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*The Korean War (1950-1953) and the Kagnev Battalion:
Music, War, and the Concept of Collective Security*

Cynthia Tse Kimberlin*

Greek war correspondent Kimon Skordiles covered the first armed clash of the Cold War — the Korean War of 1950-1953. He wrote about a group of Ethiopian soldiers he previously knew nothing about. They were volunteers recruited from Ethiopia's elite Imperial Bodyguard known as the Kagnev Battalion. They were part of the 1.94 million troops from 16 nations who participated in the Korean War and 21 nations under the United Nations' (UN) flag who pledged support by sending combat and medical troops, and provided South Korea postwar reconstruction aid (JUNG 2010).

Skordiles writes in *Kagnev: The Story of Ethiopian Fighters in Korea* that the Ethiopians won their battles against North Korean forces in the vicinity of Ch'orwon, Kumhwa, and Mundungni (1954: 122); not one of the 6,037 Ethiopians went missing or became prisoner of war. The Kagnev battalion was the subject of a 1993 B.A. thesis by Dereje Tekle, Addis Ababa University. A 2007 book by Begashaw Derese was published in Amharic with additional material. A fourth book *Kagnev beKoera* (Kagnev in Korea) published in 2007 was written anonymously by the son of one of the guardsmen. But the early account by Skordiles was translated from English to Korean by Korea Times journalist and writer David In-yeup Song. It was published in 2010 commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War.

Song served two years in Ethiopia as chief representative of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). The book introduces how Ethiopia became involved in the Korean War. In it he says:

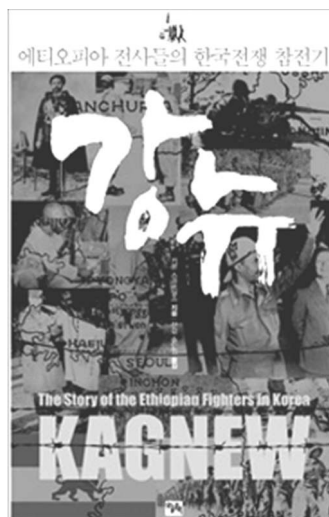
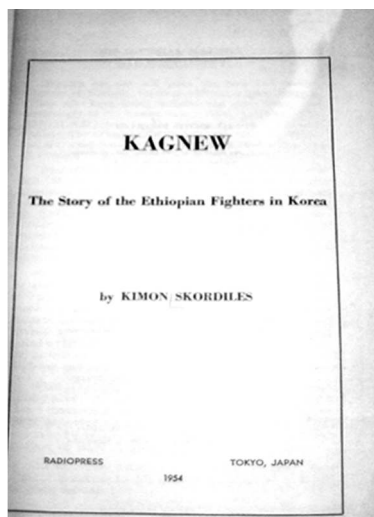
I came across the book a couple months after I arrived in Ethiopia. I knew Ethiopia had sent troops but I was surprised to learn about their amazing achievements....I spent sleepless nights reading the book. I decided to translate it because it passes on an important lesson to the younger generation.

It is against this background this study will explore music and other connections between Ethiopia and Eritrea and Korea accompanied by photographs and music examples¹ excerpted from recordings made by myself and others. Topics discussed

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¹ Illustrations and recordings are not included in this version.

include: (1) the principle of collective security as exemplified by the Kagnew Battalion, (2) origin of the word Kagnew, (3) the Imperial Bodyguard, (4) the Imperial Bodyguard Band, (5) music in the context of the Korean War and its aftermath, (6) reciprocity, and (7) final observations.



Figures 1 and 2: Kagnew: The Story of Ethiopian Fighters in Korea by Kimmon Skordiles in English (1954) and Kimon Skordiles' book translated into Korean by David In-yeup Song (2010)

Collective security as exemplified by the Kagnew battalion

Collective security is an arrangement in which all countries cooperate collectively to provide security for all by the actions of all against any country within the group which might challenge the existing order by using force. And that its failure lay not in the principle but in its members' commitment to honor its tenets. An example of this failure by the League of Nations occurred in 1935 when Italy invaded Ethiopia. Benito Mussolini ordered the Italian army to invade Ethiopia but the League refused to act despite a desperate plea from Emperor Haile Selassie I in his famous address to the League of Nations in June of 1936 in Geneva, Switzerland. Sixteen years later a similar invasion took place when North Korea invaded South Korea. The Emperor recognized the similarity of this crisis to that of his country's crisis in 1935 and so he responded quickly, demonstrating Ethiopia's continued support for collective security.

Ethiopia is one of the founding members of the UN and Organization of African Unity (OAU) established in 1963 in Addis Ababa and now called the African Union (AU). It has endorsed the principle of collective security in the context of the UN and OAU/AU. Although the slave trade allegedly existed in Ethiopia until 1941, Ethiopia

accepted the Emancipation Convention in 1924 in order to join the League of Nations. As a result, 120 slaves were freed from Gambela and Benishangul and arrived in Addis Ababa the following year. Many were members of the first marching band of the Imperial Bodyguard (SIMENEH 2009: 46). As a result, Ethiopian forces engaged in UN peace-keeping missions and humanitarian operations to assist in political transitions, build institutions, foster the spread of rule of law, support economic reconstruction efforts, supervise elections, disarm militias and former combatants, facilitate humanitarian aid programs and re-settle refugees and internally displaced persons (KINFE ABRAHAM 2008: 181).

Implementing this policy contributed to the UN peacekeeping forces in Korea (1951-1954) and in the Congo (1960-64). In 1951, led by Lieutenant Colonel Teshome Irgetu some 3518 members of the Kagnew Battalion, known as Qañaw Shaläqa to the United Nations forces, plus non-combatants were sent to Korea to fight with the UN forces as part of the United States-led seventh division. In fact, Ethiopia's ground force and South Africa's Flying Cheetas airforce were the only African nations to intervene in the Korean crisis. Ethiopia was the only non-NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization consisting of 28 member countries) state in the area to contribute a contingent of UN forces in South Korea under United States command. The Ethiopian unit's eight months intensive training in Ethiopia's mountains stood them in good stead when they encountered the hilly Korean terrain. The Ethiopian troops drawn from three successive battalions from the 1st Division Imperial Bodyguard between June 1951 and April 1954 participated in 253 battle fields; 120 men were killed in action and 536 men were wounded in action (Unpublished Documents of the Ministry of Defense, July 2005). The Kagnew Battalion gained a reputation as one of the toughest and most aggressive infantry units in Korea, particularly in guerrilla warfare and nighttime fighting maneuvers. The Korean War ended in a truce, not a permanent peace treaty. Hence, the two Koreas remain technically at war.

Origin of the word Kagnew

The name Kagnew in military parlance refers to the reconnaissance position.² It was also the name of the warhorse of Emperor Haile Selassie's father, Leul Ras Makonnen. Military units from Imperial times often adopted a name of a favored military commander. In the past Ethiopian Warriors were often interchangeably referred to by the names of their war chargers. Emperor Menelik was referred to as Aba Dagneu. These nom's de guerre or "Saddle names", Yekoricha Sim were also used by the nobility and renown warriors. Modern day Ethiopian commanders and leaders abandoned the Koricha Sim tradition though individual instances of Saddle names did survive. The best known example was HIM Emperor Haile Selassie "Aba Tekil" (SANDLER 1995: 109).

² In Amharic Kagnew means "to bring order out of chaos" and was important during the 1896 Battle of Adwa "when a riderless horse named *Kagnew* galloped towards the attacking Italians, heartening the Ethiopians into repulsing them" (VESTAL 2011: 40-42).

Imperial Bodyguard

Established in 1917 (PANKHURST 1968: 562) *kəbur zäbäñña* or “Honour Guard” was the Ethiopian Imperial Guard, also known as the First Division. Based in Addis Ababa, it served to provide security for the Emperor of Ethiopia and as an elite infantry division that was not part of the organizational structure of the regular Ethiopian army.

The Emperor, then known as Regent Ras Tafari, assembled a unit under his direct control from men who had trained in the British army in Kenya and others who served under the Italians in Tripoli. In 1930 as Emperor he invited a Belgian military mission to train and modernize the Ethiopian military which included the Imperial Bodyguard. After Emperor Haile Selassie returned to Ethiopia after his exile in 1941, the military was reconstituted and men of the Kagnew Battalion were recruited from the Imperial Bodyguard. “It remained the elite force of the empire” (BAHRU ZEWDE 2001: 148), “until discredited in the wake of the attempted coup of 1960”. In 1969 it had some 7,000 men. Around the mid-1970s the Imperial Bodyguard was disbanded after the Derg consolidated their hold on Ethiopia.

Imperial Bodyguard Band

Musical ensembles in Ethiopia have been organized to represent the polity and unify the country. Indigenous and Western-styled modern musical groups in Ethiopia were pioneered by the military that helped introduce new genres and styles of popular music. These institutions were state sanctioned established primarily for the purpose of serving the government’s interests (SIMENEH 2009: 46, 65).

The group that paved the way for the establishment of the Imperial Bodyguard Band was known as the Arba Lijoch (forty children)³. The Imperial Bodyguard Band founded in 1929 performed Western music at state events and welcomed visiting dignitaries (FALCETO 2001).

During its heyday the Imperial Bodyguard Band had an enormous impact inspiring others in its practical organization and training procedures. In the early 1960s it supplied a number of musicians to many independent developing bands. The Band influenced the bands of other branches of the military including the Ground Force, Air Force, and Navy (*ibid*: 49). In essence, the Imperial Bodyguard Band combined the best musical personnel with the best facilities available. In addition to its local popularity, the expeditionary missions to Korea (1950-1953) gained the members enormous recognition and cultural and political exposure. A number of musicians from the Band who composed and performed music about the war included Tilahun Gessesse and Nuru Ghebrewondafrash.

³ It was comprised of a 40-member Armenian group of orphans who escaped the Armenian genocide in Turkey, came to Addis Ababa in 1924, and was adopted by Crown Prince Ras Tafari who arranged for them to receive musical instruction. Along with their bandleader Kevork Nalbandian, they became the first official orchestra of Ethiopia. The original Imperial Bodyguard Band was trained by the Swiss musician Andre Nicod, who replaced Kevork Nalbandian in 1929 (AMANI, 1975: 85; SIMINEH 2009:39).

Music Examples in the context of the Korean War and aftermath

On board the ship going to South Korea were the crew of the troopship and the soldiers of the other nations traveling on the same ship with the Ethiopians. Many were impressed by the popular songs and dances the Kagnew Battalion performed during the long ocean voyage such as the songs Tizita, Ganzebie, Ambassel, Anchilge, and Aman Baman (SKORDILES 1954: 120).

Tizita

The first music example is the song Tizita. In Amharic, *tizita* has three related meanings. It can mean memory and the act of memory. Some dictionaries add nostalgia, or the memory of loss and longing in its melancholy. Secondly, *tizita* refers to one of the *qəññət* (mode) in secular Ethiopian music. And third, *tizita* refers to a ballad expressing lost and memory of love lost. The possessive *tizitaye* (my *tizita*), refers not only to the singer's own melancholy memory but also to the absent lover. The longing in *tizita* is without resolution, since the possibility of restoration or return is always thwarted. Tizita is lyrical and haunting in this vocal interpretation by Asnatchesh Worku who accompanies herself on the *kerar* (lyre) in a 1996 recording made in Germany ("The First Lady of Ethiopian Music", May 25, 2008, Horizon Ethiopia). The text reads:

Nostalgia, memories
 He has gone away from me, far away
 All that is left is his love
 The memory of him tears my soul apart
 Ask my eyes, they will tell you
 How much my heart longs for him

Bale Gariw

During military leave some Ethiopian soldiers went to Tokyo. While five were at the Hotel Yurako drinking beer, the hotel manager suddenly asked them if they would sing an Ethiopian song. So in an ad hoc manner they were taken to a hall where people were attending a music show. In the middle of the show they were introduced by the show's leader to sing. Of the many versions, here are two music examples 2a and 2b by Abera Mulat⁴ in 2009 from Dire Dawa and Aster Aweke in 1993. Known as "Bale Gariw" (the man with [the] chariot), it was originally known as "Shimbira [chickpea] Dube [pumpkin] Aygegnm Bedubie". The soldiers sang it during the war as recalled by Major Tefera Woldetensae (DEREJE 1993: 48). The song is about a youth in love with another. The youth is riding in a *gari* to meet this person but is nervous that the *gari* will not make it in time. One text reads in English translation:

Keep away, by any means
 From my lovely, stay away
 If you want to reach
 Enough for your survival
 Stay away till morning brings
 The need for me to come
 Keep away, for some will surely die

⁴ At the time, Abera was seated in a small park in the Kezira in front of the Greek Church amidst the sounds of ongoing traffic.

Shilela

Shilela is an umbrella word for all types of war chants. Etymology of the word *shilela* is derived from the infinitive Meshel, which means to boast with exaggerated body expression and melismatic singing (SIMENEH 2009: 30). The caption for a photograph reads: "During the cease-fire period in Korea, the men of the Kagnew Battalion displayed their dramatic talents in a native Ethiopian drama". This photograph depicts an enactment of a drama where the soldiers are preparing for battle exhibiting their patriotism. (*op.cit*: 150) Music example 3 is a 1972 rendition of a shilela Kimberlin recorded and performed by Alemayehu Fantay accompanying himself on the *masinqo*. The text reads:

Hunger after harvest, missing after shooting
 They burn you like fire under your feet.
 Let a hero die and a cowardly person live because his shoulders like carrying dirt.
 My home country Ethiopia, the sign of freedom
 I do not want to lose your life while I am alive.
 Not shooting a bullet to shoot a person,
 Even if you tie it around your waist, it makes you respected and feared.
 Bring my "dimot four", I do like to put it away
 It is after blood is shed that a brother comes to fight
 Kill me with a "dimot four;" and kill him with "bulie"
 Let the enemy send people who ask for peace
 Tell that person to take care for his life, I think he has no advisor.
 A bullet has no brain if you pull the trigger.
 Please kill our enemy, to kill him is the best thing to do,
 Otherwise if you say tomorrow, and after tomorrow, the enemy will be ready.
 Heroic general who marches heroes to crush against each other at the battlefield.

My Strong Will

Lieutenant Nuru Wondafrash was a member of the Imperial Bodyguard Band who served in the Korean war.⁵ In music example 4 you will hear Girma Yiflashewa performing a quartet he arranged in the style of classical or art music based on a song titled "Tenkaraw Menfese" (My Strong Will) composed by Nuru. As a member of the Imperial Body Guard Band, Nuru often travelled for extended periods.

This quartet is based on Nuru's song. The music itself was based on a familiar Ethiopian wedding song "Yemaibegerew Tenikaraw Semete". Apart from rearranging the song in a classical style, Girma felt the emotions generated by the music also elicited memories about the difficulties he had to overcome in order to become a musician. Musicians heard in the quartet include Girma Yiflashewa (piano) with members of the UCLA Philharmonia: Luke Santonastaso (violin), Jonathan Sacdalan (clarinet), and

⁵ He was the first husband of the famous Ethiopian vocalist Bizunesh Bekele. While he was away Bizunesh Bekele was known to sing songs she composed of how much she missed him. Unfortunately, they were never recorded or released and only survive in the memory of those who knew her and heard her humming them.

Jennifer Li (cello) in a performance in Los Angeles October 24, 2009 in Schoenberg Hall at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).



Figure 3: *My Strong Will*, composed by Lieutenant Nuru Wondafrash, member Imperial Bodyguard Band. Girma Yifrashewa (arranger, pianist) with members of the UCLA Philharmonia Jonathan Sacdalan (clarinet), Luke Santonastaso (violin), Jennifer Li (cello) (Photo: Kimberlin 2009).

Japanwun Wädəjä (aka *Eruke mesrak salebu Japanwan wodije*)

The influence of the melodic contours and musical arrangements of East Asian music heard in Korea and Japan was noticeable (*Nazaret News*), as well as the influence, not of the *azmari*'s traditional songs, but by Western-style musical bands. For example 5, the song *Japanwun wädəjä* was composed and sung by Tilahun Gessesse who served with the Imperial Body Guard Band from 1955 to 1985 and in the National Theater from 1985 to 1989. His popularity, however, reached a climax in the 30 years he served in the Bodyguard. He has sung over 400 songs revolving around issues of love to patriotism, from money to locales, and from friendship to the 1985 famine in Ethiopia. He even sang about punctuality and is said to have left almost no reality of life unsung. ("Obituary", *Addis Fortune*, April 26, 2009). *Japanwun wädəjä* (I fell in love with a Japanese) is about a love affair with a Japanese woman while an Ethiopian was on tour of duty in Korea. During their service, Ethiopian soldiers, especially members of the Officer corps, were periodically granted leaves for a couple of weeks, which they spent in Japan (SOLOMON 2006; NEGA 2000; MILKIE 2004).

While I was in the Far East, I loved a Japanese [woman]
I remember burning in her love
She resembles a flower hanging from the vine
Her beauty is stunning when one looks.
There is no one that matches her beauty

She is the fountain of humbleness and beauty is her culture.
While I was in the Far East, I loved a Japanese [woman]
I remember burning in her love
Respecting parents is her custom
She is built with love, look at her personality
When will I quench my longing for her love
She will remain in my heart as long as I am alive.
While I was in the Far East, I loved a Japanese [woman]
I remember burning in her love
Excursion on a yacht which is suitable for her
Dinner in Tokyo, lunch at Yokohama
I liked my campaign in Korea
I tasted a sweet love while in the Far East.

"War: A Prophetic Speech Turned into a Song" - Rastafarian Bob Marley's "War"

A broader view of war reveals sentiments and songs that were composed in opposition to the Ethiopian political system and its leaders during the course of a number of political upheavals beginning in the late 1950s. According to informants, significant expression of political dissent in popular music began with the Imperial Bodyguard Band. One protest centred around sending an Ethiopian armed force, the Kagnev Battalion to Korea (DEREJE 1993: 1). In opposition to the Kagnev Battalion's prolonged involvement in Korea, a song of protest was transmitted over the radio for a short period (Getachew Debalke, interview, 12/01/08). The song's refrain was:

The Kagnev Battalion, the Kagnev Battalion
It is enough, come back!

Despite this protest, the Imperial Bodyguard Band was the most favoured and privileged of all military units. Both its musical and non-musical personnel took initiatives to urge social and political reforms for the country, culminating in the unsuccessful coup of 1960 (SIMENEH 2008: 108-109). One example of how these reforms were viewed outside Ethiopia is the Africa-centric movement called Rastafarianism (or Rastafari) in which the late Emperor Haile-Selassie is revered as the black Messiah. Its name is derived from Ras Tefari Makonnen, the pre-coronation name of Emperor Haile Selassie.

Rastafarianism emerged in Jamaica in the 1930s. Since the advent of Reggae music in the 1960s and 1970s led by charismatic spokesman and musician Bob Marley, the movement has become an international phenomenon, especially among disaffected youth and minority groups. The failure by mainstream church groups to address the fundamentals of modern-day racial and economic woes, the ever-increasing polarization of the world between the haves and the have-nots, the pervasive nature of Western neo-colonialism, the violent urban backlash against third world immigrants and, finally, Bob Marley's powerful lyrics on behalf of the voiceless, can be cited as some of the reasons responsible for the transformation of Rastafari into a worldwide protest movement.

Lyrics for one of Bob Marley’s most famous songs entitled, “War” was actually taken verbatim from an October 1963 speech Emperor Haile Selassie gave at the United Nations. It was then that Haile Selassie warned the world of the dangers associated with inequalities throughout the world and the injustices suffered by many. The speech was prophetic, as wars have become almost a constant around the globe. (Dec 2004 issue, *Esprit de Corps*. Magazine of the Korean War Veterans Association of Ethiopia) Here is the song “War” in music example 6.

Until the philosophy which hold one race superior
 And another
 Inferior
 Is finally
 And permanently
 Discredited
 And abandoned –
 Everywhere is war –
 Me say war.
 That until there no longer
 First class and second class citizens of any nation
 Until the colour of a man’s skin
 Is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes –
 Me say war.
 That until the basic human rights
 Are equally guaranteed to all,
 Without regard to race –
 Dis a war.
 That until that day
 The dream of lasting peace,
 World citizenship
 Rule of international morality
 Will remain in but a fleeting illusion to be pursued,
 But never attained –
 Now everywhere is war - war.
 And until the ignoble and unhappy regimes
 that hold our brothers in Angola,
 In Mozambique,
 South Africa
 Sub-human bondage
 Have been toppled,
 Utterly destroyed –
 Well, everywhere is war –
 Me say war.
 War in the east,
 War in the west,
 War up north,

War down south –
War - war –
Rumours of war.
And until that day,
The African continent
Will not know peace,
We Africans will fight - we find it necessary –
And we know we shall win
As we are confident
In the victory
Of good over evil –
Good over evil, yeah!
Good over evil –
Good over evil, yeah!
Good over evil –
Good over evil, yeah!

Reciprocity

During and after the war there have been many examples of reciprocity on both sides.

Bowha Orphanage, Dongducheon, Gyeonggi province

During the Korean war, the Ethiopian soldiers founded an orphanage for Korean children who lost their parents. After fighting in the war, the Ethiopians established the Bowha Orphanage in April 1953 that took care of the children. The facility operated from funds Ethiopian soldiers gathered by donating part of their pay. The orphanage offered shelter to 60 to 70 children. Since that time Ethiopian veterans have expressed hopes of meeting the children that were raised in the orphanage they established and maintained during the war. The children they supported were raised at the orphanage. Shin Kwang-chul, general secretary at the Supporters Association for the Ethiopian Veterans of the Korean war said: "We have been visiting Ethiopia in the past few years to provide aid to Korean War veterans and every time we went, they asked about the children from the orphanage... They want to meet the former orphans while they are still healthy enough to come to Korea," he said. What happened to the children after the Ethiopian troops went home in 1956 is unclear for there is little documentation (2004).⁶

During the 1990s to the present, South Korea has reciprocated by building eight new schools in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a new residential complex in Sembel, Eritrea, and continues to provide educational scholarships to Ethiopian descendents of soldiers who served in the Kagnew Battalion. Twenty-first century contributions include a medical college and a memorial church.

⁶ <http://ethiopundit.blogspot.com/2004/07/ethiopians-seek-lost-orphans.html> (consulted Nov. 2013).

Japan and South Korea Build Schools in Ethiopia's Capital (By Binyam Tamene)

The Japanese and South Korean governments are building eight new schools in Addis Ababa with 100 million birr (Addis Ababa Bureau of Education). The Japanese government allocated over 72 million birr to construct six elementary and one high school in different sub-cities of the capital city. The Korean government is constructing schools modeled after the schools in Korea. A Korean-style high school is being built in Akaki Kaliti sub-city costing around 28 million birr. Mayor Kuma Demkesa says there are plans to establish more schools, colleges and universities with modern facilities to improve the educational standard.⁷

Semmel Residential Complex Asmara

Asmara, Eritrea is developing at a dramatic pace in the housing sector. The Semmel Residential Complex built in 1996 is one of Africa's biggest housing complexes housing about 1250 families. It was built by Keangnam Enterprises, Korea's first contractor, also known as Corea. The complex situated South-west of Asmara includes shops, a hospital, a kindergarten, an elementary school, a gymnasium, playgrounds, sport facilities, a theatre in the round, offices, and public squares.⁸

Miyungsang Hospital/Medical College and Memorial Church

Founded in 2004, a medical college and memorial church in Addis Ababa share a compound. and was completed on March 23, 2010. The college has the capacity to train around 180 medical students. This will improve the quality of health services of the country and reduce the number of Ethiopians who travel abroad seeking better medical services according to Reverend Sam Hwan Kim, founder of the hospital, which began neuro-surgery for the first time. The church was built in remembrance of the Ethiopian soldiers and to thank the Ethiopian people who helped during the war said Kim.

60th Anniversary Celebration

The Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs launched a Revisit Program for overseas veterans from nine nations from June 21 to 28, 2010. About 300 veterans and family members from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Greece, Ethiopia and Luxembourg took part in attending the ceremony, visiting monuments, paying respects at the National Cemetery and touring a folk village. Ethiopian Veterans of the Kagnev Battalion attending their memorial in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia included Corp. Girma Mola (80); Lt. Tadesse Kerstos (82); and Capt. Semare Mekele (79).

⁷ http://nazret.com/blog/index.php?title=japan_and_south_korea_build_schools_in_e&more=1&c=1&tb=1&pb=1 (consulted Nov. 2013).

⁸ <http://www.asmera.nl/semmel-residential.htm> (consulted Nov. 2013).

Final observations

The Korean version of “Kagnew” places Skordiles’ work into a contemporary context by tracing the legacy of the Ethiopian warriors, through interviews with some of the 400 veterans who are alive today. Facts, figures and anecdotes are provided in both Korean and English.

Among them, Haile Giorgis, who served as 2nd lieutenant during the war, became promoted as military protocol chief to the emperor in 1972. Ironically, the emperor was overthrown in a communist coup, and during a spell of red terror through the 1980s, the Korean War veterans, once honored heroes, were forced to conceal the fact that they had fought against communist forces. Giorgis lived a reclusive life until the early 1990s.

In 2010, 40 members of the Korean War Veterans Association of Ethiopia visited Seoul to witness what had become of the impoverished country they fought in as young men. “Ethiopians took note of Korea’s rapid economic development as a model for their country’s own growth. Today KOICA continues to help build schools, drinking water facilities and welfare centres for women and children. Song urged Koreans to learn more about Ethiopia’s rich history. Although the younger generation of South Koreans today enjoy a rich life materially and intellectually, still, many do not even know when the Korean War broke out.

Ethiopia’s participation in the War transformed its action from a specific conflict on a specific terrain to a global arena involving other nations. Ethiopia confronted them to take a stand and whose response today echoes within the public’s consciousness. For Emperor Haile Selassie the Korean War was a “holy” mission for world peace and collective security to stop the further spread of ideological conflict.

The six music examples capture this conflict through its subject matter, commentary, and quintessential musicality. Although their essence is encapsulated succinctly, the music itself is not limited in scope but widely diversified in terms of genre, form, style, and historical placement in time. To help facilitate the inclusion of new musical idioms, the concept of intercultural music is utilized where elements from two or more cultures are integrated (KIMBERLIN and EUBA 1995: 2-5). It illustrates how Ethiopia has expanded its influence beyond its borders into a broader realm, infusing it with modified forms and styles from different eras coupled with new possibilities. For example, Tilahun Gessesse in “*Japanwun wädəjä*” captures the essence of East Asia’s aesthetics in terms of melodic contour, music textures, and ambience. Haile Selassie’s text set to Bob Marley’s Jamaican reggae style in “War” essentially parlays a belief that is usurped by others, capturing the political, social, and the artistic component in a single song with a universal message. The instrumental quartet “My Strong Will” framed by Ethiopian and Western art traditions conveys the travails of both the Ethiopian Korean War veteran of the past and concert pianist’s life in the present. The composition shows music can poignantly convey meaning and emotion without an accompanying text. Contrast it with the traditional Ethiopian iconic song that crosses time and place in the very personal and lyrical “Tizita” and the boisterous call to arms in that category of song known as “Shilela”. And finally, the classic “Bale Gariw” that portrays the public and

ubiquitous transport of the gari that moves quickly, but never in a straight line but rather zigzagging down the road, hurrying to its destination and carrying its passenger who waits in anticipation and hope.

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