

Eritrea: Sanction and Strategy for Defying it.

Etymological and Philological Analysis & Moral Significance of Hade Libi Hade Hzbi

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The health and well-being of a nation is derived from the efforts and personal dedication of each who stand as its individual citizen. The Eritrean spirit of perseverance is manifested in its full glory, by its individual citizen, in recent years, when the country was invaded by the enemy, when the unjust sanction was imposed on the country, and when the cyclical effect of the nature such as drought has affects the country.

These manifestations of defiance are a testament to the Eritrean spirit of perseverance, and an explanation to the conceptual framework of Hade Libi Hade Hzbi.

The linguistic significance of the Eritrean notion of Hade Libi Hade Hzbi has the connotation of population who has one heart. It is similar to the Latin term *Unum Corpus* formulated by Thomas Aquinas that has the connotation of one body, and this philosophical teaching presupposes that people of a given community should relate to each other as members of the same family.

There is perhaps no clearer testimony to the recent conceptual manifestation of Hade Libi Hade Hzbi in an Eritrean culture than the complete participation of Eritrean people, inside and outside the country, in world-wide peaceful demonstration, to challenge the unjust sanction imposed on their country.

Similarly, one can recall similar action taken to avert an enemy's aggression. When Eritrea was invaded by Weyanne, people from all walks of life, notwithstanding their differences or their geographical proximity and distance to the land, contributed immensely, and in great numbers, financially and otherwise to alleviate human suffering caused by the devastation of war.

Similarly, drought and abundance, traditionally, are two paradoxical opposite aspects of nature that affects the Eritrean farmer. It is with these two elements of nature that the Eritrean farmer has to struggle and wrestle, as it is, his harvest and livelihood. Through their cyclical effect, the elements of nature, sets the precise terms of the struggle, and in that sense it is nature, which ultimately determines whether it will be a year of bounty or famine. However, the Eritrean people never allow nature to set a limit to what human autonomy and human will could accomplish. The construction of Aligidir dam in Gash Barka, for instance, is a clear manifestation of combating the cyclical, and natural drought by altering ones nature through sustainable environment in order to ensure food security, and implement the concept of self-sufficient. Armed with a slogan of Hade Libi Hade Hzbi they take on the feature of a struggle to alter nature to their advantage with human action.

Thus it is from these facts and fragments of our culture that we seek to extract the constant principles of the human spirit and moral significance and to make maps that point the way toward our communal future.

Eritrea is a complex nation founded in human spirit and human relations forged on the battlegrounds of this century. Historians put our reality of human spirit and human relations in context, explaining Eritreanness to themselves based on this powerful slogan of Hade Libi Hade Hzbi of remarkable depth and perception that sets high standard to modern interpretation of human relations.

In the past informative teachers and philosophers have attempted to construct the compelling concept of this slogan unto numerous civilizations, however only Eritrea has carried this quest into the new century.

We Eritreans are called to protect and safeguard the nation and the people. Traditionally, the concept of familial obligations i.e. looking after your children, parents (filial obligation), relatives, or after those who are endowed with less fortune occupies a prominent place in Eritrean culture. Those who have more are called to share with those who have less. This Eritrean concept of obligation keeps the community of people together who are otherwise relegated to different status.

For instance Augustine had asserted rightly that Caritas and utilitas proximi constitute fundamental human relations. Of course Caritas is a Christian precept of Charity regarded by Thomas Aquinas as the "highest virtue". This concept is similar to the Quranic teaching of Alms found in the third pillar Zakat, in the Islamic faith.

Furthermore, utilitas proximi could be translated as the interest of one's neighbour or what we call in Tigrigna Bsay in its true camaraderie meaning as Halyot Bsaynet. However, only in Eritrea the word Halyot Bsaynet has quintessential meaning. In Tigrigna the word Halyot derived from Gsi or verb Haleye which connotes the utilitarian concept of loving concern of others, that is explicitly the same as Augustinian's utilitas proximi i.e. interest of one's neighbour.

Those who have participated in the Eritrean armed struggle know by experience that Bsaynet demands self sacrifice. In Bsaynet the fundamental virtue is not the honour or power of this life, but the sacrifice that one endures to protect the welfare of the comrades. From the perspective of Bsaynet, therefore, a position of leadership stipulates something more than political responsibility which is paying with one's life to protect the people under your leadership. Similarly, in private life Bsaynet calls to show a loving concern as well as to protect, and safeguard the welfare of those who are under our care or those who have less or those who are less fortunate.

In Western tradition, this concept of human relations was proposed by Augustine based on charity. However, unlike the Eritrean concept of obligation that makes essentially no political or religion distinctions, the Western notion of charity initially was based on principles of Christianity. The Latin term unum corpus formulated by Thomas Aquinas has the connotation of one body, and the teaching of charity presupposes that people of a given community should relate to each other as members of the same family. Similarly, the corresponding Tigrigna saying Hade Libi Hade Hzbi has the connotation of population who has one heart.

Hade and Libi are the Tigrigna nouns of one Ahaz (number) and Libi (heart) respectively. In Tigrigna one can observe the equivocal and singular nature of these nouns. But in contrast to this, the Tigrigna language, when referring to population where many cohabit, uses the noun Hzbi

(population) to denotes exactly the multitude of people. Even in Tekie Tesfay's Tigrigna dictionary the noun Hzbi (population) is defined in its plural connotation.

Therefore, this terminology represent something new in the history of the usage where Hade Libi (one heart) methodically describes the flow of blood that is life from one source - heart. Furthermore, the linguistic usage of Hade Hzbi (one population) faithfully preserves the equivocal meaning of multitude of people at the receiving end of the life sustaining element from one source that is one heart (hade Libi). A conceptual analysis of the compendium usage of Hade Libi Hade Hzbi , therefore, suggests a terminology to describe strong bond between people wherever they are and how different they are, and it corresponds to general human experience of love.

In conclusion words such as Libi (heart), Hzbi (population), Halyot (loving concern), Bsaynet (camaraderie), Halafnet (responsibility), evoke memory of responsibilities and sense of obligations towards our fellow human beings. They bring to our memory inevitable and inscrutable connection to our homeland that transcends human understanding. The aforementioned words are what we have in common with our people both at home and abroad. It is because of such explanations that the Eritrean notion of Hade Libi Hade Hizbi has no difficulty to manifest itself whenever the need arises, whether it is to fight famine, to challenge the unjust sanction, or to defend the nation.