

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Benjamim João Luís: “Returning Home”

Benjamim João Luís · Tuesday, September 29th, 2020

In one of the most controversial neighborhoods in the city of Beira, called “Munhava,” Sofala province, that is, in Mozambique- Southern Africa, a selfless and dreamy young man was born with a strong desire to do something different that impacts his own life, the life of his humble family and that of those around him, because from an early age he showed love for his neighbor, get trained and make the destiny of his life different from many young people who live in that neighborhood.

Munhava is a suburban and controversial neighborhood located on the outskirts of the city of Beira—its popularity is due to the fact that it houses a quarter of the population of the city of Beira, where there are many unemployed and disadvantaged young people and many of them preferring to live in the world of crime, that is, they steal within the community as well as in other neighborhoods. The reaction of this people when something like this happens is nothing less than lynching the thieves, putting a tire around the thief and burning him alive, even though it was an extremist and inhumane attitude that caused the wave of robberies to diminish over time.

You must already imagine what it is and what it is like to be born and grow up in a neighborhood like this one, suburban, disadvantaged and a little violent, even before the child grows up those in the other society try to predestinate their journey, something that many do without hesitation. Well, it was in this controversial and famous area where Benjamin was born, the son of a maid and a father he never knew because his dad lost his life when Benjamim was still a baby, so he was raised by his grandparents.

Benjamim had a childhood like many other children in that area—played hide and seek, bathed with friends in the rainwater, played the ball and even fished, since about 4 kilometers from where he lived there was an area of plantations of rice and there was a lot of fish in them.

Time passed and he grew up, each stage of his life faced the same challenges as other children in the community. However, he always dreamed of doing something different, which was to graduate, to have ventures and to provide better living conditions for him and his family.

He managed to graduate first as a teacher, which made him leave his home and his home area to walk new paths and follow new challenges that life had imposed on him at that time, so he did. Away from home, away from the area and away from his friends he had stayed for years, he had missed everything, even the dust that plagued that area.

First he worked very far from home, which was in another province where he learned to live alone,

to be responsible for his choices and actions, there he had to be very responsible and respectful, because it was a province with everything different from where he came from. The tradition was different, the culture and customs were different, which was a great challenge for his adaptation in that new environment. Time passed, he had a great and unforgettable life experience and had to go back a little closer to home, so he did. Already in his province, but still far from home, he made his new home, learned a lot there and had a lot of professional, personal and even entrepreneurial life experiences. It was a new stage in which he expanded his vision of the world and what he always dreamed of conquering. But he was not happy, even though he had a job and now a daughter has always felt and knew what he really wants and has always wanted for his life. Weird? No, it's the childhood wind blowing back towards him and made him wake up and he remembered his true dreams and goals in life and, now he is willing to make a decision that will change his life drastically, it will be a challenge but worth a try.

The winds guide him back home, yes, to Munhava.

He got home and the new day starts, went out on the road and took a deep breath. He looked around, took a few walks through the neighborhood and visited places he had been when he was a boy.

Much time has passed, but things have not changed so much. He can still smell the dust that was plaguing and continues to plague the area, the children are different and the games too, today they are no longer playing as the last generation used to be, the children are fearless and try adult games, he felt like a stranger in the middle of all this, of all this change.

Friends are still the same, but not the same. Some were arrested for the life of criminality they chose to lead, some seem older than they really are because of the excessive consumption of alcohol and traditional drink in the area known as "NIPA", others are married and have children, others already have a minimal life made and others simply in the struggle chasing goals just like him.

"OH! Munhava, I missed you and during all these years that I was away I thought a lot about you, how I fought against all adversities to become who I am today and it was because people looked at you with contempt eyes that I had to fight to show the society that judges by the place of origin that "we" can be anything we define to be, no matter where we were born or grew up because we are what we believe to be- said Benjamin.

But, does he still identify himself with the zone? No, not anymore, because of what he lived during all this time he became a new being, with different habits and customs, but he carries the "Munhavanse" being in his heart, because a boy who was born and grew up in Munhava with all the adversities and yet he turned away from crime, got trained and is beginning to shine he becomes a "winning warrior," and I became this being, a winning warrior and at the same time a mirror for the coming generation, I am an example of overcoming for those who do not believe that coming from nothin does not influence anything to achieve success or even stability.

"I am staying here, killing homesickness, friends and family while I plan to continue my new challenging journey where I will surely triumph."

VOTE!

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