GA. You can check out some of my art on my site <http://OsazeAkil.com>



@WhyWordsMatter_

Hi fam! I'm Tiffany and I work in education policy in DC. Before that, I taught children 5-8 in NC, NYC and in Bogota, Colombia. Excited for this discussion! #DiasporaDiscussions



@Hood_Biologist

Greetings everyone! My name is Shay-Akil McLean, I'm an evolutionary geneticist, biological anthropologist, & sociologist studying the effects of racism on human biology. As Malcolm X put, I am an African in America.



@ObongAnwanSalem

Hi all, I'm hi I'm Salem. Human Rights Lawyer. African scholar. Consultant. Yogi. I'm excited to be part of #MagicAndMelanin's 2nd edition of #DiasporaDiscussions. I'm a Nigerian born West African



@LimitlessMMA_

Hello my brothers and sisters pardon my lateness My name is Christian and I'm from dc but I live in Thailand and I'm pro fighter #diasporadiscussions



@gedeongiddy

Hello my name is Gideon, I am a tour guide at Magic & Melanin and I live in Togo #diasporadiscussions



tonight's #DiasporaDiscussions chat will be hosted by @DosseVia, the founder of #MagicAndMelanin, @ScorpioMystique and @KnowTheZodiac she moved from NYC to West Africa two years ago and has been inviting descendants of Africa to join her in the Motherland



Q1

How would you define decolonization, and is it truly achievable in your eyes?

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@gedeongiddy



I will define decolonization as a process of emancipation from colonial territories from colonizing country, and in my eyes it's achievable but only if we proceed to a mental decolonization and be fully independent.

@OsazeAkil

Decolonization to me is just redefining ourselves and our lives through an African lens, versus under European ideals. I definitely think it's achievable.

#DiasporaDiscussions



@WhyWordsMatter_



Colonization is establishing control. The opposite is freedom. Decolonization is breaking down the why- why do systems of control exist and how do we removal those constraints that we've been taught to get free. It's achievable, we just have to unite. #DiasporaDiscussions

@Hood_Biologist

On p.1 of "Wretched of the Earth", Fanon states that decolonization, "starts from the very first day with the basic claims of the colonized. In actual fact, proof of success lies in a social fabric that has been changed inside out." #DiasporicDiscussions

#Juneteenth



Q2

What do you view as some of the biggest challenges in diasporans returning to the Motherland?



@WhyWordsMatter_



Mindset and affordability. Some of my friends and family would love to experience the Motherland but circumstances have held them back. But..it's mindset too. There's unlearning to do in the diaspora about returning and seeking ways to do so sustainably.

@ObongAnwanSalem

They can be feeling of disappointment associated w/ whatever expectations we have. Some of it with how "modern" life is & sometimes with how slow "progress" is. There's also an angst w/ returning which I view that as somewhat of a cleansing.



@OsazeAkil



Adjusting to entirely new cultures and languages will be a barrier. Also we still have to get over negative perceptions that av been embedded in our minds about Africa #DiasporaDiscussions #Juneteenth

Q3 what are some mindsets or ideologies that diasporans and continental Africans will have to unlearn in order to heal and unite? in what ways may that make us uncomfortable?



@gedeongiddy



In order to heal and unite, the diasporans and the continental africans need to unlearn the fact that they said we are different from each other , that african descendants don't love each other, and that may make us uncomfortable when we reunite but we are all Africa children

@ObongAnwanSalem

For both diasporans & continental Africans, unlearning classism as an ideology will help us heal how we relate to each other. Learning how to exchange skills & compensation outside of the colonial paradigms of "high value" and "low value" skills



@Hood_Biologist



We must stop believing what the colonizers tell us about each other. & we must unlearn settler capitalist ideologies. For that reason, it's important for us to learn our actual histories, especially pre-colonial histories.

Q4 How can we address the financial inequities that may exist between African continentals and the Black diasporans who may have greater proximity & access to the Euro and the dollar? Is it possible for equity between us to be created? How?



@WhyWordsMatter_



My dad & I were talking about the genius of Black people and some of our most brilliant moments come from necessity. If we prioritize, a universal Black dollar, funneling into our communities, and bringing wealth to the continent instead of "Eurotrips" is totally possible...

@ObongAnwanSalem

There are several ways to do this most of which would involve govt action..but in an individual capacity, diasporans who return should stop trying to chase a "deal" at the expense of continental Africans. Particularly with domestic workers & market women.



@OsazeAkil



This is a difficult one for sure. I think us taking back control and reinvesting in Africa's resources back into the continent so that they won't continue to be exploited by Europe and the U.S will gradually strengthen African currencies.

Q5

Some people fear that if Black Americans or Black Europeans in particular return to Africa, they'd end up gentrifying it and enacting the same capitalistic tools of oppression as were enacted on them. What steps can we take as a people to avoid this?



@WhyWordsMatter_



this one hits deep. Education is my life's work bc of this. Some diasporans don't even know the ways in which they're conditioned in oppression. This is crucial in unlearning. What are those oppressive practices? How can you stop them in your life?

@LimitlessMMA_

What we need to do to mitigate these concerns is to operate from a place of mutual discussion and agreement. What does the community actually need? What can I create that won't just benefit me but will benefit everybody who lives here?



@Hood_Biologist



This is definitely possible & I believe that the onus is on Diasporic Africans to become committed to Pan Africanism which is inherently at its core anti-capitalist.

Q6

It's Pride Month & while some countries in are safe places for the LGBTQ community, it isn't the case everywhere. how can the diaspora & continent work to overcome queerphobia that may exist in our communities? From where did this queerphobia derive?



artist ig: @tayojr

@gedeongiddy



to overcome this problem we must if possible educate the young generation, encourage them to talk about sexuality and I think that queerphobia comes mostly from religion that some people don't interpret well

@LimitlessMMA_

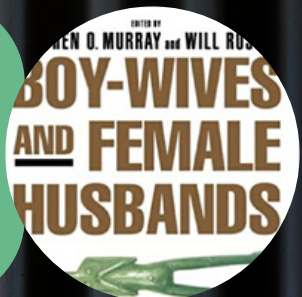
Central to the process of unlearning & beginning a process of political awareness requires that we confront colonial binary gender & cisheteropatriarchy. Homophobia & Transphobia are not African. They are colonial ways of being that we must unlearn.



@ObongAnwanSalem



Theres a book on Queer Africans that I'll leave right here**. Also, there are many continental Africans doing incredible work to normalize Queerness on the continent. One such people (and one of my fave humans on here) is @OhTimehin



**Boy- Wives and Female-Husbands: Studies in African Homosexualities by Stephen O. Murray & Will Roscoe

Q7

Many believe that educating our youth is the secret to helping build a sustainable world. what seeds of knowledge should we plant in our children's minds? anything you wish you had been taught as a child?



@dossevia



one of the most healing experiences was deciding to raise my kids in West Africa. they know how to speak my local language, Mina, and they're teaching me how to speak it! we can decolonize our youth through direct experience

@WhyWordsMatter_

As a child, I grew up knowing that Black is beautiful and who and where I come from. And I want every Black child to really know, to feel safe and loved and to thrive. I want them to know that what Whiteness May place upon them is also not theirs to bear.



@Hood_Biologist



As Frederick Douglass said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men". The things we teach & show children are investments into the kind of world we would like for them to live in. We must teach them that their autonomy & freedom is their right.

Q8

For tweeters from the diaspora: what do you envision yourself doing / building / learning / unlearning / contributing to if you were to move to the continent?



@LimitlessMMA_



I will contribute to the continent by helping to build strong mindsets through martial arts. My journey with martial arts helped me build a mindset that helped me become the person that I am proud of today. I want other people to feel that exact same feeling about themselves.

@WhyWordsMatter_

step 1 was going! I envision continuing to visit, bringing others and teach about my experiences to break down antiquated mindsets. When I think of legacy, I think of my future children knowing the continent intimately and contributing in a meaningful way



@ObongAnwanSalem



If I moved backed to West Africa today, I'd open up a bookstore & library and have book clubs for the AfriFem community. We'd read all our fave theorists and discuss them weekly. Then we'd have tea and giggle about life and do a restorative yoga session.

Q9 Where do you see Africa and its diaspora by the end of the decade, in 2029? what will we have collectively manifested as a people as we consciously unlearn and decolonize?



@gedeongiddy



by 2029 i'am seeing an Africa with no border and no visa requirements for all the blacks that want to come back home

@WhyWordsMatter_

By 2029, my children will be there. And that's my hope. By then, we have harnessed our financial power. The younger generations will lead and teach us- how to center all Black lives in the diaspora and on the continent.



@ObongAnwanSalem



I see the @_AfricanUnion passports being a thing so inter-continental travel is easeful. I envision a Pan African, inter-government owned airline & a rail that allows for seamless & affordable travel to other countries. I see sustainable relocations.

DECOLONIZATION

READING

LIST

decolonizeallthethings.com
by Dr. Shay Akil-McLean

Barracoon
Zora Neale Hurston

The Souls of Black Folk
W.E.B. DuBois

**Notes from the Back of the Room:
Problems and Paradoxes in the
Schooling of Young Black Students**
Karolyn Tyson

**Does the Negro Need Separate
Schools?**
W.E.B. DuBois

**Oyèrónké Oyěwùmí. 'Conceptualizing
Gender: The Eurocentric Foundations
of Feminist Concepts and the Challenge
of African Epistemologies',
In: Jenda: a Journal of Culture and
African Woman Studies. (2002)**

David Goggins.
Can't Hurt Me. (2018)

Black Feminist Thought
Patricia Hill Collins

Homegoing
Yaa Gyasi

Africa Must Unite
Kwame Nkrumah

Franz Fanon.
'Black Skin, White Masks'. (1952)

Copper Sun
Sharon Draper

**Edward Said.
Orientalism. (1978)**

Class Struggle in Africa
Kwame Nkrumah

