

Proper Management of the Contradictions among the Eritrean People

እታ እርርምቲ ግዝአት ናይ አተን ኮንትራድኲዮኒ መንን እታ ሰብ ናይ አርትራ

La corretta gestione delle contraddizioni fra la gente dell'Eritrea

As change makers, when we scrutinize (መአስ ንሕና ንጅርርብ) our situation, we can say that the Eritrean contradictions advanced to a level that is unprecedented. This means the enemy turned things that he can exploit to his advantage. The worst is the Eritrean opposition camp it is not able to invent (inventare/ኢንቨንታሪ, ፈጠረ, ረኽቦ, ቀለቦ) a **contradiction decreasing or watching machine** after so many years. This points out that the health of our national commitment to bring change is not in great shape. So it seems high time that we learn The Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People.

In contradiction to increase we should not blame only the enemy, but also to ourselves because we have contributed a lot. This reminds us that there is a general lack of awareness about safety issues. As a result we hurt our people and our national unity. But today we are one-step forward because we are discussing about the correct handling of contradictions among the people.

What does contradiction mean?

- 1) Lack of agreement between facts, **opinions**, actions, etc. For example, if two guys are invited to give their opinions about when the Eritrean dictatorship started to walk on all fours and the first says: from 1991 and the second says: years ago before 1991.
- 2) The act of saying that **sth** that **sb** has said is wrong or not true. *E.g.*

What is that?	እንታይ ኢያ እቲኣ?
That is a goat.	እቲኣ ኢያ ሐንቲ ጠል.
But it is flying.	ግን አልላ ትነፍር.
No matter if it flies or not, is a goat.	አይአገድድሰን እንተ ትነፍር ወይ አይኮነን ኢያ ሐንቲ ጠል.

Synonyms of Contradiction/ኮንትራድኲዮኒነት Contraddizione in Tiriyna: ምቅዋም ተቓውሞ (ተቓውመ)

What type of contradiction is burning Eritrea now? እንታይ ቲፖ ናይ ኮንትራድኲዮኒነት አልሎ አንድድ አርትራ ሕዚ. Che tipo di contraddizione sta bruciando l'Eritrea ora?

The type of contradiction that is burning Eritrea now is **a great contradiction between oppressor ጸቓጢ and oppressed ጸቕጥ**.

How we can solve this?

War is the highest form of struggle for resolving a great contradiction

እታ ውግግእ ኢያ እታ ብዙሕ በርራኽ መልክዕ ናይ እታ ቃልሲ ምእንቲ ቁረጸ ሐንቲ ዓብባይ ኮንትራዲዮኒነት

What the philosophy teaches is that, at a given time (ናብ ሓደ ውህብ ጊዜ *a un dato momento*), as the current situation in Eritrea, where there are oppressed people under **oppressive military dictator**, there is a great contradiction that only armed struggle can solve.

To understand this great contradiction let us shed some light on **antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions** as much as we can.

What does the term antagonistic mean?

► showing or feeling active opposition or hostility towards someone or something
ዝ ይገልጽ ወይ የግህድ ናይ እኩቲብ ምቕዋም/ተቋውሞ ወይ ጽልኢ /ቅርሕንቲ ናብ ሓድሐደ ወይ ግዛዕ
mostrando o sensazione di opposizione attiva o ostilità verso qualcuno o qualcosa.

Contradiction/ኮንትራድኢዮን Contraddizione in Tiriyna: ምቕዋም ተቋውሞ (ተቋው መ)
Antagonistic adj /አንታጎኒስቲክ/ኮ antagonistico = ጸላኢ, ተጻይ, መባእስቲ
Antagonistic contradiction = አንታጎኒስቲክ ኮንትራድኢዮን = ጸላኢ ምቕዋም
Non-antagonistic contradiction = አይኮንን-አንታጎኒስቲክ ኮንትራድኢዮን = አይኮንን-ጸላኢ ምቕዋም

When we say the oppressed Eritrean people, how much are they? They are **5-6 million people**. What about the number of the oppressors? The number of oppressors (ጸቕጥቲ) or dictator and his henchmen (መገልገልቲ) are less than 300 individuals. This means one oppressor has 16 -20, 000 Eritrean oppressed slaves.

Here there are two opposite classes, namely the upper class military and all lower oppressed classes. The contradiction between them is antagonistic contradiction. And the contradictions that exist between all the Eritrean lower classes are non-antagonistic.

Eritrea is burning now not only of antagonistic contradiction but also of non-antagonistic contradictions because all are not handled correctly.

How could be resolved antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions? ከመይ ምክኣለ ነበረ ቀሩጽ እተን አንታጎኒስቲክ እውን አይኮንን-አንታጎኒስቲክ ኮንትራድኢዮን
Come potrebbe essere risolto le contraddizioni antagonistiche e non antagonistiche?

Antagonistic contradiction: አንታጎኒስቲክ ኮንትራድኢዮን/ጸላኢ ምቕዋም

The contradiction between the Eritrean people and the Eritrean ruling military group is antagonistic contradiction. Most of the time this is expressed as We (the people) and He (the enemy) or the oppressed and the oppressor (ጸቕጢ). This great not easily resolvable contradiction can be called heavy-weight contradiction. Because of this it can lead to armed confrontation. For example, the Eritrean dictator who always wants to stay in power never leaves the throne unless he is forced. To put him out of his throne it takes the strength of the people.

Non-antagonistic contradictions: አይኮንን አንታጎኒስቲክ ኮንትራድኢዮን /አይኮንን ጸላኢ ምቕዋም

The contradictions among the people (or oppressed people ጸቕጣት ሰብ/ሕዝቢ) are called non-antagonistic. This consists of:

- The contradictions (on facts, opinions and actions) within the working class እተን ኮንትራድኢዮን ናብ እቲ ውስጣዊ ናይ እታ ሰራሕተይና/ ዐያዪ/ከድዳሚ ክላስስ Le contraddizioni (su fatti, opinioni e azioni) all'interno della classe operaia,
- the contradictions within the peasantry እተን ኮንትራድኢዮን ናብ እቲ ውስጣዊ ናይ እቶም ሓረስቶት ወይ ዓኻያት le contraddizioni all'interno dei contadini,
- the contradictions between the working class and the peasantry እተን ኮንትራድኢዮን መንጎ እታ ሰራሕተይና ክላስስ እውን እቶም ሓረስቶት le contraddizioni tra la classe operaia e dei contadini,
- the contradictions between the workers and peasants on the one hand and the intellectuals on the other, እተን ኮንትራድኢዮን መንጎ እቶም ሰራሕተይናታት እውን እቶም ሓረስቶት, ካብ ሓደ ወገን እውን እቶም ኢንተልገታዊ ካብ እቲ ካልእ le contraddizioni tra gli operai e i contadini, da un lato e gli intellettuali, dall'altro,

ብጻይ (pl. ብጻት)

ብጻይ (pl. ብጻት) ናይ ክላሰስ/ብጻይ, ናይ ስታንዛ stanza, ናይ ጸወታ, ናይ መገሻ a friend or other person that you work with during a war **አብ አንግሊሽ ኮምራድ comrade ኮምፓይኖ compagno**

e.g. A and B were comrades of Eritrean liberation movement ሀ እውን ለ ነበሩ ብጻት ናይ እታ ሕብረት ናይ ሹብዕትተ.

ዓርኪ (pl. አዕርኸቲ ወይ አዕሩኸ) ናይ እቲ መርዓ friend, compagno

e.g. a childhood friend ሐደ ዓርኪ ናይ ሕጻንነት un amico d'infanzia

How to settle Questions of an Ideological nature or controversial issues among the people ከመይ ይቆረጹ/ይውሰሱ ቁስትዮኒ ናይ ኢደኣሎጊካዊ ባሕርይ ወይ ኮንትሮቨርሰ (ከርከራት/ ቁየቻታት/ ከትዲ ዝርግርግ/ ጽርዲ) መንገእ እታ ሰብ Come risolvere questioni di natura ideologica o questioni controverse tra le la gente:

We always resolve the issues between the people with the democratic method ንሕና ወትሩ ነቕርጽ/ንውሰስን እተን ኮንትሮቨርሰ ቁስትዮኒ ብ ደሞክራሲያዊት ስርዓት Abbiamo sempre risolvere le questioni controverse tra le la gente con il metodo democratico.. These are:

- a) the method of discussion እቲ ስርዓት ናይ ዲሰኩሰሳ/ ድያሎግ il metodo di discussione/ dialogo
- b) the method of criticism እቲ ስርዓት ናይ ክሪቲሲዝም il metodo di critica
- c) the method of persuasion እቲ ስርዓት ናይ እት ድክካለ/ ርድዳእ il metodo della persuasione and
- d) the method of education እቲ ስርዓት ናይ ትምህርቲ il metodo di istruzione.

With these four democratic methods of resolving the issues between the people we arrive at a new unity. From these we can form a formula "unity – discussion or criticism or persuasio or education –unity".

But the enemy or the oppressor settles controversial issues by coercion or repression ሓይሊ ወይ ዕግጋት/ ዕግግት (ዐገተ) la coercizione o la repressione.

In ordinary circumstances (*fortune*), contradictions among the people are not antagonistic. But antagonism may be skyrocketed if any political movement like ours is without a **democratic contradiction watching machine** ደሞክራቲክ ኮንትራዲክሽን.

Here let us talk about raised antagonism as an example. This is the relationship between movement for change and the Eritrean community in Italia known as አርትራውያን ኢድደታ ናይ ዓድዲጣልያን

These patriot Eritreans are insulted and humiliated not once or twice but for years being followers of the dictator. But we must know that any Eritrean movement for change cannot win without their (or other like them) participation. So without them is really a great loss experiences.

Issues of concern for Eritrean Diaspora:

The Eritrean Diaspora has manifested its strong desire for unity by many ways for many years. One of these is Geneva chain of demonstrations. Here **the right wing politics is good at organizing people** that last only for one day. To see another one must wait for one year. We are the people of those who have great unity thirsty. Simply this is not enough. One year is a long time in politics. This reminds us that Diaspora is lacking Grass Roots Organizers that fix the unity forever.

WE are on the Eve of exit from the crisis to Reconciliation

▶ When we are sure with the following skills we can say that we are on the eve of exit from the crisis to reconciliation.

- a) On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People
- b) On the meaning of contradiction
- c) On **How to settle Questions** of an ideological nature or controversial issues among the people

The seven skills of dialogue are:

a) deep listening

b) respecting others

- c) inquiry
- d) voicing openly
- e) balancing advocacy and inquiry

- f) suspending assumptions & judgments and
- g) reflecting. Each of these skills is explained below.

1. Deep listening ስሙቕ ምስማዕ ascolto profondo

In its most simple form deep listening derives from the conscious choice to listen. It involves quietening the voice in our heads so that we can hear the true story of the person to whom we are listening. As we listen to understand their whole story we literally stay quiet and just listen. In exercises that we conduct on listening, people often report that they are amazed at how much they can hear when they know that all they have to do is listen. Instead of readying themselves for their turn to speak, the listener focuses on understanding the speaker. Deep listening can occur anywhere, anytime. It could be with a team member while walking down a corridor. It might be with a customer in a busy department store or on the telephone. It might even be with our own partners! Imagine the difference that enhanced listening could make in that domain! The common element in all listening examples is the genuine choice to listen. It is both powerful and important if deep listening is to occur.

2. Respecting others ምክባር ካልሌት rispettando gli altri

Voltaire, a French author, humanist, rationalist and satirist is reported to have said, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." This perspective lies at the heart of respecting others. Clearly this is particularly difficult to do when we interact with people who have contrasting views to our own. Practicing this dialogue skill therefore becomes imperative if we are to develop the true capacity to dialogue. While respecting others does not mean that you have to agree with them, it does mean that you will allow them the time and space to have their say and you will see it as a perspective that while you may not understand it, it is a perspective that is valid in the context that it contributes, even if only in a small way, to our understanding of the 'complete' picture of whatever is our area of focus at the time.

3. Inquiry ወኸሳ Inchiesta

This is the capacity to ask genuine questions. As such it encourages the use of open questions that enhance our understanding of different perspectives, or assist in the deeply held mental models that lie behind many perspectives to come to the surface. The blog *The Art of Skilful Questions* provides a range of insights and suggestion to assist with developing improved questioning skills.

4. Voicing openly (advocacy) ሽይሺንግ ብከፉት Voicing apertamente (advocacy)

Many of us are quite talented in this skill, at least in part. Voicing openly is the capacity to say what you think *and* to be able to explain why you think what you think. Unfortunately many people struggle to share their view. All views, if they exist, are important for the development of a true understanding of a situation. If those views are not shared, then a part of the picture is missing which is why voicing is so important in the context of dialogue.

5. Suspending assumptions and judgments አፍአመ ጽውዓ እውን ናይ እቶም ፍርዲታት

Sospendere assunzioni e dei giudizi

The capacity to explain why we hold the views that we hold lies at the heart of suspending assumptions & judgments. Much like we hang our clothes on a line for them to dry, suspending means that we 'hang out' our reasons for our views. This allows people to look at them, question them and assist us in developing a deeper understanding of our perspectives. To suspend your assumptions & judgments illustrates a willingness to be vulnerable which is a key attribute of servant leaders (see the blogs *Dee Hock – an example of a Servant Leader* and *The Paradoxes of Servant Leadership* if you are not aware of servant leadership). Should we discover that our views are not useful through the act of having suspended them before others, we have the opportunity to adopt new ones. This experience is often described as true learning.

6. Balancing voicing (advocacy) and inquiry ምምዛን ምድሃይ (አድህሮ) እውን ጥይዳቸታት
Bilanciamento voicing (advocacy) e interrogazioni

This is as simple and complex as balancing sharing our view and why we have it with asking genuine questions to better understand another person's view, or to allow the group to talk about issues that will enhance the whole group's collective understanding of a topic. To practice this skill involves utilizing all the skills listed above; deep listening, respecting others, inquiry, voicing openly and suspending assumptions & judgements. Even if the other people with whom you are conversing are not trying to dialogue, practicing this skill significantly enhances the quality of your contribution to the conversation. People will notice your enhanced communication skills because the quality of the conversations within which you participate will be enhanced by your contributions to them.

7. Reflecting ምስትውዓል riflettendo

Our fast paced world offers little time to reflect. However the capacity to reflect is a big rock (see the blog *The Rocks and the Jar*) and enhances our communication skills and capacity to dialogue through considering how we have just practiced our skills. In team environments it is worth holding a reflection at the end of an attempted dialogue to recognise where the skills of dialogue were used effectively and where they could be improved. The blog *Conducting an End of Meeting Reflection* provides some pointers for such a conversation.

Summary ቀንጽል (ቆንጽለ) sommario

People often recognize that practicing dialogue is not easy. It isn't. But the various skills of dialogue can be practiced at any time in any form of communication, and providing they are used for the purpose of genuinely enhancing communication, practicing these skill will provide immense benefits for all involved and result in improved team/group performance.

(Gary Ryan enables individuals, teams and organizations to matter. Visit Gary at <http://garyryans.com>)

