

Feature

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As Kaduna Old Boys host member from Hungary

THERE is nothing as pleasurable as having a reunion of old friends who meant a lot to each other especially when it brings back the good old memories they shared together. The visit of Professor Andreas Jeff indeed rekindled the passion of those old days of Government College Kaduna among his friends.

The radiant joy with which they welcomed the professor is a pointer that they really had good times together during those developmental periods. This means that the past indeed is crucial in one's life because it will always count since you never can tell what the future may turn out to be and where you might meet each other again.

Meeting old friends especially childhood friends also brings back those childhood memories; because childhood is not only a time of humility and innocence but it is also a time of mystery, of faith and of prayers that are filled with trust. Childhood is also a condition of power, for childhood convictions and loves are unbreakably strong.

Childhood thus becomes the most eloquent symbol of the divine power at work, rendered more visible and more striking when it is manifested through what is ordinarily weak and insignificant to what is strong and significant.

Yes, that is the experience of Professor Andreas Jeff during his stay in Nigeria as a child, what seemed insignificant has metamorphosed into a great deal of reality.

The memories of African live are still fresh in the mind of Professor Andreas Jeff as he came back to refresh his mind on the pattern of mutual, cohesive and humanistic existence of African live. To him it is a thing of joy to recall with enthusiasm the innocence of those childhood days with his friends now.

Mr. Andreas possibly must have had a fill of those good old days in Nigeria as a child up to his adolescent age and who had the opportunity to have a first hand interaction with the Nigerian society as he attended Capital School and Government College Kaduna for both his primary and secondary education respectively; the very foundation that molded the life and career of the professor in one of the oldest universities in the world, The Pecs University which was established in 1367.

With high sense of pride the professor expressed satisfaction for what he received in a way of education and other moral lessons at the two institutions in Kaduna. "I can see myself as extremely fortunate and the schooling I received here in Kaduna at Capital School especially Government College Kaduna made it possible for me to become a professor of education at one of the oldest university in Europe. I am in charge of Masters Studies of Human Resources Development and also PhD in Adult education".

On arrival in Abuja (he and his wife), professor no doubt was made to feel that once a Nigerian forever a Nigerian. The usual African hospitality as he said is still fresh as he was given a preferential treatment as a Nigerian when he was asked to join the Nigerians line at the airport. "There was a very long line for the foreigners and a short one for Nigerian travelers and I said I am Nigerian and the



PROFESSOR ANDREAS JEFF Hejz

residence card and I said no but I schooled here in Nigeria which I meant was a jock and the man asked me to join the Nigerian line. From that very moment I felt extremely excited and in fact my old school mates are very open towards me makes me feel warmed and am happy to see that you are extremely successful".

The coming of the professor is indeed a pride to the educational system of the country having produced one of the professors in a reputable institution of the world who knows very much about the country and its plight and who is very keen at normalizing things in our students when they go study abroad. "we always make them pass through a preparatory course to put them on the right track of deciding for themselves on what to do and be critical of what they take in Europe and to adjust to the Nigerian situation".

The wish of the professor to come back to Nigeria really showed that he actually had a good time which according to him, most of the African life was natural and of course the cradle of life. This then

is a people who do not cherish their cultures and always kicking against it. One of such cultural experiences was the issue of initiation which forms the basis for adulthood and responsibility. "This is something powerful in my experience here in Nigeria. In fact many men in Europe have the bodies of big men but the spirit of children because they lack the process of initiating young men into responsible adulthood, and many say the feminist movement in Europe was as a result of the fact that European men are not men, they oppress women because they lack responsibility. But here you have control and responsibility and that is really part of initiation and I think it is quite dangerous to throw away every bid of initiation that is why I believe in keeping up tradition. I think that the peace of the world depends on whether people are trained to be responsible adults. Not just fear of laws and punishment but for the inner wish to fulfil what you come to fulfil on earth".

The professor could recall with reminiscence the great deal of peaceful life

operative as expected. But regret the unfortunate scenario of religious crisis and the divisions among the people of the country today which presented an alarming contrasting society compared to the old society which was known for its tradition, propriety and decorum. He recounted the harmony in the life of religiosity among the African people, the common bond that holds them together, and the happy laughter of friendly people.

The professor candidly advised that people should be made to stand up not against themselves but in fairness which is important in making this country better.

The visit of the Professor has indeed revealed many things especially by virtue of his experiences of the two different cultures of Africa and Europe. This experience has bestowed on the professor the authority to tell Africans the truth about themselves. He has described Africa as the cradle of life and civilization as well as society endowed with humanism, responsibility and absolute control of their situations. This in fact is not far from a saying by Obama's mother that the black race is superior and the only race that could endure the pains of slavery. No wonder David Diop said, "Africa my Africa, Africa of proud warriors in ancestral savannahs... your blood flows in my veins, Your beautiful black blood that irrigates the fields, The blood of your sweat, The sweat of your work, The work of your slavery... this your back that is bent... under the weight of humiliation, this back trembling with red scars, and saying yes to the whip under the mid-day sun... Whose fruit bit by bit acquire the bitter taste of liberty".

The homecoming of the professor should therefore be an eye opener to us that Africa is indeed a formidable society with high cultural values that has placed the continent on the line of continuity.

Though the Hungarian professor laments the way Nigeria is seen by the wider world as a place of insecurity, corruption and other vices, he still believes that if Nigerians should not allow themselves to be misled and stop misleading others as well as establishing an administrative system that is devoid of rigid equity in the distribution of the nation's resources, the country will be on a firm path of advancement. "It makes me angry when they say Nigeria is corrupt. Every country is corrupt, even in my own country corruption is in the highest order... but as a nation, you've become richer than in the sixties, so that should be visible on the individual level and in general".

We believe that by the end of this visit, his mates, who are mostly occupying top government positions in the country at the moment would have borrowed a leaf from the Hungarian's wisdom and knowledge for proper application to make sure that their colleague's visit was not just a reunion of old friends but a platform for rethinking and reconstruction.