

PALAVERS UNDER THE BAOBAB (AFRICAN VILLAGE ASSEMBLY)

(Annual Meeting of the African Diaspora of the Municipality of Ostermundigen)

In Africa, the expression "palavers under the baobab" refers to the tradition of gathering under a tree, often a baobab, to discuss and make collective decisions. These gatherings, called palavers, are important moments in the social and political life of villages, where residents discuss their problems, resolve conflicts, and make important decisions for the community.

More detailed explanation:

- **The baobab as a gathering place:**

Indeed, the baobab (*Adansonia digitata*) is of particular interest due to its multiple functions. A centuries-old tree, the "baobab" is known in sub-Saharan Africa and Madagascar as a sacred tree that has overcome the vicissitudes of all ages and times. The baobab, a majestic and emblematic tree of Africa, is often chosen as a gathering place for these palavers due to its large size and generous shade, providing a comfortable space for discussions.

- **The palaver as a decision-making process:**

Palavers are more than just a discussion. They are a formal process where community members express their opinions, concerns, and points of view on various topics.

- **Social and political importance:**

Palavers play a crucial role in the sociocultural, economic and political life of African communities. They help maintain social cohesion, resolve conflicts, make collective decisions, and preserve culture and traditions.

- **A symbol of wisdom and community:**

The baobab, as a place of discussion, is often considered a symbol of wisdom, strength, and community. It represents the ability of local people to come together, discuss, and find solutions together.

In summary, "palavers sous le baobab" evokes an ancient and significant practice in African communities, where the tree becomes the framework for collective discussions and decisions, promoting social cohesion and cultural preservation.

Switzerland has a similar tradition under the Germanic name "Landsgemeinde," which is still practiced in certain cantons in eastern Switzerland.

The African community of the municipality of Ostermundigen/BE celebrates this ancient tradition by carrying out their annual meeting to discuss sociocultural, economic, and political activities in a public park in Ostermundigen, again under a tree...