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### Why Are Our Great Men Forgotten?

When I was 17 years old, I sat in a segregation cell, sort of like the general population cell I am sitting in now. But what I know now that I did not know then, is that death is real, life is serious business, I am not immortal and as much as I "think" I know-I know nothing!

I was so full of myself back then, and my world was full and complete, so I thought. Even in prison, I was living large, yeah, right. I was young, dumb and not knowing. I had spent my entire life basically in 12 block radius. The only time I left my "Hood", was for school, that is when I wasn't skipping school. Go figure? Because now I live for school, and I will search for knowledge, I crave knowledge-is it too late for me though? I sit incarcerated striving to learn, how backwards is that?

How could I as a Black Boy, from the inner city of one of america's "many" ghettos discern all that I had missed out on. Lost over the centuries due to slavery, european, and caucasion assimilation. To have my african (heritage) history nefariously scrubbed from the history books. How could I make it when I had no clue as to my true identity, heritage, culture, language-when I didn't know my true worth? When I was not conscience of my Birthright, slavery, targeted attacks against so-called "minorities" of the worlds-I could not understand the depth of knowledge that had been stripped and denied me, by white america.

I was seriously in for a rude and wided-eyed awakening, because I was about to learn so much about myself, america, and africa and the rest of the world. Serious and severe damage was done to psyche, but I was about to learn what I was worth as a human being, a man and a african man. Think about it, they call President Castro, a enemy of America, to this day. But, how, can he be anything less? He's been in power for over 50 plus years, in that time at least 10 U.S. Presidents have sat in the White House. Out of those 10 U.S. Presidents 5 of them have tried to have President castro assassinated. Why? Because he kicked those Les Miserables out of his country! Those that did nothing but rob and pillage his country. The CIA, Italian mafia, rich cubans that was puppets

of those pillagers, and hundreds of foreigners that did nothing but break the backs of hard working cuban people.

So is former President Castro, this horrible dictator that the american propaganda machine protrys him to be? I think not, but who am I? I would, however, love to see Cuba, oneday. Because as a so-called minority, it is for me to see the world thru my own eyes-DE NOVO.

Sorry, I digressed, where was I...oh, yeah, at 17 years old, in prison, in segregation-young and not knowing, life was fun! Anyway, at night we would have Amateur Night at the Apollo. We would sing and do comedy, if you were funny or could sing you got cheers, if you sucked, you got booed mercifully. Don't ask how I did, I will never tell! :) Well this one night these two older brothas, Sunrise and Drako, asked, who knew their history-their african/african-american history? And every young dude there got extremely quiet, especially me. I was like how could they ask something like that? They just messed up our entire night of fun in the hole. What could be better than a bunch of semi-illiterate black boy sitting in segregation singing and joking, not knowing that we were really mentally, spiritually, and emotionally dead? And because I was always the loudest out of the young crowd, Sunrise, called on me first. He asked me who was Malcolm X? I would not answering him, I had literally went and sat down on my bed, now mind you, I was just at the door being goofy and loud. Now I just wanted everybody to forget I existed, not going to happened. Sunrise, called me to the door, and I could not continue to ignor him, because I had mad respect for this brotha. So with shame on my face, I came to the door, now he could have cut into deep, talked about me, called me dumb and stupid-he didn't. Because instead of trying to kill my spirit, he was about to teach me about self, and all that came before me. What did I know about our history, Malcolm X (El-hajj Malik El-Shabazz), about who I really was? I knew absolutely nothing! How could I, I didn't learn it in any school books, church (Jesus was white as was everybody in the bible. The white man had both enslaved us and saved us at the same time. Go figure), in the "hood", and sadly, not at home from the breast of my mother.

Sunrise, this accused murderer, killer and criminal allowed me to own my shame, my ignorance without criticism, anger, hostility or bullying. He embraced me with love and understanding-yeah, prison is a weird place. When you expect violence, you get love, and vice versa. Go figure.



Sunrise, was like, Brotha, don't be ashamed. It's time for you to learn about yourself, your heritage and culture. Because in order to know where you are going you have to know where you come from. The first book I read was Malcolm X's autobiography.

"Because having lost the honor of full manhood that comes only from the pride of racial worth and identity, the black man's mind generally operates favorably towards his white enemy and negatively towards himself and his kind". Excerpt: Destruction of a Black Civilization.

I quoted that first, to say this, Malcolm X, said, that the black man will hate himself to extinction, while loving the white man the entire time. I paraphased some, but you get the point. Anyway, this is where I was at, I had no cultural identity, but I hated my dark skin. When I saw people on T.V. from africa, I made fun of them. And my mother not having any guidance in her life knew no better, either. So you have El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, saying almost the same thing as Dr. Chancellor Williams, in Destruction of a Black Civilization. And for me, no matter how much I've learned over the years, something Dr. Williams, wrote in his book always stuck with me. He said, that, he did 16 yrs of field study in Africa and only scratched the surface of knowledge to be obtained from that continent. No matter what I learn from a book thousands of miles away from the first civilization on earth, I want even be scratching the surface of knowledge to be obtained. That should be a game stopper for me but it wasn't, because I had been deprived for so long, that it just made me hungrier.

Reading Malcolm X, had me like what the hell! I understood what I was reading and I didn't. I got the gist of it, but those huge words were murdering, my vocabulary was extremely limited. (My vocabulary is better now, plus, I have like 5 dictionaries and I am not afraid to use one. However, I still hate english, never got never will.)

But, back to Malcolm's Autobiography, that is my favorite book and over the years I have read that book at least 20 times and every time I cry at the end, and I have only ever, cried for two people in my entire life, Malcolm and my mother. But when I read how those bullets entered his body and stole his life my heart was broken. On February 21st, 1965, we lost our greatest champion.

With the demise of El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, everything that that brotha had to give us, show us, teach us would never happened. He was our brightest star, and the love that he had for african americans and people of color was unconditional-and even in the end of his life, he had started to recognize that not all whites were bad.

Most people will read this blog and say how can that/this be? Malcolm X, was a hate-monger, segregationist, a campaigner of violence, that could not be any farther from the truth than if you were on Mars saying. He was a defender of the truth, of justice for his people and all people if they were willing to live in peace with the black man. If not, then yes, he advocated that we should not turn the other cheek. We should not allow our women and children to be beaten and raped, have dogs put on them- there has never been a bloodless revolution in the history of mankind. So why advocate for one, for the african man when he protest his treatment in the greatest nation on earth.

See, it is easy for white america to embrace Martin Luther king Jr., you put up plaques of him, honor his birthday-why because he was trying to get america to take off its rose colored glasses and see the black man as human. I love MLK JR. too, and I commend his fortitude and patience, but Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, is my shining star. When you study El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, you will see why I love this brotha above all else. He was a remarkable man, leader, father and hero to his people. How can he not be the greatest Human Rights Leader of his time. See MLK JR, kept his fight within the borders of America, when Malcolm X, took it to the World Court.

El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, was magnanimous, kind, gentle and loving. He loved his people with everything that he was, and I've asked myself how does one come from where Brotha Shabazz, came from and submit so completely to the will God?

Imagine had he lived, where would we be with a leader like that around? He had the potential to lead us into the 21st century. Even had MLK JR lived....he was extremely important to the upliftment and salvation of this African American nation, and America as a whole. Malcolm and martin, goals and expectations were the same, their strategies and tactics may have differed but love guided their hearts and lives.

Malcolm, has been portray by history as a hate-monger, racist, nefarious, and wiped from the annals of america's history books. Except for when a villian is needed, like President Castro. How can the creators of hate get mad when they're not loved by those that they oppress? In 1831, Nate turner, led a revolt against slave owners. They left white slave owners and their families dead. After the revolt was put down, and Nate Turner's body was savagely violated, they interviewed a slave owner, that slave owner had the nerve to say, "We had no idea that the niggers were unhappy being slaves". No idea! The audacity and arrogance of that slave owner to think such foolishness. The only way to enact change is thru revolution-revolution menas change.

I am not trying to argue the tenets of slavery, that practice is long gone. What I would like is for america to embrace Malcolm X-El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. He does not deserve to be shun from the american history books, his contributions were just as valuable as MLK's.

This blog is a ode to El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz's upcoming birthday. He would have been 83, May 19th, of this year. And I would just like to say learn about Malcolm, study his life, he is worthy of recognition, love and acknowledgment for his sacrifice for the upliftment of his people.

Like Alex Haley, eulogized at Malcolm's wake, "Malcolm was our shining black manhood". He fought for us when we were scared to fight for ourselves, and he died for his beliefs, when so many were scared to live as men, with dignity and honor-as men.

So this May 19th, think about Malcolm and all that he wanted for his people and the world. Had he lived, I think that america would be an even greater place to live today. I never seen so much information on a person, yet, have him so misunderstood. There should be a El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz Day, not just for african american but for all americans. There still needs to be a discussion about race in america, because if people will only discuss it around people that look just like them, nothing will change. Even with the election and Presidency of Barack obama, there is still racial tention in this country. People, powerful people, in the highest offices in the land hate that a(n) african american sits in the Oval office-how petty of them!

So, to Malcolm, my brotha, even though I never had the honor to meet you I love you and I thank you for your sacrifice. May God have mercy on your soul.

Respectfully,