

# Open letter to Eritrean dictator Isaias Afwerki

I hope that this letter finds you well.

**Subject:** It is part of the violation of human rights to be the only teacher, speaker, and writer of the Tigriyna/ትግሪይኛ language for more than thirty years with less than zero skills.

In Eritrea there is neither the rule of law nor the rules of grammar. What Eritrea is experiencing is the policy of "divide and conquer" from 1991 to today. As a result, Eritrea is a highly and severely polarized country. Time will tell whether or not Eritrea will survive the dictatorship as a country. But for a moment we continue to talk about how the policy of "divide and conquer" misinforms the Eritrean people, obviously, to strengthen itself.

## 1. ሐዳስ ሌርትራ

The aforementioned "ሐ/ሐዳስ ኤርትራ" is the name of the only Tigrinya newspaper under the dictatorship in Eritrea. The unfortunate aspect is that this newspaper has had a misspelled name since the first day of its establishment. Despite this, it claims that "New Eritrea" is its English translation. This is a clear indication of what kind of newspaper it is. Despite this, the correct spelling of the Tigrinya term in question is "ሐድዳስ" feminine adj derived from the basic verb ሐድደስ and አሐድደስ as the causative verb to renew in English. E.g. ንስሳቶም ወስሲኖም ናይ አሐድደስ እቲ ውዕሊ/ኮንትራትቶ they decided to renew the contract. The verb "ሐድደስ" is one of the double-lettered Tigrinya words, just like to cook, to broom, book, queen, knee, in English. These matters, because of the corrupt system we have, we have yet to learn how to use them properly.



2. "ዓመተ ትንሳኤ! ሐዳስ ኤርትራ መጠል 33 ዓመት ቁ/125 ረቡዕ ጥሪ 2024 ገጽ 12 ዋጋ 2.00 ናቕፋ ገጽ 1", line 11.

As we see the word "ነይሩ" does not exist in Tigriyna. But we have "ነበረ and ነበረት" was first- and third-person singular past of be in English. E.g. ንስሱ ነበረ ተንኒስ ተጻዋቲ ግን ንስሳ ነበረት ጌዶዶት He was a tennis player but she was a runner. The verb "ነበረ" to be in English is one of the key verbs of Tigriyna. Some animals, according to the Internet, can understand verbs after training. But the word "training" is missing from the agenda of the Eritrean dictatorship. What it does have is an empty and alarming boast. Thanks to this and others it is never ashamed to say "I am the only one who put order in the world". But we have just seen that the Eritrean dictatorship is not able to spell the name of its newspaper correctly.

3. "ህዝባዊ ግንባር ሓርነት ኤርትራ". Of this name made up of four words we only talk about the first. The word "ህዝባዊ" is incorrect. The correct spelling is ሕዝባዊ relative adj. pl ሕዝባዊያን. E.g. ንስሳ ነበረት ሓንቲ ሕዝባዊት ዳል She was a popular girl.



4. The term "ሃገረ" on the emblem of dictatorship is also incorrect if it is meant to be "ሀገረ". If this is the case the word "ሀገረ" is always noun and it cannot be used as an adjective like what we see above. As we can see on the

emblem next to “ሃገር ኤርትራ” there is “**The state of Eritrea**” as its translation. This leads us to believe that for dictatorship “ሃገር” means “the state” in English. But the translation of the word “state” in Tigriyna is “መንግስት”. For example, United States of America = ኡቡራት መንግስቲታት ናይ አመሪካ.

The word “**ሀገር**” (pl. “**ሀገራት**”) is Ge’ez word used in Tigriyna. In Ge’ez “**ሀገር**” encompasses a wide range of meanings related to land, culture, regions, governance, and urban features, depending on the specific context in which it is used. But all these have no room in culture of Dictatorship.

The other three words, “ሐድደሰ”, “ነበረ”, and “ሕዝቢ” are also Ge’ez words used in Tigriyna. Here are ግዕዝ sentences as examples. **1.** ወሐደሰ ቤተ እግዚ. **2.** ነበረኩ ሕዝብ. **3.** ሕዝቢ ዐቢይ or ኣሕዛብ በሀገር.

It seems important to understand how the Ge’ez language addresses double letters in a word. If the double letters that make up the word are all from the ግዕዝ or first order or form, as in “ሰደደ”, “ቀለለ”, “ጸመመ”, etc., there is no issue. However, when the double letters in the word include both ‘ሳድስ’ and ‘ግዕዝ,’ as in “ሐድደሰ”, “ወድደሰ”, “ደቅቀሰ”, etc., a proper approach is lacking. I believe such issue is addressed by my work “Tigriyna Modern Dictionary”.

**In summary,** we have gained profound insight/ ንሕና አልሎና ርኹብ ሐንቲ ዕሙቕነት ራእይ into the stark reality surrounding us. Concurrently, we have observed the intentional manipulation of information and the deliberate deceit woven into the fabric of our work environment. Words, wielded as tools, not only sow seeds of misunderstanding and confusion among us but also serve as instruments to erode our collective knowledge in unimaginable ways. However, this is not the sole channel or conduit for the loss of Eritrean knowledge. The wealth of valuable knowledge has also departed Eritrea, accompanying those unjustly confined in mass incarcerations, the thousands forced to seek refuge for their very lives, and undoubtedly, with the closure of the University of Asmara and the ban on public newspapers.

But now allow me to demonstrate that Eritreans are proud of their rich literary heritage and that they will not be long in returning after the death of the dictatorship and the establishment of popular government.

## **In the culture of the Eritrean dictatorship, words and word order do not matter.**

The literary pride of the Eritreans, obviously, like all the Abyssinian brothers and sisters, starts from what historians teach us: that is, from the Ezana Stone document, an ancient stele still standing in today's Axum and from the translation of the Bible into Ge'ez. These two events probably date back to the 4th century and the 5th-6th century respectively.

As the Eritrean dictatorship has no word order in a sentence, I would like to focus now on Ge'ez writing that was with Subject + Verb + Object (SVO) [ ገባሪ + ግብረ + አቕሓ in Tigriyna] word order. Having said that it does not mean that Ge'ez word order was strict. In fact, Subject + Object + Verb (SOV) [ ገባሪ + አቕሓ + ግብረ in Tigriyna] word order had a space. According to my humble study, Ge'ez literature is primarily founded on the SVO word order, but over time, the SOV word order gained prominence, especially after the rise of the Solomonic dynasty, 1270 to 1285, that was speaking Amharic with semi-SOV word order.

As an example, the following are Ge'ez sentences with SVO word order and their English translations.

1. ነበርኩ ሕዙነ. I was sad [Subject + Verb + Object (SVO)]
2. ይነብር ውስተ ቤት. He is inside his home. [Subject + Verb + Object (SVO)]
3. አንስት ትነብረ በገቢረ ሠናይ Women live by grace. (SVO)
4. ጥበብ ትትፋለሰ ውስተ ነፍሳተ ጻድቃን. Wisdom migrates here and there in the heart of a just man. (SVO)]
5. "ኢትዮጵያ ታበጽሕ እደዊሃ ኅበ እግዚአብሔር (Ps.67.32) = Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God. " (SVO)]

Now, as a conclusion, I would like to introduce to you the new approach of my work on Ge'ez SVO word order to revive and continue the cultural heritage of Ge'ezians. I believe that with this cultural heritage, we will not only be able to free ourselves from the infection of dictatorship, but we can also progress towards becoming a civilized society.

Basic SVO sentence: እታ ሳሬት ሐዘት ሐንቲ ጽንጽያ.	English The spider caught a fly."	ቲግሪይና/Tigriyna እታ ሳሬት ሐዘት ሐንቲ ጽንጽያ.
Adding "Where":/ አበይ	The spider caught a fly in the garden.	እታ ሳሬት ሐዘት ሐንቲ ጽንጽያ. አብ እቲ ጅያርዲኖ/ጋርደን.
Adding "When":/ ሞአስ	The spider caught a fly in the garden, yesterday.	እታ ሳሬት ሐዘት ሐንቲ ጽንጽያ. አብ እቲ ጅያርዲኖ/ጋርደን ትማሊ.
Adding "How":/ ከሞይ	The spider caught a fly in the garden, yesterday skillfully.	እታ ሳሬት ሐዘት ሐንቲ ጽንጽያ. አብ እቲ ጅያርዲኖ/ጋርደን ትማሊ. ብክኡል.
Adding "Why":/ ንምንታይ	The spider caught a fly in the garden, yesterday skillfully for its food.	እታ ሳሬት ሐዘት ሐንቲ ጽንጽያ. አብ እቲ ጅያርዲኖ/ጋርደን ትማሊ. ብክኡል.ምእንቲ እቲ ናታ ምግቢ.

The spider caught a fly (where) in the garden, (when) yesterday (how) skillfully (why) because it was hungry. / እታ ሳሬት ሐዘት ሐንቲ ጽንጽያ አብ እቲ ጋርደን ትማሊ ብክኡል ምእንቲ እቲ ናታ ምግቢ.is a sentence well-constructed and provides a complete picture by addressing the 5W and how. Let us break it down:

- **Who (Subject):** The spider/ ሞን (ገባሪ): እታ ሳሬት
- **Did What (Verb):** Caught/ እንታይ ገበረት (ሸርቦ): ሐዘት
- **What (Object):** A fly/ እንታይ (አቕሓ): እታ ጽንጽያ
- **Where:** In the garden/ አበይ: አብ እቲ ጋርደን/ጅርዲኖ

- **When:** Yesterday/ ሞአስ: ትማሊ
- **How:** Skillfully/ ከሞይ: ብክኡል
- **Why:** Because it was hungry/ ንምንታይ: ንምንታይ ንስሳ ነቢራ ጥምይቲ

So, the sentence covers the essential elements of who, did what, what, where, when, how, and why, making it thorough and informative.

And I ask what does the following "sentences" cover, obviously from "ሓዳስ ኤርትራ ሞበል 33 ዓመት ቁ/125 ረቡዕ ጥሪ 2024 "except the culture of dictatorship?



And each sentence ends with four (::) points. Why? The four pints we see, they were first more than eight points as: **ክሎ: ወልጺ: ርብቃ: ውኃቱ**

The introduction of the points at the end of sentence might, indeed have historical roots connected to religious practices, possibly with the translation of the Bible into Ge'ez. Plus, it is unknown how the church was writing decimal points in numbers as 13.4. and abbreviations as Dr. or etc. (et cetera) However, as society changes, language and writing conventions may evolve to suit contemporary needs. In short, public institutions like schools, hospital, and journals may seek to reflect a more inclusive and secular environment, especially in areas with a diverse population like Eritrea.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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