Of Repatriation, Rivers and Rivulets

Okunini Ọbádélé Bakari Kambon

The fact is we are Black. In fact, the first instance of us referring to ourselves as such dates back to *bɛyɛ sɛ* 2289-2255 BCE in the Pyramid text of 𓈖𓏏𓇌𓆤𓏏𓇌𓌰𓂋𓂝𓅭𓇳 *nswt bity mry-rꜥ sꜣ Rꜥ pipi* 'Nswt Bity Mery-Ra Sa Ra Pepi':[i]

The vertical text to the left in example (1) states "You stand—spoken words—in front of the Black people like the Apis bull". The Apis bull was a Black bull. Interestingly, in the exact same period, again under 𓈖𓏏𓇌𓆤𓏏𓇌𓌰𓂋𓂝𓅭𓇳 *nswt bity mry-rꜥ sꜣ Rꜥ pipi* 'Nswt Bity Mery-Ra Sa Ra Pepi' we also find individuals referring to themselves as Black as evidenced in example (2):

ꜥḥꜥ.k	
stand.2SG	
'You stand'	
ḏd-mdw	
speak	
word.PL	
'spoken words'	
ḫnti	
front	
'in front of'	
kmtyw	
Black.HUM.PL	
Black people	
ḥpw	
Hpw	
'Apis bull'	
.is	
like	

1. (P/N 9)

2.   a.

Ḥꜣty-ꜥ   *ḥtm(ty) bity*   *smr wꜥty*
 Mayor   sealer Lower Kemet ruler.POSS sole companion

ẖry-ḥbt
carrier-ritual book

'Mayor, seal-bearer of the Ruler of Lower Kemet, unique companion, carrier of ritual book'

ỉmy-r ḥm(w)-nṯr

PREP-mouth servant(s) Netcher
'overseer of the servant(s) of the Netcher'

ỉmy-r šmꜥ mꜣꜥ   *Ppy-n-ꜥnḫ*
within-mouth Upper Kmt true   Pepi-POSS-life

rn.f nfr
name.3M.SG good
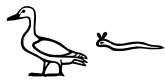'The true overseer of Upper Kemet, Ni-ankh-Pepi, his good name'

Ḥpỉ km
Hepi **Black**
'**Black** Hepi'

     b.

sꜣ.f   *mry.f*   *ḥsy.f*   *ḫtm(ty) bỉty*
son.3M.SG   beloved.3M.SG praised.3M.SG   sealer Lower Kmt
'His son, his beloved, his praised, the seal-bearer of the ruler of Lower
Kemet'

smr wꜥty   *ỉmy-r ḥm nṯr* *ppy*   *ꜥnḫ*   *rn.f nfr*
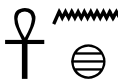companion sole PREP-mouth servant Neṯer Pepi-life name.3M.SG good
'Unique companion, overseer of the servants of the netcher; Pepi-ankh,
his good name'

𓏤𓍼𓂝𓂝𓏏 𓈎

Ḥny(t)   *km*

Henenit   **Black**

'**Black** Henenit'[ii]

And how do we know that 𓈎 *km* translated to Black? The same word has been preserved lexically (with regard to form) and semantically (with regard to meaning) in Coptic—the last phase of the written language—which continues to be spoken as a liturgical language as demonstrated below in the following excerpt from the Song of Solomon, which reads:

Figure 1: Depiction of imAxw Henenit Km (Black Henenit) making an incense offering to imAxw

3. [ⲁⲚⲞⲔ ⲁⲚⲄ   Ⲟ]ⲨⲔⲀⲘⲎ   ⲁⲗⲗⲁ   ⲚⲈⲤⲰⲈⲒ

   anok   ang   ou.**kamē**   alla   nesōei

   1SG   1SG   INDF ART.**Black** but   beautiful

   'I am **Black** but beautiful'

   […]

   [ⲘⲠⲢ   ϭ]ⲰϢⲦ ⲈⲢⲞ ⲈⲒ ⲬⲈ   ⲀⲚⲄ   ⲞⲨⲔⲀⲘⲎ   [ⲀⲚ]ⲞⲔ.

   mpr   chōsht ero ei <u>de</u>   ang   ou.**kamē**   anok

   NEG   look   PREP 1SG because 1SG   INDF ART.**Black** 1SG

   '[Don't] look at me because I'm **Black**'[iii]

In fact, in various languages of the continent now known as Afrika, from classical to contemporary times, we find a similar conception of individual and extended self as demonstrated in the table below:

Table 1: Afrika and Afrikan in Contemporary Afrikan Languages

1. Akan (Ghana)

a. O-bibi-ni[iv]
   NOM.HUM-Black-NOM.HUM
   'Afrikan (lit. Black person)'
b. A-bibi-man
   NOM-Black-nation/land
   'Afrika (lit. Nation/Land of Blacks)'

2. Yorùbá (Nigeria)

a. A-dú-lᵉ-àwò̩
   NOM.HUM-Black-in-color
   'Afrikan (lit. Black person)'
b. Ilè̩   A-dú-lᵉ-àwò̩
   land NOM.HUM-Black-in-
   'Afrika (lit. Land of Blacks)'

3. Bambara (Mali)

a. Fara-fin
   human-Black
   'Afrikan (lit. Black person)'
b. Fara-fin-na
   human-Black-LOC
   'Land of the Black people (Afrika)'[v]

4. Wolof (Senegal)

a. Nit ku ñuul
   human GEN Black
   'Afrikan (lit. Black person)'
b. Réewu nit   ku   ñuul
   land human GEN Black
   'Afrika'

5. Kikôngo (Congo DRC)

a. N'dômbe
   HUM.Black
   « Noir, Noire » 'Black male, Black   female'[vi]
b. Nsi ya   Bandômbe
   land GEN   Black.PL
   'Afrika (lit. land of Black people)'

6. Igbo (Nigeria)

a. Ndi isi ojii
   HUM head Black
   'Afrikans   (lit.   Black people)'[vii]
b. Ala ndi   isi   ojii
   land people head Black
   Afrika (lit. land of Black people)[viii]

Again, while it may be wrongly assumed that these are relatively recent coinages and/or calques, in reality, we can trace this terminological self-identification as Black all the way back to ancient ⌂𓏏𓊖 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks' mentioned above and as shown in the following examples:

7. 𓏞𓏟 Mdw Ntr 'Hieroglyphs'

a. 𓆎𓁐𓀀𓈖𓏤𓏤𓏤   b. 𓆎𓅓𓏤𓊖

Kmt(yw)   *Kmt*

'Black People'[ix,x,xi]   'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks'[xii]

While for years, primarily white Egyptologists and a few of their phenotypically-Black-on-the-outside-but-anti-Black-on-the-inside lackeys have claimed that the term 𓆎𓅓𓏤 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks' refers to cultivable Black soil, they seem to have failed to take into account that the 𓆎𓁐𓂋 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' themselves, in their mythology, said that they were made by 𓎸𓈖𓅓𓏭 *H̱nmw* 'Khnum' on his potter's wheel out of that exact same soil. This means that if the soil is Black, so too are the people made from that soil. Check and mate. Evidence in support of this fact can be seen, for example, in the temple to 𓎸𓈖𓅓𓏭 *H̱nmw* 'Khnum' at Esna where it states:

Figure 2: The making of mud bricks from the Black soil of ꜣbw (Elephantine) island

8.

𓈖𓎛𓊪𓋴𓈖   𓍿𓂋𓅱   𓁷𓂋   𓈖𓎛𓊪𓆑

nḥp.sn   *ṯrw*   *ḥr*   *nḥp.f*
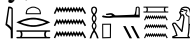
form.3PL ochre (from ꜣbw island)   on   potter's wheel.3M.SG

'Formed them of ochre (from Abw island) on his potter's wheel.'[xiii]

Interestingly, 𓇋𓃀𓈙𓍯𓏤𓊖 *ꜣbw* 'Elephantine' is an island right in the middle of 𓈖𓈗𓈖𓏤𓈋𓏤𓊖 *itrw Ḥꜥpy* 'Nile river' where, due to untold millennia of inundation, the Blackest soil would be found.

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Indeed, even 𓄿𓏏𓏤𓏤𓏤 *ꜣmw* 'eurasians' themselves (ɛ.n., greek, roman, and arab invaders, enslavers, and colonizers) – are in agreement that the authochtones of the land is now known as "Afrika," were not pale eurasians, but were rather indigenous Black people. Thus, the name for the land is derived from the people and not vice-versa as seen in example (9):

9.
a. Greek: *Αἰθιοπία* Aethiopia 'Land of burnt faces (Blacks)'
   as in the contemporary country of Ethiopia
b. Latin: *Niger* 'Black'
   as in the contemporary countries of Niger and Nigeria
c. Arabic: بلاد السودان Bilad as Sudan 'Land of the Blacks'
   as in the contemporary countries of Sudan and South Sudan

Figure 3: *Provincia Africa Proconsularis* highlighted in red

Another major point that should be reconsidered is the use of the term 𓊖𓏤𓅓𓏏 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks' rather than "Africa." The name 𓊖𓏤𓅓𓏏 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks' itself is useful because it identifies a link between the land and the people and vice versa. "Africa," on the other hand, came into use principally after the defeat of 𐤒𐤓𐤕𐤇𐤃𐤔𐤕 *Qart-ḥadašt* 'Carthage' after the third punic war whereby the etymologically opaque and relatively meaningless term exemplified as case of *synechdoche* or *pars pro toto*. This is a situation whereby the name given to a small part of something comes to be identified with the larger whole. However, we note that *Provincia Africa Proconsularis* amounted to little more than a thin strip of coastal land as shown in Figure 3. [xiv] Moreover, it was the term used to describe rome's defeated and incorporated province. Needless to say, any free and/or self-

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determining people would be unwilling to accept a name connoting a defeated thin strip of land annexed by the roman republic. However, in accepting such a self-defeating name, self-defeating attitudes and behaviors are likely to follow. As a proverb in Kiswahili states *Ukirithi jina urithi na mambo yake* "If you inherit a name, you must also adopt its affairs."[xv]

As such, it should be clear that our classical identity is as ⬛ *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' rather than the divisions with which we now identify. In the words of Maam Seex Anta Jóob (Cheikh Anta Diop):

> We need to distinguish two levels: the immediate one, of local histories, so dear, deeply lived, in which the Afrikan peoples, segmented, by diverse exterior forces the principle one of which is colonization, are shrivelled up, find themselves trapped, and are vegetating today.

> A second level, more general, further off in time and space and including the totality of our peoples, comprises the general history of Black Africa.[xvi]

In a similar vein, we should note here that the term Yorùbá, with which millions of people now identify, is not even indigenous to the Yorùbá and was used as an exonym by the Hausa/Fulani to refer to those who spoke a large swath of mutually intelligible languages as 'shady and unreliable.'[xvii] This begs the question of how can we self-identify as a concept that did not even exist when our Ancestors were being stolen as the term itself is only first attested in 1829 in the work of Clapperton, where he writes "We learned in fact that we were not now in the king of Badagry's territory, but in a district of Eyeo, which is called Yarriba by the Arabs and people of Houssa."[xviii] This use was reinforced by Bishop Samuel Àjàýí Crowther on a mission to Nigeria in 1841 when he decided to take up the exonym to refer to mutually intelligible dialects.[xix] Thus

began the adoption and entrenchment of "Yorùbá" as an adopted name with his later publication on Yorùbá grammar.[xx]

Similarly, while non-Blacks came to the area now known as Ghana back in 1471 CE, the first known use of the term Akan was in 1694 CE—well over two hundred (200) years later—and it did not gain currency as a supposed ethnonym until the 1950s when linguists decided to use it as "an umbrella term for the language to delineate mutually-intelligible dialects of the people."[xxi] Indeed, while many are aware of the Berlin Conference 1884-1885 CE, at which 𓈖𓂝𓅓𓏤𓏤𓏤 *ꜥmw* 'foreigners (from eurasia)' divided the land of Black people politically, comparatively less people are aware of a similar process in which contemporary 𓈖𓂝𓅓𓏤𓏤𓏤 *ꜥmw* 'foreigners (from eurasia)' linguists turned cultural-linguistic groups into "tribes" (now known euphemistically as ethnic groups) based on their language and the mutual intelligibility or lack thereof vis-à-vis neighboring languages.[xxii] This linguistically-based "tribification" is based on what is referred to as Classical Theory (CT) categorization:

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The classical theory which goes back to Aristotle, classifies entities according to necessary and sufficient conditions. This means that a certain category, for example, is defined by specific features; and each of the features is considered necessary for the definition of that category. For an entity to be said to belong to that category it must have all of the defining features of that category, otherwise it cannot be put in that category. The sufficiency of the defining features lies in the fact that an entity can be considered to belong to the category if it possesses each defining feature of the category.[xxiii]

Essentially, this inappropriate conception of reality introduces a fiction in which there is a sharp dividing line between one "tribe/ethnic group" and the other as demonstrated in Figures 4 and 5:[xxiv]

"YORÙBÁ"	"IGBO"

Figure 5: Linguistically delineated and defined "tribes" as incorrectly conceptualized by modern day 𓂝𓏤𓏤𓏤𓏤 ꜣmw 'foreigners (from eurasia)' linguists based on a CT-based ontological misinterpretation of reality

Figure 4: Languages of Black People as conceived of by 𓂝𓏤𓏤𓏤𓏤 ꜣmw 'foreigners (from eurasia)' linguists and as followed by pretty much everyone else. Notice how these divisions are similar to those of the Berlin Conference, which operates on the same CT ontological (mis-)understanding

However, it has been observed that, to the contrary, "Although logic may treat categories as though membership is all or none, natural languages themselves possess linguistic mechanisms for coding and coping with gradients of category membership"[xxv]

This gradient-based conception of reality is vastly different from one that categorizes on the basis of sharp dividing lines between one category (in this case language) and another. Such an alternative understanding can be demonstrated in Figure 6:

Figure 6: A gradient-based conception, more in alignment with the confluence of mutual intelligibility and areal distribution of linguistic features vis-à-vis supposedly mutually exclusive language groupings

As alluded to above, even the labels with which we now identify, in many cases were not conceptualized nor developed by us. Secondarily, even if they were, the reality is that related languages—particularly at points of confluence—share features and aspects that a CT necessary-and-sufficient-conditions-based mis-understanding of reality obscures. Even when 𓂝𓂝𓂝𓏥 ꜣmw 'foreigners (from eurasia)' linguists and their ostensibly Black lackeys are willing to concede to lump the languages of contemporary 𓆎𓏏𓏤 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' into larger groupings, it is still on the basis of Classical Theory with its obligatory compartmentalization, dichotomization and sharp dividing lines as shown in Figure 7. However, even these "supertribes" may not stand up to scientific scrutiny; particularly when we see the same basic vocabulary that cuts across supposedly mutually exclusive categorial membership—pointing to a common origin/source of the languages in question that are
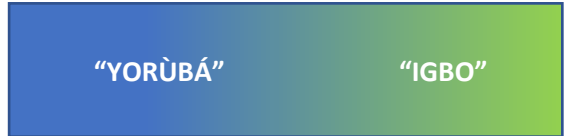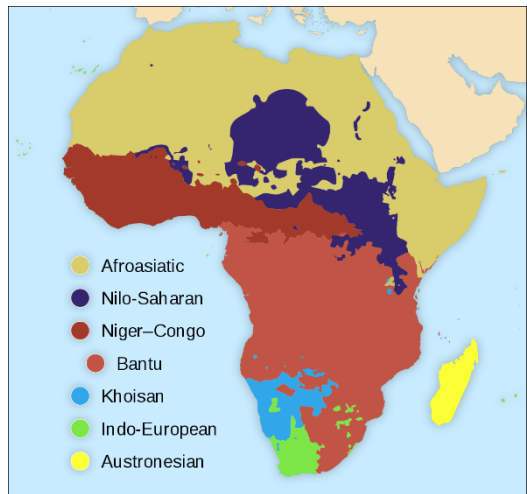

Figure 7: Currently dominant language family model

painted as belonging to different linguistic phyla (language families). World-renowned scholar and linguist Tâta Théophile Obenga shows just such a situation whereby languages from supposedly different families share the same word across the length and breadth of the continent. The sheer spatial and temporal depth involved makes the idea that they borrowed the word from one supposed "language family" to another highly unlikely. It rather points to a common ancestral proto-language from which they are all descended. Just such an illustrative case is shown below:

10.

Table 2: Putative cognates from supposedly different language families pointing to a common source language from which they are all descended.[xxvi]

Language	Supposed Language Family	Word
⸗ Mdw Ntr 'Hieroglyphs'	Afro-Asiatic	bỉnt 'mal' (wrong) bỉn 'mauvais' (bad)
Coptic	Afro-Asiatic	ⲃⲟⲟⲛⲉ /booně/ 'mal' (wrong) ⲃⲁⲁⲛⲉ /baaně/ 'mal' (wrong) ⲃⲟⲛⲓ /boně/ 'mauvais' (bad) ⲃⲁⲛⲓ /baně/ 'mauvais' (bad)
Matakam	Afro-Asiatic	ba 'mal/mauvais' (wrong/bad)

Mboku	Afro-Asiatic	bay 'mal/mauvais' (wrong/bad)
Hurza	Afro-Asiatic	ba 'mal/mauvais' (wrong/bad)
Songhay	Nilo-Saharan	bone 'mal' wrong'
Kanuri	Nilo-Saharan	bûì 'bad luck'
Bambara	Niger-Congo A	bone 'malheur' (misfortune)
Asante	Niger-Congo A	bɔne 'bad'
Peul	Niger-Congo A	bone 'méchanceté' (wickedness)
Wolof	Niger-Congo A	bon 'mauvais' (bad)
Yorùbá	Niger-Congo A	ibi 'evil'
Lyele	Niger-Congo A	byena 'mal/mauvais' (wrong/bad)
Kaje	Niger-Congo A	biyin 'mauvais' (bad)
Tunen	Niger-Congo B	-bɛ 'wrong'
Lingala	Niger-Congo B	mabé 'bad'
Kiswahili	Niger-Congo B	mbaya 'bad'
IsiZulu	Niger-Congo B	-bi 'evil, bad, wicked, wrong, nasty'
Kikôngo	Niger-Congo B	ḿbi 'bad, wrong, evil'

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The above exercise utilizes just one example of the 105 putative cognates identified by Tâta Théophile Obenga that cut across so-called language families.[xxvii] Thus, it is readily apparent that the currently dominant language-family model obscures the fact that all of the languages listed in Table 1 are ultimately descended from the same proto-language, referred to by Tâta Théophile Obenga as *Négro-Égyptien*

'Black-Egyptian'—the source language of all ⌂𓅓𓏏𓏏𓏏 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People'.

This scenario is akin to a single river with many branches that may separate only to reunite further downstream—but ultimately belonging to just one river—regardless of the arbitrary Berlin-conference-like cultural-linguistic divisions externally imposed upon them.

Figure 8: Like a river, even when languages separate, they are still connected as one even when land apparently intervenes between one distributary and another. Their connection is their common source.

Ultimately, there is the question of perspective whereby one may choose to emphasize the distributaries/rivulets or the river. I note here, however, that whether 𓅒𓃀𓀀𓏤𓏤𓏤 *ꜣmw* 'foreigners (from eurasia)' linguists and their anti-Black lackeys choose to emphasize the oneness or the diversity, they do so with the interests of 𓅒𓃀𓀀𓏤𓏤𓏤 *ꜣmw* 'foreigners (from eurasia)' in mind.

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Nonetheless, I note that even fabrications can be brought into being in the minds of people (with implications with regard to lived reality) and must be addressed appropriately.

So, what does this all have to do with repatriation? Well, ultimately, one can choose to identify with the river or the distributaries/rivulets. We can choose to be 𓂀𓆓 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' or we can choose to be fragments. We can choose to see the gradients between us or to see sharp dividing lines and their concomitant compartmentalization and dichotomization. As our "Yorùbá"-speaking Ancestors relate: *Ohun t'ojú ń wá l'ojú ń rí* 'What the eye is looking for, is what the eye is seeing.' In other words, your perspective and intentionality behind that perspective may shape what you conceptualize and/or realize as the nature of being/existence.

With regard to repatriation, interestingly, in the last Right to Return Last Town Hall Meeting for 2020, my good friend and colleague Dr. Hamet Maulana gave a spirited talk calling for Diasporans to come to see themselves as one of many tribes in Ghana, with its own unique interests and pursuits.
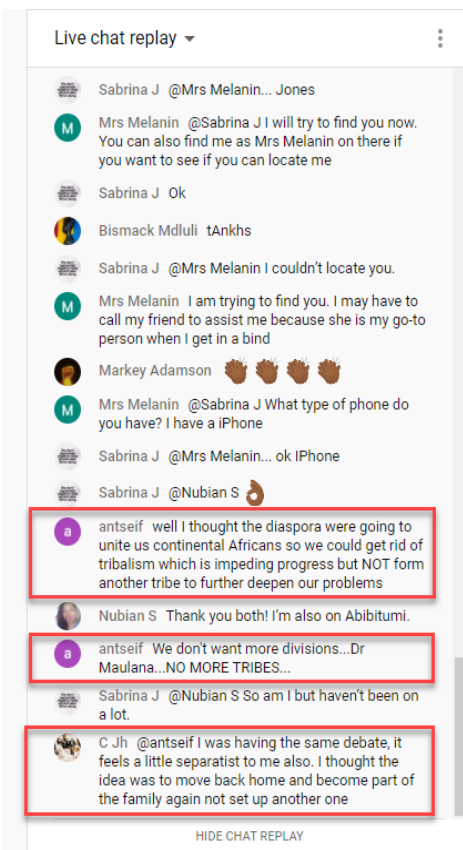

Figure 8: Screenshot of Live Chat Replay from the Last MoF Town Hall Meeting of 2020

As this was going on, in the live chat discussion (shown in Figure 8), at the 2:44:07 mark you can clearly see a conversation between user *antseif* and *C Jh*, where *antseif* commented "well I thought the diaspora were going to unite us continental Africans so we could get rid of tribalism which is impeding progress but NOT form another tribe to further deepen our problems […]

We don't want more divisions...Dr Maulana...NO MORE TRIBES..."

To which user *C Jh* replied "@antseif I was having the same debate, it feels a little separatist to me also. I thought the idea was to move back home and become part of the family again not set up another one."

In classical times, we had those who worked towards us seeing ourselves on the basis of what we have in common, being ⌂𓈖𓏤 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' and we had those who worked towards us seeing ourselves as innumerable fragments, with each one pursuing its own individual survival and isolated interests. An analogous situation pertains now.

As such, when you repatriate to Ghana, I would encourage you to not only learn more than one language, but to learn languages from throughout the continent. Just last month I returned to the neo-colonial cage known as Ghana from the neo-colonial cage known as Nigeria having had intellectual conversations in "Yorùbá" about the nature of prefixes in "Akan," "Yorùbá," "Wolof," and "Bantu languages" and how nominalization markers in "Yorùbá" may be vestigial noun class markers. I had scholarly debates in "Yorùbá" on whether or not *èsìn* 'religion' is an indigenous concept, on continuous vs. discontinuous revelation, on the nature of *Olódùmarè* and whether or not *Olódùmarè* stands outside of creation or inheres within creation, *n.k.* The only reason why I was able to do in "Yorùbá" what I regularly do in "Akan" was because I know that we are all ⌂𓈖𓏤 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' in a way that, for me, is lived out on a lived, functional level. If I thought I was "Akan" or if I thought I was "Ghanaian" or if I thought I was "Yorùbá"

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or "Nigerian", the limited diameter of such an understanding would have implications for the circumference of my possibilities as it unfortunately tends to be rare for ⌂𓄿𓏏 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' of contemporary times to be able to master other indigenous languages outside of their fragmented neo-colonial cages.

In short, our behavior is directly attributable to who we say we are. Our possibilities are governed by our identities. When you repatriate to Ghana or elsewhere in contemporary ⌂𓆎𓏏 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks' you also have the choice to focus on the river or focus on the rivulet. One should choose wisely.

Part and parcel of the services that we offer through https://www.repatriatetoghana.com is a series of consultations aimed at assisting and guiding contemporary ⌂𓄿𓏏 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' interested in repatriating to the continent of contemporary ⌂𓆎𓏏 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks.' And when I speak of ⌂𓆎𓏏 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks,' this is in its broadest sense and with the original understanding that all land of ⌂𓄿𓏏 *Kmt(yw)* 'Black People' is rightfully ⌂𓆎𓏏 *Kmt* 'The Black Nation/Land of the Blacks'— including those lands currently criminally occupied by 𓄿𓅓𓏤𓏤 *ꜣmw* 'foreigners (from eurasia)' and/or divided into neo-colonial fragments. While the land of Black people has been fragmented into neo-colonial cages, the restoration efforts are underway and your repatriation serves as an integral piece of the puzzle to bring us back to the state of Abibitumi (Black Power) necessary to restore 𓆄𓏏 *mꜣꜥt* 'Maat.' Interested in playing your part? Sign up for an initial consultation at https://repatriatetoghana.com/repatriation-readiness-quiz/ to see if Repatriate to Ghana is a good fit for you and what you envision for your future and for the beautyful ones not yet born. **Take the Repatriation Quiz>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>**

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