As defined by Hirsh, postmemory: “describes the relationship of the second generation of powerful, often traumatic experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own rights” (2008). Applied to the African Diaspora, one may suggest that slavery and colonialism constitute a postmemory directly determining the approach to self of all members of the African Diaspora.

This postmemory is so ingrained in these societies that the post-conflict backlash generally affecting women from former colonised or occupied countries, has hit African-Diasporic women in an extremely unusual way. In fact, it has been witnessed in several middle Eastern or South American societies that after liberationist conflicts, some societies would create a fantasised notion of womanhood allegedly pre-colonial, rejecting the former dominant culture to glorify their own root culture (Al Ali, Pratt 2007; Pankhurst 2007). In African-Diasporic milieu and in the same post conflict context, women were fed with dreams of European respectability of which the European middle class woman was archetypal. This rather complex situation generated great uneasiness as far as identity and womanhood were concerned. Beyond the debate around Négritude, Créolité and even Modernity, black women are yet to fit the general notion of “whut a [black] woman oughta be and to do”.

Indeed, One can wonder at the ability of the new generation to fulfil the dream of respectability of its mothers (Burton, 1997) while complying with the demands of an increasingly neo-liberal environment. Coupled with the Festival Image of Black Women, this conference will be the opportunity to discuss the discrepancy between the image, the representation and the realities of African-Diasporic women. The aim is to identify the postmemories responsible for the social expectations of womanhood in a given community and how these expectations protect or injure the same women.

This event is going to be placed under the auspices of laughter. Ri yo avan yo Riw translated as: “Laugh at them before they laugh at you” has the vocation to identify and defuse self destructive learnt behaviour generated by these traumatic postmemories typical of the African Diaspora. Scholars, artists and activists are welcome to join and feed the debate around these suggested topics:

- How natural is your hair?
- The de-dramatisation of skin bleaching.
- The African Queen.
- The sketel
- The label of domestic violence.
- The diktat of the “strong black woman”.
- It is not raining men.
- religion, make up and long sleeve
- Rastafari, what say the I?


**Deadline for submission:** Please submit a 150-word abstract before **April 1, 2012**.

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