Woman in Ethnocultural Peril: South Korean Nationalist Erotic Films of the 1980s

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As the most popular genre of South Korean cinema of the 1980s, erotic film not only played a breakthrough role after the national film industry's catastrophic decline since the early 1970s but also seemed to conform to the totalitarian state's cultural policy of promoting the "3Ss" (screen, sex, and sport) that served to control the minjung *(people) in the 1980s. The erotic filmmakers' seemingly conforming strategy has long caused South Korean film critics and historians to indiscriminately detract from the film genre by pejoratively tagging it "ero film" and to be prejudiced against its lack of artistic and ideological value. However, ironically, some of its subgenre films, particularly nationalist ero films, overflow with minjung nationalist ideology equipped with anti-Westernization and anti-Americanism. Resorting to the spectacularization of Korean woman's body as the Korean peninsula and of male sexual assault of her body as symbolic of the colonization of South Korea, nationalist ero film interrogates the modernity and geopolitics of the nation. Yet, this article attempts to complicate and problematize the nationalist efforts of the sub-genre in the transnational feminist perspective by textually analyzing* Murŭp kwa murŭp sai *(Between the knees, 1984) and* Kip ko p'urŭn pam *(Deep blue night, 1984) to show how patriarchal the minjung nationalist ideology is and how this leftist thought paradoxically mirrors the oppressive regime's political agenda.*

The 1980s was a time when eroticism was conventionally and prevalently used in both the mainstream and the direct-to-video film industry in South Korea. Adopted from Japanese abbreviation *ēro* from the English adjective "erotic," the term "ero" has been used in the South Korea film industry to refer to both the theatrically released and direct-to-video erotic films of the era.[1] While this article focuses on the former, widely designated as ero film (*ero yŏnghwa*) vis-à-

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vis the latter as ero video (*ero pidio*), particularly the subgenre that I would call nationalist ero/erotic film (*minjokchuŭi ero yŏnghwa*), it addresses the subgenre's tight linkage between erotic visuals and South Korean ethnocentric nationalism aligned with masculinism.[2] To do so, the present study rests on two nationalist erotic film texts, *Murŭp kwa murŭp sai* (Between the knees, or Knee to knee, directed by Yi Changho [Lee Jang-ho, 1984] and *Kip ko p'urŭn pam* (Deep blue night, directed by Pae Ch'angho [Bae Chang-ho], 1985).

By and large, nationalist ero film evinces two thematic concerns. One is the trauma of the Korean women sexually violated by the type of American/Western man mostly encountered in the It'aewon area, the neighborhood of the largest American army base in Seoul. Films in this vein include *Between the Knees, Yŏwangbŏl* (Queen bee, directed by Yi Wŏnse [Lee Won-se], 1985), *Pam ŭi yŏlgi sok ŭro* (Into the heat of the night, directed by Chang Kilsu [Jang Kil-su], 1985), and *Ch'urakhanŭn kŏs ŭn nalgae ka itta* (That which falls has wings, directed by Chang Kilsu, 1989). The second type documents the dark side of the American Dream through the shattered lives of Korean immigrants in the United States, in which a Korean man either rescues or abuses an extremely miserable Korean American woman such as a drug addict or a fugitive; films include *Deep Blue Night*; *Amerika Amerika* (America, America, directed by Chang Kilsu, 1988); and *Ch'uŏk ŭi irŭm ŭro* (In the name of memory, directed by Yu Yŏngjin, 1989). In these films, Korean women are not only portrayed as direct victims who are physically and spiritually corrupted by Western or American politico-cultural imperialism, but they are also in desperate need of redemption by Korean male saviors. In short, nationalist ero film represents the Korean male fear of the West, especially the United States' politico-cultural dominance in South Korea, by underlining the necessity of preserving premodern/preindustrial/preglobal Korea's cultural purity in likening it to woman's ethno-sexual chastity. The patriarchal nationalism in the genre deploys woman's sexual degradation as a synecdochical allegory of a Korean ethnocultural crisis in neocolonial, postmodern South Korea on its way to globalization. Deprived of her individual subjectivity in her life, especially her sex life, woman in the genre is thus only a victim of a sexual and national crisis by "carry[ing] the [heavy] burden of national allegory."[3] Where the allegorized woman is in improbable peril on par with that of the ethno-nation, the jeopardies are further provocatively turned into sexual spectacles. In this sense, nationalist ero film is not a completely commercial entertainment genre but also a sociocultural outgrowth peculiar to South Korea that intervenes in the global inequity between the First and Third World.

The eroticized synecdoche of Korean woman in peril is stereotypically showcased in *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night*. Notably, the two films were commercially and critically successful when they were theatrically released in the mid-1980s, for they were made by two of the most well-respected directors of the decade, Yi Changho and Pae Ch'angho, respectively. Directed by these *auteur* directors, the films have been able to avoid common critical detraction

incurred by other ero films of lesser-known directors, which will be discussed below. Inasmuch as the two films deserve academic attention not just by virtue of their status as exemplary texts of the nationalist erotic film but also by virtue of their production value and serious thematic concern, I will rehistoricize, reilluminate, and recontextualize them from the vantage point of a transnational feminist three decades after the productions. As transnational feminists, Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan stress "an imperative need to address the concerns of women around the world in the historicized particularity of their relationship to multiple patriarchies as well as to international economic hegemonies" exists.[4] My focus is concomitantly on the films' androcentric conflation of the woman's body with the national body as well as on a paradoxically politicized eroticization of the two bodies in peril in the South Korean context of the 1980s. To do so, I will first discuss a major form of South Korean nationalism of the 1980s called *minjung minjokchuŭi* (minjung nationalism) as well as its affinity with ero film and then move on to textual analyses of *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night*.

ERO FILM AND THE MINJUNG MOVEMENT

South Korean erotic films of the 1980s are inextricably linked to the minjung movement of the same period. Although many of the erotic films were greatly influenced by the movement, the ero film in toto, at the same time, suffered from the movement's main ideology, particularly anti-establishment and anti-commercialism. Since the overnight hit of the first ero film, *Aema puin* (Madame Aema, also known as Aema woman, directed by Chŏng Inyŏb, 1982), which prompted most of the South Korean film industry to engage in eroticization throughout the 1980s, the genre has been despised, denounced, detracted from, and thus understudied by many critics and historians of South Korean cinema. Such critical reasoning, as I have pointed out elsewhere, is not single-handedly grounded on the minjung ideology itself but rather on its affiliation with gender essentialist feminism.[5] I shall begin by touching upon the two discourses below and then explicate the relationship between ero film and the minjung movement in this section.

On the one hand, all ero films have been undiscriminatingly presumed to be inartistic commercial exploitations of sexual spectacles including scantily clad or unclad women. I have suggested that extensive research of ero film has been precluded by the binary divisions of gender essentialists, especially gender-essentialist feminist scholars, in South Korean film studies between the commercial/sexploitive and the artistic/sexually revolutionary as well as between the male spectator/voyeur and the female spectacle. While South Korean cinema in general is not fittingly applicable to the divisions like the classical, albeit prejudicial, one between (European) art film and (Hollywood) commercial/popular movies, it has oscillated in between, and so has ero film.

Indeed, not only have female and male spectators enjoyed watching South Korean erotic films that feature women—not only for Mulveyan "to-be-looked-at-ness" but also for their roles as narrative agents—but so-called artistic filmmakers also directed a number of ero films in the 1980s that were introduced and rewarded at prestigious European film festivals held in Berlin, Cannes, and Venice.[6] Therefore, I have proposed to consider the erotic, at least in the case of South Korean cinema, neither simply as the commercial/inartistic nor the misogynic/sexploititive but as something generically "situated" at the threshold between the elitist and populist film movements.[7]

On the other hand, ero film has assumed a controversial position in South Korean film history in that it has gained notoriety for its assumingly uncritical compliance with the 1980s' authoritarian government's culture policy promoting the 3Ss: screen, sex, and sport. This cultural scheme, called *Sam esŭ chŏngch'aek* (3S Policy), is believed to have been deliberately and non-statutorily implemented by the Chun Doo Hwan (Chŏn Tuhwan, 1980–87) government for the purpose of depoliticizing South Koreans. During Chun's tenure, most South Koreans questioned, contested, and disagreed with the legitimacy of the regime and protested against it insofar as his presidency was preempted not only by a military coup in 1979 but also by a massacre in response to the 1980 uprising of Kwangju citizens against the coup. Therefore, Chun hoped to divert the political attention of South Koreans to what he deemed as something opposed to politics—namely, culture. Notably, Chun emulated and at the same time differentiated himself from his predecessor, Park Chung Hee (Pak Chŏnghŭi, 1961–79), who had also taken advantage of military force to attain power. Park had attempted to legitimize his long-term military dictatorship with economic growth and "spiritual mobilization" (a reemphasis of the premodern "essential" cultural heritage) of South Korea until he was unexpectedly and mysteriously assassinated by his right-hand man in 1979.[8] Chun maintained Park's rigorous project of turning South Koreans into economic (laboring) machines as his doted protégé, yet he chose to take a culturally liberal, albeit in comparative sense to Park's, approach to political legitimacy by liberating South Koreans from Park's rigid moral regulations, such as the national curfew system and the enforcement of a strict hair and dress code (e.g., prohibition on men's growing hair and on women's wearing mini-skirts, etc.) as a part of the 3S Policy. The policy has thus been considered one of Chun's deceptive tactics of ostensibly setting South Koreans free from Park's Foucauldian biopolitics: it not only encouraged them to enjoy the curfew-free night life with the "pleasure (i.e., sex) industry" (*hyangnak sanŏp*)[9] and late-night cinemas screening ero films but also engrossed their minds in sports played by unprecedentedly professionalized athletes under Chun's focus on "preparing the nation for the international games"[10] held in South Korea—namely, the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Therefore, many dissident intellectuals of the 1980s who stressed the sovereignty of the common people—namely the minjung—vis-à-vis then-illegitimate

state power, criticized the government's use of the 3S Policy and its collaborators, in particular erotic filmmakers who deployed two of the 3Ss: sex and screen. Initially conceived during the Colonial Period as a peasant-centered collective that militantly resisted the Japanese colonizers, the category of minjung ultimately came to embrace all dissident activists and sufferers in the 1980s who struggled and fought back against South Korean autocrats as well as all the enemies of bottom-up democracy.[11] Beginning with the anti-Japanese nationalist movement, the notion of minjung was not limited to a politically progressive and revolutionary cause (democracy) but also turned out to be the "major social, political, and cultural movement in the 1980s."[12] However, the minjung movement was ironically headed and commanded by South Korean intellectuals, particularly by certain college students called *undongkwŏn* (activist groups, literally meaning movement sphere) rather than ordinary people, so it could not practically detach from elitism.

Along this line, quite a number of film scholars have not only divided the South Korean cinema of the 1980s into ero film and minjung film, but they have also devalued the former as a conformist production bent to the military government's manipulation of the minjung vis-à-vis the latter as a part of the minjung movement that reflects the lived life of the minjung.[13] For minjung-oriented film scholars, ero film falls prey to the popular commercialism of the 3S Policy, which is in line with the aforementioned binarism between the commercial and the artistic.

While acknowledging the unofficial implementation of the 3S Policy and its association with ero film, I am skeptical of the policy's depoliticizing effect and of academic overemphasis of it as a single determinant of the genre film. For one reason, the minjung-ideology-aligned film critics and historians have overestimated the policy's disempowering effect on the minjung. Although many South Korean cinemagoers quite enjoyed ero film, their cathexes to the 3Ss never disinterested them from political injustice. Consequently, South Korean common people, indeed the minjung, regardless of age, gender, and class, were capable of democratizing South Korea in 1988 through their militant protests *en masse*, especially in June 1987, when the production of ero film peaked. Notably, the momentum of the large-scale protests had been cumulatively gathered from minjung activists' frequent, consistent, anti-government rallies throughout the 1980s.[14] Further, the South Korean minjung's Gramscian "consent" to the hegemonic ideology of democratization also occurred in the 1980s. In effect, Chun's culture policy belied the expectations of both the government administrators and minjung intellectuals, which indicates that culture is, by no means, the opposite of politics.[15]

The other reason is that many ero films are rather more closely linked with the minjung discourse than with the state ideology. Indeed, they do not propagandize but problematize the state-led industrialization widely and rapidly enacted by the Park regime and Chun's succession to it under the rubric of economism, industrialism, developmentalism, and upward mobility. In particular, ero film often

address the repercussions of Park's hurried push of industrialization by pitying its expansive range of social victims such as the urban poor, rural-girl-cum-urban-prostitutes, long-hour factory workers, immoral social climbers, expedientists, and jilted women from the last two groups. In fact, this tendency to reveal the dark side of compressed modernization is often witnessed in South Korean films made between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s, which are particularly rife with the feature of the innocent-rural-girl-turned-urban-prostitute.

Consequently, a new South Korean film genre called "hostess film" then emerged, featuring various prostitutes such as bar maids, club hostesses, call girls, and red-light district workers. Although the hostess film is a direct predecessor of the ero film in terms of its visual utilization of eroticism and thematic approach to the adverse effects of South Korean compressed modernization, there is a difference between the two genres: if the 1970s South Korean film industry was more or less too pusillanimous to utilize eroticism other than that of sex workers, the 1980s was more ready to expand erotic figures from hostesses to Korean women from diverse social classes, such as ordinary housewives, widowers, female college students, and even professional women. Furthermore, Korean men from various social origins, too, play the role of the erotic figures as well as of the social victims in ero films. In short, the hostess film initiated a trend of erotic filmmaking in South Korean cinema in the 1970s and merged into ero film as a subgenre in the 1980s. Since many ero films, including the hostess genre and the nationalist erotic film, square with the dissident rhetoric of the minjung ideology, they are, technically, not the antithesis but the thesis of it.

In this respect, it is indeed ironic that many film critics who supported minjung film have never paid attention to ero film's minjung-ideological side. The most obvious is that nationalist ero film is the very embodiment of the minjung nationalism of the 1980s. As mentioned above, the concept of minjung originated from anti-Japanese nationalism and then developed into a massive democratization movement in the 1980s. In the course of this development, the discourse's anticolonial nationalist drift did not die out but outlived the Japanese Empire by shifting its adversary to American domination in postcolonial South Korea. After the Korean War (1950–53), South Koreans avidly admired the United States not only as their savior from the red menace of North Korea, China, and the Soviet Union but also as a beneficial donor who helped them reconstruct a devastated nation by providing political and economic aid. However, admiration turned to animosity, especially among the minjung intellectuals, when they learned that Washington officials had not only supported the postwar South Korean autocrats, Syngman Rhee (Yi Sŭngman, 1948–60), Park Chung Hee, and Chun Doo Hwan but had also condoned the Kwangju Massacre. This animosity toward the United States was soon coupled with the minjung discourse, which evolved into minjung nationalism.

Minjung nationalism interrogated the erstwhile official nationalism of South Korea, especially of Park Chung Hee's anticommunist project of the "modern-

ization of [the] fatherland [*Choguk kŭndaehwa*]"[16] that aimed at overshadowing North Korea in terms of South Korea's exponential economic growth.[17] Park's nationalist project was contested inasmuch as it was not just officially propagandized on the basis of anti–North Koreanism but also ironically imbued with what Partha Chatterjee calls the "surreptitious colonization of knowledge."[18] Its primary impetus—namely, emulating the West (and Japan)—not only posits modernity as a teleological end of history but also locates essential modernity in the condition of putatively advanced nations with cultural supremacy. This kind of nationalism is indeed "surreptitiously" fraught with the European post-Enlightenment knowledge that constitutes a "supposedly universal framework of thought which perpetuates, in real and not merely [the] metaphorical sense of colonial domination."[19] Minjung nationalists thus questioned the legitimacy of Park's nationalistic modernization, the meaning of modernity, and the postcolonial hegemonic replacement of Japan by the United States. In so doing, they "began reassessing the relationship between South Korea and the United States and concluded that their country was nothing more than a US military fortress."[20] What fueled this reassessment was the fact that "South Korea always had a strong state vis-à-vis its own people," as Bruce Cumings puts it, "but a weak state vis-à-vis the United States."[21] For this reason, minjung nationalism partakes of anticolonial and anti-American nationalism, which is reflected in nationalist erotic film. I will show how this genre is closely involved with minjung nationalism as well as with popular anti-Americanism in the so-called dark age of Korean cinema in the following section.

PICTORIAL TURN: *MIHWA*'S DOMINANCE OVER *PANGHWA* IN THE 1980s

Along the lines of the anticolonialist minjung movement, the huge popularity of American mass culture in South Korea played another role in turning the minjung intellectuals, as well as a few Korean filmmakers, toward anticolonial nationalism. Cultural anti-Americanism was particularly ignited by the relative unpopularity of South Korean cinema, the then called *panghwa*.[22] While several South Korean erotic films performed well at the box office, Hollywood action blockbuster films were so beloved in South Korea that they topped the box office records of the 1980s. Table 1, which lists the 1980s' top ten box office hits, tells of the popularity of Hollywood films in South Korea during this period.

Although the list includes two Roland Joffé films (*The Killing Fields* and *The Mission*), which are not American but British productions, they were, to my knowledge, regarded as "American" in South Korea, probably because the two films not only garnered multiple Academy Awards but also featured American actors as their protagonists (Sam Waterston in *The Killing Fields* and Robert De Niro in *The Mission*).

Table 1. Top Ten Movies by Ticket Sales in South Korea, 1980–1989

	Title (Nation)	*Director*	*Year*	*Korean Release*	*Ticket Sales*[a]
1	*The Killing Fields* (UK)	Roland Joffé	1984	June 6, 1985	925,994
2	*Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (US)	Steven Spielberg	1984	May 8, 1985	808,492
3	*Rambo: First Blood Part II* (US)	George Cosmatos	1985	August 3, 1985	639,098
4	*Platoon* (US)	Oliver Stone	1986	July 4, 1987	576,924
5	*An Officer and a Gentleman* (US)	Taylor Hackford	1982	January 1, 1983	563,533
6	*E. T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (US)	Steven Spielberg	1982	June 23, 1984	559,056
7	*Never Say Never Again* (US)	Irvin Kershner	1983	December 23,1983	555,627
8	*The Mission* (UK)	Roland Joffé	1986	December 24, 1986	525,630
9	*Deep Blue Night* (South Korea)	Pae Ch'angho	1985	March 1, 1985	495,673
10	*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (US)	Steven Spielberg	1989	July 22, 1989	491,010

[a] In contrast with the United States, where a movie's box office success is estimated by its total income in theaters that have local variations in ticket prices, the South Korean film industry, in which the price is fixed at a national level, has used the total number of tickets sold since the late 1990s. Until then, each theater, particularly in Seoul, kept the records, based on which the table was complete, so it is subject to change. "Pidyo alba ŭi yŏnghwa pŭllogŭ, Nae chip ŭro wayo" [Video shop clerk's film blog, Come to my home], accessed December 21, 2015, http://blog.naver.com/hanyu313?Redirect=Log&logNo=60065014991.

Thus, it is not far-fetched to say that 1980s South Korean moviegoers discriminated against South Korean cinema in favor of American films, then called *mihwa*. Under these circumstances, Pae Ch'angho's *Deep Blue Night* was an unexpectedly exceptional hit in 1985. This not only astonished Pae himself but also tagged him as the "Steven Spielberg of South Korea" in celebration of the director's consecutive box office successes that followed his record breaker, *Korae sanyang* (Whale hunting, 1984) one year earlier.[23] Notably, Yi Changho's *Between the Knees*, theatrically released several months after *Whale Hunting* in 1984, outpaced Pae's film in its third week but then failed to surpass it.[24] Yi's erotic costume-drama film, Ŏudong (1985) challenged *Deep Blue Night* in 1985. The friendly rivalry between Yi and Pae was thus almost the only competitiveness in the panghwa industry vis-à-vis the mihwa in the mid-1980s.

Of course, Hollywood movies still sell immensely well in South Korea during the twenty-first century just like in any other nation. However, the lopsided ascendancy of mihwa in the 1980s was extremely different from the new millennial box office performance of South Korean films, which have been the record toppers since the late 1990s. Conversely, 1980s South Korean filmmakers were in a double battle against Hollywood's domination of the South Korean box office and the stagnation of the national film industry that had persisted since the 1970s. The dominance of mihwa in the 1980s caused fear and enmity toward Hollywood among South Korean filmmakers, critics, and journalists, which was reflected in a 1985 newspaper headline: "Violent Mihwa Dominant in Korean Box Offices This Year as Well."[25] Worrying about mihwa's popularity in South Korea, the reporter sought the opinion of a film critic, Hŏ Ch'ang, who not only aired his serious misgivings about South Korea's "infatuation with mihwa" but also stressed the necessity of importing "good-quality foreign-pictures [*woehwa*]" like European "art" films so that they can contribute to the "development of spiritual culture [*chŏngsin munhwa paljŏn*]" of South Korea.[26] Of course, nationalist warnings against the harmful effect of Hollywood cinema, singling out its commercialism in particular, is not unique or new in South Korea but valid in any country other than the United States in the name of national cinema. Indeed, national cinema has often been historicized in terms of "crisis and conflict, of resistance and negotiation"[27] vis-à-vis a Hollywood that is considered to be equivalent to a "global," "international," or "transnational" cinema.[28] The national cinema discourse is thus more often than not conceptualized and utilized as "a strategy of cultural (and economic) resistance: a means of asserting national autonomy in the face of (usually) Hollywood's international domination."[29] In the case of South Korea, this strategy of cultural resistance was unprecedentedly strengthened in the 1980s via the Korean discrimination against panghwa in favor of mihwa.

This discrimination was, I suggest, largely due to stunningly spectacularized visuals of mihwa in the wake of the emergence of New Hollywood's blockbuster films such as *Jaws* (directed by Steven Spielberg, 1975) and *Star Wars* (directed by George Lukas, 1977) in the 1970s. I credit the huge popularity of American

pop culture overall in South Korea in the 1980s to American culture's spectacular visualization, dominant to the extent that even non-visual media such as pop music entered what W. J. T. Mitchell calls a "pictorial turn." Mitchell characterizes the turn as a "postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality."[30] In the 1980s, American popular culture indeed embodied Mitchell's assertion that all media are mixed to the extent that "there are no 'purely' visual or verbal arts."[31] Therefore, postmodern American pop music came to be glamorously (in the wake of the "glam rock" of the 1970s) visualized by the 1981 launch of MTV (Music Television), while Hollywood blockbusters were also aggressively spectacularized in the 1980s. In contrast to this pictorial turn in American pop culture, 1980s South Korean pop music played up its aural quality so that the music's visual facets, invested in music videos or a vocalist's dance performance, were neither common nor appreciated; cinema during this time, as stated by director Yi Tuyong (Lee Doo-yong), was "wrapped up in writing stories into films."[32]

Although a few directors of the 1980s, such as Yi Tuyong, Yi Changho, Pae Ch'angho, and Im Kwŏnt'aek (Im Kwon-taek), attempted to refine their cinematic skills to sublimate into visual artistry, the visuality of their films were, as I will show with the analyses of *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night* in the following sections, often overshadowed by the then-pervasive impulse to verbally and linguistically ideologize South Korean cinema. The national cinema's ironic indifference to pictorial quality continues into the late 1990s; by that time, not only did the directors known for their films' stunning images, such as Kim Chiun (Kim Jee-woon), Pong Chunho (Bong Joon-ho), and Pak Ch'anuk (Park Chan-wook) debut with *Choyonghan kajok* (The quiet family, 1998), *P'ŭllandasŭ ŭi kae* (Barking dogs never bite, 2000), and *Kongdong kyŏngbi kuyŏk* (*Joint Security Area J. S. A.*, 2000), respectively, influence younger debutants, but the very first South Korean blockbuster film, *Swiri* (directed by Kang Chegyu [Kang Jegyu], 1999) was also produced. South Korean cinema, with its visual medium's general overemphasis on story rather than mise en scène in the 1980s, is ironically contrasted with what Theodore Hughes locates as "verbal invocation of the visual" in Korean literature, a traditionally visual medium's synaesthetic practice that has been employed since the Colonial Period.[33] However, it is also ironic that, despite South Korean cinema's adherence to story, its displaced narrative structure and "incoherent development of the character" have been indicated as the weakest points.[34] Of course, the severe censorship under the autocratic administrations of Rhee, Park, and Chun resulted in the rough, discontinuous montage and plot-structure of South Korean films, which is, nonetheless, still endemic in the national film industry. At any rate, panghwa was fighting a losing battle with mihwa in the 1980s.

Furthermore, the Fourth Revised Film Law (Che-4 ch'a yŏngwabŏp kaejŏng, 1973–84) inadvertently encouraged South Korean film companies to invest more

effort in enhancing the quantity rather than the quality of many domestic films. The law regulated startup film companies so heavily under a fussy license system that only fourteen to twenty companies could survive to monopolize in 1984. In addition, the few remaining companies took advantage of the foreign film import quota system, under which only the film companies that produced at least three panghwa films every four months were granted one license to distribute a single foreign film. Since the distribution and exhibition of mihwa were much more lucrative than those of pangwha productions, the quota system led one film producer to hurriedly produce twelve films in a year to earn four importation rights that year. Under these circumstances, the South Korean film industry was caught in a vicious circle. South Koreans began to disregard panghwa—including ero film—as a group of crude, unsophisticated, and low-quality films. To make it worse, ensuing revisions of the film law in 1984 and 1987 enabled mihwa to be directly distributed in South Korea and they were no longer imported by South Korean producers.[35] Upon the introduction of direct distribution, the threat of Hollywood increasingly and viscerally loomed over South Korean filmmakers by the end of the 1980s. As soon as the first directly distributed Hollywood film, *Fatal Attraction* (directed by Adrian Lyne, 1987) was theatrically released on September 10, 1988, some South Korean filmmakers vehemently rose up against the distribution. A few took such extreme measures as releasing snakes and committing arson attacks at theaters that were playing the film.[36]

Even though the law was not repealed, despite intense resistance that lasted until 1990, the protesters' use of extreme measures somehow succeeded in drawing national attention to their concern about South Korea's cultural subordination to the United States. For instance, a 1990 newspaper published a middle-aged subscriber's concerns about the South Korean adolescents who crowded a movie theater that was screening a United International Pictures (UIP)-distributed film, which the subscriber worried might "desecrate [South Korean] national culture [*minjok munhwa hweson*] in the long term."[37] To ordinary South Koreans as well as South Korean filmmakers, critics, and journalists, Hollywood was not simply an international cinema but a metonymy of the cultural imperialism of the United States, a superpower that would homogenize and contaminate South Korean national culture. Along this line, the anticolonial minjung nationalism aligned with anti-Americanism was greatly supported by a number of South Korean filmmakers, which was, in part, represented by nationalist ero films. In addition, South Korean audiences more or less positively responded to the filmmakers' concerns. Productions of ero films in conjunction with minjung nationalism thus peaked between the mid-1980s and early 1990s, and *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night*, which were released in 1984 and 1985, respectively, were instant box office hits.

The commercial success of these two anti-American nationalist films in the 1980s were not just indebted to South Koreans' fear of their nation's politico-cultural subordination to the United States/West but also reflected the enormous

leverage of American popular culture, including mihwa, on South Korea. However, the objective of the present study is not to simply reveal that many ero films were aligned with minjung nationalism nor to reaffirm that South Koreans simultaneously loved and hated the United States and its (popular) culture but to show that some of the films even embraced the problematic aspects of the South Korean nationalism, particularly its ethnocentrism linked with patriarchy. In terms of these problematic aspects, nationalist ero film ironically mirrors and overlaps with Park Chung Hee and South Korean official nationalism as well as with European colonialists' nationalistic logic in terms of their regressive desire for the ethnic purity of premodern times. In analyzing *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night* in turn in the next two sections, I will show how minjung nationalism has been transmuted into patriarchal ethnocentrism in South Korean nationalist erotic film.

AN ALLEGORY OF "CULTURAL RAPE" IN *BETWEEN THE KNEES*

A moderate hit of the 1980s, *Between the Knees* portrays a middle-class South Korean woman's sexual degradation, which is caused by a sudden restoration of a faint, traumatic memory of childhood molestation by an American adult male. Along with *Deep Blue Night*, *Between the Knees* values and idealizes Koreanness in direct opposition to Americanness by turning the main female character into a victim in her encounter with American people, culture, and lifestyle. In particular, the anti-American nationalism embedded in these two films "creates a double-edged, paradoxical allegory of a [neocolonized] nation: anticolonial nationalism can be achieved only through the self-construction of the feminine Other."[38] Indeed, the two films represent the female body as an otherized battleground wherein South Korean national purity is either preserved or disrupted, the guard of which is one of the most important duties of the South Korean man, a national subject. This tendency is not just applicable to these two films but to the other nationalist erotic films briefly discussed in the introduction as well.

Along this line, *Between the Knees* is a prime example of Fredric Jameson's famous and controversial formulation of the Third World literary and film texts as national allegories. Jameson pays attention to the public and political dimension of Third World texts that ostensibly unfold private and libidinal stories.[39] For Jameson, these stories are created under conditions where Third World nations, including South Korea, find themselves "in various distinct ways locked in a life-and-death struggle with first-world cultural imperialism—a cultural struggle that is itself a reflection of the economic situation of such areas in their penetration by various stages of capital, or as it is sometimes euphemistically termed, of modernization."[40] Indeed, *Between the Knees* politicizes the libidinal life of a South Korean woman as a national allegory of South Korea in the face of American cultural imperialism or capitalistic modernization. Resisting the imperialism in the

name of minjung nationalism, the film allegorizes the "life-and-death struggle" of a South Korean girl, whose body not only symbolized the imperiled ethno-nation but is also "raped by [American/Western] culture," as the director puts it.[41]

Although Jameson hopes that "all" Third World texts are allegorically returned to precapitalist "tribal" life in resistance to modern capitalist mode of cultural production, the nationalism embedded in *Between the Knees* commoditizes the very mechanism of politicization of the "libidinal dynamic" by equipping them with commercial eroticism. Although Jameson suggests Third World cultural nationalism as an alternative to a postmodern, capitalist, first-world culture that has created a modernist split between the private and the public, the poetic and the political, and the sexual and the socioeconomical, *Between the Knees* does not reconnect the splits but rather perpetuates them by ambivalently and paradoxically responding to Western modernity. The film thus militantly rejects cultural modernization (Americanization/commoditization), yet willingly accepts politico-economic modernization (capitalism and democracy). Just as Aijaz Ahmad critiques Jameson's "haste in totalizing phenomena in terms of binary oppositions"[42]—between the Third World and the First World, between nationalism and postmodernism, between (tribal) pre-capitalism and capitalism, and between canons and non-canons—1980s South Korea and its production of nationalist erotic films are located in the middle ground of such oppositions as an industrialized/modernized capitalist nation that desires to catch up with, not to resist, the West, using commercialized national allegories. In this process, the premodern is revalorized not for its pre-capitalist features but for its uncontaminated state free from the ethnocultural hybridization that accompanies modernization.

Furthermore, Jameson, as well as Ahmad, hardly consider woman's place in Third World nationalism, just as Caren Kaplan and Inderpal Grewal call these scholars "masculinist" Marxists.[43] Although Ahmad makes a passing remark on "gendered text" at the end of his response to Jameson, he and Jameson are neither largely interested in the "patriarchal construction of culture or cultural difference" nor do they pay attention to "the uneven divisions between men and women, as well as between First and Third World constructions of class as inflected by race"[44]—they are more invested in the international unity of male Marxists in the resistance to global capitalism. However, it is for this very reason that *Between the Knees* matches Jameson's theorization of national allegory. The masculinist resistance to global inequality in *Between the Knees* as well as in *Deep Blue Night* is partly compatible with Jamesonian binarisms and gender/culture essentialism metaphors, even though the nationalist rhetoric of the two films somewhat belies the formulae of the Jamesonian ideal of the Third World text in that these films do not carry strong Marxist themes.

Between the Knees thus persistently contrasts the South Korean with the Western/American, the premodern with the modern, the rural with the urban, and the male rapists with the female raped. The film often juxtaposes its female protagonist, Chayŏng with her college classmate and boyfriend, Cho Pin as a

parallel to the modern and the traditional, who is portrayed as a desirable and politically correct South Korean man. In contrast to Chayŏng's family, whose members lead a modern/Westernized lifestyle in a high-rise condo, Cho Pin and his widowed mother live in a *Hanok* (traditional Korean house) and wear *Hanbok* (traditional Korean dress) at home; whereas Chayŏng plays the flute, a Western instrument, Cho Pin majors in *taegŭm* (Korean flute). Contrary to Cho Pin and his mother, who enjoy *p'ansori* (traditional Korean dramatic song), Chayŏng's brother, Chich'ŏl, is infatuated with American pop music and with his idol, Michael Jackson. He not only plasters his bedroom wall with the photographs and posters of Jackson but also spends his time emulating the singer's dance moves at clubs or practicing them at home while watching music videos. Unlike Chayŏng's pharmacist mother, who more or less neglects household chores and childcare in her role as a modern working woman, Cho Pin's mother is portrayed as the traditional, ideal Korean housewife who, on top of her fidelity to traditional/Confucian female domesticity, even enjoys doing Korean embroidery as well as playing the *kŏmun'go* (Korean zither), as if she is a reincarnation of the ideal, premodern yangban woman of Chosŏn Korea. Even more interestingly, when Chayŏng, while listening to a Western string quartet in school, becomes sexually involved with her opera-singer classmate, Suil, Cho Pin and his mother attend a *pansori* concert "A Song of Ch'unhyang," a eulogy to the Korean role model of the "chaste woman." Furthermore, Chayŏng's Westernized family is dysfunctional to the extent that not only are Chayŏng and Chich'ŏl spiritually corrupted by Western/American culture, but Chayŏng's businessman father has been as well; he is shown to have fathered an illegitimate daughter, Poyŏng, with a former employee. Everything traditionally Korean is good and anything Western/American or modern/West-influenced is bad in this film.

In addition, *Between the Knees* adds other classic dichotomies between men and women and the aggressor/rapist and the victim/raped. Using these manichean binarisms, the film insists that even the notion of sexual pleasure is neither indigenous nor endogenous but *externally inserted* into South Korea. In this way, *Between the Knees*, while presenting unusually and surprisingly erotic scenes that are almost as explicit as the softcore spectacles of ero video, ironically repress sexuality by denying, negating, and even demonizing sexual pleasure as exogenous, that is to say, originating from the West. To Chayŏng, sexual drive is not what she voluntarily and endogenously experiences as a sexual subject but what she passively and exogenously encounters as a sexual victim of an American aggressor. Now a flute-major college student, Chayŏng had once taken flute lessons from a Caucasian American music teacher at her home when she was a young teenager. In flashbacks, the teacher, whose beard and round-rim glasses unmistakably remind the viewer of Freud (albeit Austrian), fondles Chayŏng's "knees," taking advantage of her mother's absence. The innocent little girl feels something, perhaps not sexual pleasure but something similar. It is at this moment

that her mother comes home to witness the scene of Freudian sexual seduction where the perverse adult is kissing an innocent girl's knees.

Ironically, the mother does not blame the American pedophile but rather places the blame on her young daughter for this sexual misconduct because, in South Korea, such fault is often and typically imputed to a woman's conduct, regardless of her age. The furious mother thus not only reproves her daughter by slapping her but also starts to keep a close watch on her every move. Under her mother's suffocating surveillance, Chayŏng's memory of traumatized sexual seduction is repressed so much so that she can neither remember it nor have any sexual encounter until one evening when she comes to accidently overhear a stranger's sexual moan in a crossed telephone line and suddenly feels a sort of sexual stimulation on her "knees" again.

The film shows thereafter how Chayŏng's reawakened sexual drive, which was instilled by an American flute teacher who indelibly fixated on her knees as a problematic erogenous zone, mutates Chayŏng into a sexually "abnormal" woman.[45] Chayŏng becomes unable to resist any sexual harassment whenever her knees are touched or defend herself from "Westernized" Korean rapists. While the film is replete with Freudian sexual tropes (e.g., a flute as a metaphor for oral sex), film critic See-moo Kim notes that its title, *Between the Knees*, is "transposed" onto the "extraordinary" image of "the glittering gold flute between Chayŏng's white knees" in several erotic scenes.[46] In this sense, Yi Changho, who is the director and a screenwriter for the film, uses the flute teacher, who resembles Freud, and "sexualized images derived from popular Freudism" in two ways.[47] On the one hand, Yi seems to accept Freud's emphasis on how the seduction phantasy represses the "normative" development of a child's sexual life, so that the Freudian "return of the repressed" is manifested in Chayŏng as a "neurotic" and "abnormal" sensation on her knees.[48] On the other hand, the director misconstrues the Western psychoanalyst's discovery of the ubiquity of human sexuality (even in infants) as a glorification or deification of sexuality by equating the ubiquity with West-oriented sexual liberalism or sexual degradation. Operating under these presuppositions, the film blames both the American sexual aggressor and the Westernized Korean rapists as Chayŏng (South Korea)'s victimizers who taint her (national) sexual purity. An American pedophile violently draws Chayŏng from her pre-adulthood sexuality, and then the West-influenced Korean men push her into adulthood sexual degradation. Notably, the South Korean rapists, or Chayŏng's unwilling or half-hearted sex partners, range from her "opera-singer" classmate, Suil, to total strangers such as the two "city" men, who selfishly create noise pollution with "Western" light music in the quiet rural village, where Chayŏng retreats after her first sexual intercourse with Suil, and random gang rapists who seem to be demoralized by Western sexual liberalism. The gang rape, which Chayŏng encounters at the end of her libidinal journey, completely breaks down her body and mind so that she loses her will to live.

Nevertheless, the film gives hope to Chayŏng insomuch as she is victimized against her will. While Chayŏng (modern South Korea) is sexually and ontologically imperiled by an American man and West-influenced South Korean men (the West), she is mentally and spiritually rescued by a "respectable" South Korean man, Cho Pin, who not only abstains from his sexual desire in order to protect his girlfriend but also appreciates Korean cultural traditions (premodern Korea) in his dismissal of Western culture. In one of the opening scenes, where Chayŏng and Cho Pin are leisurely sitting on campus where Michael Jackson's "Thriller" is diegetically heard, the couple talks about the singer who is negatively recognized by Cho Pin.

> Chayŏng: My brother Chich'ŏl is deluding himself all day long that he is Michael Jackson, which is his hobby.
>
> Cho Pin: I get scared whenever I see Michael Jackson. He fulfills all of Nostradamus's prophesies about the fin de siècle mood.
>
> Chayŏng: Jackson is gross sometimes, but cute like a toy at other times. Maybe he's so popular because he looks like a mischievous fairy.
>
> Cho Pin: I don't know if he is a fairy or a devil. But, I don't think he is doing us any good.[49]

Here Cho Pin expresses his nationalist concern on behalf of Yi Changho; the King of Pop is not only the Other who does no good to "us," the South Korean people, but is also a fairylike or devilish charmer who blindly bewitches his beholders, which is an eschatological sign that can be juxtaposed with the fin-de-siècle decadence of Europe at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century. Since the American singer is more or less demonized in the film as a metonymy of American/Western cultural contamination of South Korea, Chich'ŏl, who always imitates Michael Jackson's robotic moves and dances, ultimately fails to retain his human capacity: whenever Chayŏng is raped, the "eroticized" rape scene is always intercut with a shot of Chich'ŏl's mindless and self-absorbing dance at a disco, which underscores his robotic, inhuman indifference to his sister's tribulations. Unlike Chayŏng's rapists and Chich'ŏl, all of whom are enthralled and demoralized by American popular culture and Western culture in general, Cho Pin is portrayed as someone who is disenchanted by foreign culture in his role as a protector and guardian of Korean cultural traditions.

Cho Pin epitomizes what George Mosse calls "respectability." In his study of the relationship between European nationalism and sexuality, Mosse defines respectability as "'decent and correct' manners and morals as well as the proper attitude toward sexuality" in the context of the alliance between nationalism and sexuality among Western European bourgeois men at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century.[50] Just like fin-de-siècle European middle-class men, who

considered manliness "freedom from sexual passion, the sublimation of sensuality into leadership of society and the nation" against the decadence of the time, Cho Pin not only controls his libido to the extent that his relationship with Chayŏng remains purely platonic throughout the film—it was desirable and not considered strange for a 1980s South Korean heterosexual couple to restrain from a premarital sexual intercourse—but also embraces her physical and mental collapse after her continuous rapes including the final harrowing gang rape.[51] When Chayŏng is hospitalized for her suicide attempt, Cho Pin, who reluctantly split from her upon her request, runs to her sickbed immediately when he learns about it. Decidedly standing by Chayŏng like a knight in shining armor, Cho Pin reunites with her at the end of the film when she walks out of the hospital in a white dress, which foreshows the couple's happy future. Chayŏng is redeemed by a "manly" and "respectable" South Korean man in the film's patriarchal nationalist tenor.

Since the film insists that a nation must retain an "immutability not granted to the appurtenances of modernity," Cho Pin is embodied with the film's nationalistic yearning for the premodern/traditional in its retreat from modernity and the concomitant sexual liberalism of South Korea.[52] However, Cho Pin 's and Yi Changho's nationalism is ironically contradictory in that it exactly resembles and repeats early twentieth-century European nationalism as well as Park Chung Hee or South Korean official nationalism, which not only emphasizes (bourgeois) male respectability in terms of sexual abstinence that ultimately contributes to an ideal-nation-building but also removes "middle-class woman from active life outside the home and keep[s] her facing a turbulent age."[53] Just like Cho Pin's mother, an ideal woman in this rhetoric, should preserve her "innocence and chastity" as preindustrial symbol, "the pastoral and eternal [is] set against the big city as the nursery of vice."[54] Not to mention a respectable man should protect her. In terms of its anticolonial, anti-modern, and anti-Western regression to the preindustrial past, the minjung nationalism embedded in the film confronts its "irony," borrowing a term from Terry Eagleton, in that oppositional politics, like nationalism, is "ineluctably parasitic on [its] antagonists."[55] Indeed, the premodern-oriented, sexually repressive nationalist rhetoric in *Between the Knees* is, ironically, very similar to the European nationalism of a century ago as well as the South Korean official nationalism accentuating the "spiritual mobilization" and Korean traditional ethnic culture (*minjok munhwa*), which had been "surreptitiously" aligned with European colonialism and imperialism. As such, nationalism is, as Chatterjee points out, not only a "European export to the rest of the world" but also "entirely a product of the political history of Europe."[56]

Interestingly, Yi Changho, who professed in the mid-1980s that the package of his films combined sex and politics—particularly the minjung ideology—appears at the end of the film as the psychiatrist who helps Chayŏng rehabilitate, in order to explicitly verbalize the theme of the film in the scene when Chayŏng's mother drops by his office.

> We should blame society rather than your daughter. We are suffering from this Westernized lifestyle and way of thinking. They are not really meant for us. Try to forget about this nightmare and respect your daughter for her pure heart [actually "mental chastity" in direct translation] from now on.[57]

While the director explicitly blames Chayŏng's tragedy on the Americanization/Westernization of South Korea, Chayŏng is accordingly repurified and reborn, which is visualized by her white dress—a symbol of her pure heart or mental chastity. Later regretting that his cameo appearance made the film too "didactic," Yi worried that the film's "too sexual and erotic appeal" might have "distorted" his message.[58] However, I conversely see that *Between the Knees*'s verbalized patriarchal nationalist message rather distorts its unprecedentedly erotic, sensational, and realistic images. (Although the erotic sequences of Yi's *Pyŏldŭl ŭi kohyang* [Heavenly homecoming to stars, 1974], which was a prototype of the hostess film, were already sexually explicit enough in the 1970s to make it a phenomenal hit.) As one of the rare examples of South Korean cinema's pictorial turn, the images, in my view, in conjunction with the milieu of popular anti-Americanism, are the main attractions that drew South Korean cinemagoers to *Between the Knees* back then, although the film's too schematic approach to minjung nationalism tends to outshine them. Hence, at stake in *Between the Knees* is not the eroticism *per se* but the eroticization of rape as well as the problematic analogy of woman's body as the nation under the film's patriarchal nationalism.

Yi even verbally enunciates that *Between the Knees* symbolizes a cultural "rape":

> When I was making *Between the Knees*, I got the idea from the title first, and I wrote the script based on that. In the process, *I feminized myself*. In a sense, I wanted to place myself in the position of a woman and what it's like to be *raped by* [Western] *culture*.[59]

Therefore, Chayŏng, a victim of "cultural rape," whenever her knees are touched, reflexively (just like the Pavlovian dog) and nonsensically enjoys rapes (or quasi-rapes) from her childhood molestation to all of the subsequent rapes in the film. Although the final gang rape is an exception with its dismal music and close-ups of Chayŏng's tortured face, unlike her ecstatic face in previous rape scenes, tell of the seriousness of the event, this is an obvious narrative device to lure her into a suicide attempt. Therefore, there is no contemplation of the horrendous nature of rape but of the articulation of the ideological apparatus in the film.

Notably, this problematic use of rape in "a conflation of individual and national body" is often noted in Japanese male nationalists' writings and interrogated by Japanese female writers enacting what Michael Molasky calls the "counter-history" of Japan. Molasky's passage, which encapsulates women writers' critique of "the fantasy of shared victimhood" deserves an ample quote here.[60]

> With remarkable consistency, male writers from both mainland Japan and Okinawa have articulated their humiliating experience of the [World War II] defeat and [the American] occupation in terms of the sexual violation of women. This propensity of male writers to appropriate rape's symbolic dimensions while ignoring its violent reality may be what prompted Kono Taeko, an acclaimed female writer, to sardonically state that "it might have been best had the victors raped every woman in Japan." Only actual widespread rape, Kono seems to imply, could have discouraged the nation's men from appropriating women's sexual violation for their own ends.[61]

In keeping with Kono's infuriated reaction, Lydia Liu is also severely critical of Chinese male intellectuals' nationalist discourse in the face of Japanese invasion in the early half of the twentieth century:

> As a sign of symbolic exchange, the raped woman often serves as a powerful trope in anti-Japanese propaganda. Her victimization is used to represent, or more precisely, to *eroticize China's own plight*. In such a signifying practice, *the female body is ultimately displaced by nationalism, whose discourse denies the specificity of female experience by giving larger symbolic meanings to the signifier of rape*: namely, China itself is being violated by the Japanese rapist.[62]

Chayŏng's sexual victimization in *Between the Knees* is indeed "eroticized" to accentuate South Korea's cultural "plight" and to give "larger symbolic meaning to the signifier of rape." Although Chayŏng is a middle-class college student in the film, lower-class South Korean women, especially the military prostitutes of the US camptowns in South Korea, are often allegorized as the "victimized nation" in South Korean literature, film, and nationalist discourse. In her analysis of An Chŏnghyo (An Jung-hyo)'s novel, *Ŭnma nŭn oji annŭnda* (Silver stallion), which was also adapted into a 1991 anti-American film, *Ŭnma nŭn oji annŭnda* (The silver stallion will never come) directed by Chang Kilsu, Hyun Sook Kim points out how An's narrative of an American soldier's rape turning a widowed South Korean mother into a US military prostitute not only vilifies sex workers but also reproduces "totalizing, unidimensional images" of military prostitutes as "victims of militarism and neo-colonialism."[63] In the same vein, Katharine H. S. Moon problematizes the gendered relationship between the United States and South Korea—allegorized as male aggressor and female victim—for it not only "exempt[s] the [client] state from taking responsibilities for its action toward and regarding woman" but also "strips the weaker state of agency and over-emphasizes the role of the stronger state."[64] Both Kim and Moon criticize South Korean anti-American, patriarchal nationalists for feminizing South Korea vis-à-vis the United States as well as for homogenizing and totalizing South Korean women.

Relying on an essentialist gender discourse of masculine as active and strong and feminine as passive and weak as well as an essentialist culture discourse of the premodern as ideal and the modern as evil, Yi Changho, in his attempt to "feminize himself" in making *Between the Knees*, fails to walk in a woman's

shoes, especially in terms of rape. Rather, he feminizes South Korea and "strips" the nation of its "agency" by ironically "over-emphasizing" the cultural role of the United States and the West. Needless to say, his feminization of South Korea disregards the specificity of each South Korean—namely, his/her race, gender, and class. If the film delved into the more private, libidinal life of a woman than merely the politicization of her as a national allegory, *Between the Knees* would have been one of the most sensual, high-quality ero films made, even given the standard of the twenty-first century.

SHATTERED AMERICAN DREAM IN *DEEP BLUE NIGHT*

As the most commercially successful South Korean film of the 1980s, *Deep Blue Night* features South Korean immigrants in the United States, who are initially attracted by the American Dream but are later disillusioned by their struggles with ethnic feuds and internecine conflicts that ultimately cause their deaths. While *Between the Knees* allegorizes South Korea's essential ethnic culture "raped" by the nation's Westernization/modernization, *Deep Blue Night* depicts diasporic Koreans as ethnocultural traitors of the nation. Unlike the unenlightened victims of cultural rape in *Between the Knees*, a doomed path awaits the betrayers of the fatherland—namely, those who have willingly left the Korean peninsula in their admiration for the United States in *Deep Blue Night*. Unlike Yi Ch'angho's Manichean nationalist division between the West/the United States and South Korea, in his defense of the latter in *Between the Knees*, Pae Ch'angho, who worked for Yi as an assistant director of *Param purŏ choŭn nal* (A fine, windy day, 1980) and *Ŏdum ŭi chasiktŭl ilbu: Kasu Yŏngae* (Children of darkness part 1: Youngae the songstress, 1981), neither demonizes nor idealizes certain nations or national cultures but rather distances himself from valuing them. Pae problematizes the immorality of his diasporic characters, among whom the film's antihero, Paek Hobin, is performed by An Sŏnggi (Ahn Sung-ki), the actor who had played Cho Pin, the ideal Korean man in *Between the Knees*, one year earlier. Like many of the morally depraved male protagonists of South Korean erotic films who are willing to do anything for social success and economic prosperity as social victims of the compressed modernization, Hobin and his fellow immigrants are ready to do anything to become legal Americans.

Based on Ch'oe Inho's screenplay that is loosely adapted from his own eponymous novel of 1982, *Kipko p'urŭn pam* (Deep blue night) the film takes quite a different step from the original. In the novel, two Korean men, a singer and a novelist, escape from their depressing reality in South Korea (the military dictatorship and the singer's criminal status as an illegal marijuana smoker) to the United States to take a road trip in Southern California. They then suddenly decide to go back to their home country under the pressure of unescapable reality. While the novel focuses on South Korean young people's defeatism and escapism

under depressing sociopolitical conditions, the film substantially alters not only the novel's male protagonists into a man and a woman but also transforms its plot into a sham marriage to provide the man with legal, permanent residency in the United States. Subsequently, the film insists that the United States is neither a utopia nor an alternative to South Korea's politico-cultural turmoil in the 1980s.

The diasporic South Koreans in *Deep Blue Night* are depicted as those who came to the United States naively blinded by the extravagant splendor of Hollywood films. Having grown up with American popular culture just like Chayŏng and Chich'ŏl in *Between the Knees*, three diasporic South Koreans, two men and a woman, fantasize about and romanticize the United States as a "beautiful country" (*miguk*) a word that literally refers to the nation in Korean. In her admiration for the gorgeous and magnificent life depicted in Hollywood films, in which "people party and dance every night in beautiful gowns and live in huge residences commanding views of big ocean," the film's female protagonist, Jane, unhesitantly marries an African American G.I. by the name of Michael stationed in South Korea when she is an older teenager. Upon encountering the "dust in the wasteland" of a small town in Texas and being habitually battered by her husband who uses her as a release for his anger against racism, Jane finds her American Dream turning into a nightmare. Although she manages to divorce Michael, Jane not only loses the custody of their daughter, Laura, under the American legal system and its disapproval of her Korean way of mothering (disciplining a child by smacking) but also fails in her second marriage to a Greek man, who approaches her only to acquire a green card. Divorced twice, Jane decides to sell her third and fourth marriages of convenience to an Italian and a Pakistani, respectively, who also seek permanent resident status. Upon her fifth sham marriage to Hobin, Jane is initially reluctant to be involved in another green card fraud and changes her mind in hopes of having a child with a Korean man.

While Jane had already been disenchanted by American life and culture, Hobin, who only arrived six months prior, is thrilled at the prospect of becoming an American. He gives himself an American name, Gregory Paek, which is very similar to the name of one of Hollywood's most famous actors, Gregory Peck. In his interview with two immigration officers who visit him to examine the legitimacy of his marriage to Jane, Hobin impresses them by declaring his love of the United States as the "greatest country in the world" as well as the nation of "freedom, liberty, and opportunity"; he even sings "The Star-Spangled Banner" aloud. Upon attaining a green card, Hobin tells Jane how he will make money working day and night so that he can, in the future, hire several maids and purchase a mansion in Beverly Hills, a Rolls Royce with a chauffeur, and a small plane, which he saw in Hollywood movies. Hobin's male coworker at a grocery store is another South Korean worshipper of American life, who often wears a red outfit designed after Michael Jackson's costume in his "Thriller" music video. Growing up in Tongduch'ŏn, one of the largest US military camptowns in South Korea, and learning English there, the coworker is excited to realize his dream of

treading upon genuine American soil surrounded by "real" Americans as well as products "made in the USA."

The American Dream gradually devours and destroys the three characters of *Deep Blue Night*. Unlike Chayŏng of *Between the Knees* who is subconsciously and involuntarily victimized by the West/United States as well as by West-influenced South Korean men, the *dramatis personae* of *Deep Blue Night* are vilified for their conscious and voluntary choice of living in the United States. In a vicious circle of dog-eat-dog games among diasporic Koreans, Jane is used by Hobin, who is, in turn, used by his coworker in the film. Hobin's coworker, just like Hobin, has no money and a fiancée awaiting his invitation in South Korea. The clerk is extremely proud of his fiancée insomuch as he has managed, as an elementary school graduate, to dupe a college graduate by packaging himself as a "Korean American businessman." This penniless man, who badly needs money to marry his fiancée, encounters his chance when he sees a classified advertisement with a reward for Hobin's whereabouts in a Korean-language newspaper. After scraping money together by reporting Hobin to the ad, the coworker, while expecting his fiancée's arrival at the Los Angeles International Airport one evening, is unexpectedly and unfortunately killed by an armed African American robber in the store. In the meantime, the woman who posted the ad, thanks to the dead informer, manages to instruct Jane of the truth of Hobin: he not only sexually seduced and eloped with the wife of his former employer who was a Korean American store owner in San Diego but also stole $20,000 from her for his planned sham marriage and deserted her after having spectacular, outdoor sex in the middle of Death Valley, which is shown in the film's opening sequence. Having fallen in love with Hobin, Jane not only pays the jilted woman the stolen money on behalf of Hobin but also strongly refuses, upon his confessing the presence of his pregnant fiancée in South Korea (he is even deceiving his domestic partner in South Korea by marrying another woman, albeit for convenience to earn a green card), to divorce him after informing him of her own pregnancy. In his anguish, Hobin finally plans to get rid of Jane by reenacting what he did in Death Valley earlier.

In the desert, however, Jane ends up shooting Hobin as well as herself with her pistol due to her disappointment in his ingrained contempt of her miscegenation and interracial marriages. In this sense, the price of Hobin's immorality is finally paid by Jane, who is also tragedized by her own choice of marrying non-Koreans. Likewise, Hobin's coworker also faces a sudden tragic death due to the immorality of himself because he not only attempted to swindle a woman out of his league into a fraudulent marriage but also earned money by reporting his coworker, Hobin, rather than by making an honest living. *Deep Blue Night* thus deprives all its main characters of a hopeful future, as if all Korean immigrants who were duped by American Dream deserve tragic results for their immigration.

Just like *Between the Knees*, *Deep Blue Night* also deploys woman as a trope of ethno-national cultural purity. If Chayŏng's body is violated by the Westerni-

zation/Americanization of South Korea, Jane's body is, in Hobin's words, soiled by miscegenation and her interracial marriages. In *Deep Blue Night*'s last scene in Death Valley, Hobin insults Jane by using xenophobic language. After learning that his domestic partner in South Korea aborted his child to marry another man, Hobin hysterically bursts out laughing and vents his spleen by attacking Jane with a stream of verbal abuse. He derides her miscegenation with the African American man and her history of various interracial marriages by calling her "trash" and a "dirty bitch." He even physically assaults her by battering and kicking her stomach, causing a miscarriage. Facing these insults and assaults in an unbelievably calm manner, Jane tries to disillusion Hobin by saying that the American Dream is, just as Yi Changho verbalizes his message in *Between the Knees*, "as vain as the desert." Revealing that she is actually not pregnant, Jane keeps trying to persuade Hobin to start over in San Francisco with "love," not deception. However, Hobin contemptuously refuses her proposal by making it clear that he never wants to have any children with Jane, whose "filthy blood" has been made "turbid" by her interracial marriages.

Jane, unlike Chayŏng, is not raped but voluntarily engages in sexual relationships with her non-Korean husbands. She is then not only humiliated by Hobin but also condemned and deprived of a happy ending in the film. It is because South Korean patriarchal nationalism, as Chungmoo Choi notes, constructs "the Korean female as a woman who should be available only for the Korean male and then only within the bounds of matrimony."[65] Under this rhetoric, the film *Deep Blue Night*, just like *Between the Knees*, insists that "[a]ll Korean women, as the discourse of homogeneous single-nation (*tanil minjok*) mandates, are expected to be chaste and vigilant against foreign males and, by extension, masculine foreign power."[66] For this reason, *Between the Knees* sexually tortures Chayŏng while at the same time endows an optimistic future on her by allowing her sexual intercourse (vaginal penetration) only with Korean men.

Conversely, *Deep Blue Night* punishes Jane not only with her unrequited love for Hobin but also with self-destruction for her consecutive choices of sexual involvement with non-Koreans. Given that Hobin appears in Jane's life right at the moment when she wants to have a future as well as a child with a Korean man, it is even more depressing and tragic for her. But then why does she want to have a child with a Korean man? Is it because she believes that she can only raise a pure Korean-blooded child, contrary to the American court's decision to disqualify her custody of her Korean African American daughter Laura? If not, what makes her think that only a child of a Korean man can belong to her? Why does she want to start over with a villain such as Hobin, and why does she love him? Why does she single-mindedly insist on maintaining her marriage to Hobin? Mystifying her thoughts and desires as a woman, the film, fraught with patriarchal nationalism, ends up repressing the "ambivalence about and contradiction in women's subjectivity and therefore leaves no room to negotiate" so that Jane, in her disillusionment with the American Dream, desires "any" Korean man to no avail.[67]

While Jane is blamed for her adulteration of Korean blood, Hobin is seemingly punished for his racism. In fact, racism is tightly interlaced with nationalism and masculinism for they are all predicated on the distinction between the Self (us) and the Other (them). The rhetoric of nationalism, especially Korean *minjok* (ethnic/racial group) nationalism, often homogenizes the members of a nation by stressing the heterogeneity of the non-nationals and otherizing the different races. Just as Cho Pin of *Between the Knees* regards Michael Jackson as an African American singer who is doing "us" (Koreans) no good—if Jackson was Caucasian American, Yi Changho's rhetoric might have been a little different from his original message articulated by Cho Pin—Hobin insults Jane for her miscegenation with another Michael, her former African American husband. "Racism is constantly emerging out of nationalism," suggests Étienne Balibar, "not only towards the exterior [as a form of xenophobia] but towards the interior [as a form of sexism, class racism, or homophobia]."[68] Indeed, Hobin's nationalism is not only externalized as xenophobia or anti-miscegenation but also directed toward the "'racialization' of various social groups—not just ethnic groups but women, sexual deviants, the mentally ill, the subproletarians, and so on."[69] In this internalized nationalism, Hobin disdains Jane not only because she has interracial sexual relationships but also because she is a woman.

Hobin's misogyny can be detected in his relationship with Jane as well as with the abandoned woman in Death Valley. He does not want "serious" and committed relationships with the two diasporic women but uses them as mere tools for his sexual enjoyment and for achieving certain politico-economic goals (obtaining a green card and money). Hobin regards the diasporic women through his misogynic racism, as individuals physically and spiritually corrupted by American culture, whether by sexual morality or morality in general. For "[t]he unifying impulse of nationalism," as Chungmoo Choi notes, "demands moral purity, which is often articulated in gendered rhetoric."[70] In this vein, the one Hobin is spiritually committed to is his pregnant domestic partner in South Korea. Despite his unusually strong desire to be an American in the country of the so-called melting pot of human races or the country of multiculturalism,[71] Hobin's misogynic racism reveals that "racism is not an 'expression' of nationalism, but *a supplement of nationalism* or more precisely *a supplement internal to nationalism*."[72] Indeed, although his body left South Korea in pursuit of his dream of economic success in the United States, his mind or "spirit" paradoxically resides in South Korea. However, his contradictory nationalism ends up backfiring on him, for his diasporic status ultimately estranges him from the woman awaiting him in South Korea.

In this sense, *Deep Blue Night* is hostile to all diasporic Koreans. The Korean immigrants in the film, whether men or women, are notably neither likable nor empathetic but rather contemptible and pathetic. Hobin and his coworker, for their illusive American Dream, pursue their ends by any means necessary; they do not mind using up their compatriots for economic or sexual gain. While the

two penniless men are morally degraded, two diasporic Korean women (Jane and the deserted woman in Death Valley), who are relatively more affluent than Hobin, suffer from emotional emptiness. For this reason, they are easily seduced by Hobin in their own pursuit of physical pleasure and emotional contentment. Jane, as noted above, is the symbol of adulterated national purity. Therefore, Jane's defiled body, despite her *belated* desire for a Korean man, cannot be redeemed but must be exterminated with other "externally" damaged Korean bodies that encompass Hobin and his coworker, who are villains who might deserve fatal endings. The jilted woman, despite her adultery, barely escapes death in Death Valley for her delimited sexual relationships with Korean men, just like Chayŏng in *Between the Knees*. In this vein, *Deep Blue Night* is not only ambivalent toward the United States and its culture and people but also toward diasporic Koreans. It is partly because some of the diasporic Koreans in the United States, as far as the minjung nationalism is concerned, are too naive to be deluded and deceived by the American Dream—especially the dream portrayed in Hollywood cinema—and partly because they have willingly fled from the harrowing memory of the Kwangju incident as well as from South Koreans' defeatism under the Chun Doo Hwan's super-oppressive regime of the 1980s.

Although *Deep Blue Night* is a more nuanced film than *Between the Knees* in terms of nationalistic rhetoric, both films objectify and otherize Korean women sexually corrupted by American men or Korean admirers of the United States. Imputing the corruption to South Korea's modernization or Westernization, the two films urge their viewers to retreat into a putative premodern purity, whether into traditional Korean culture (as Cho Pin does) or into a patriarchal nationalist yearning for the premodern past when Korean women supposedly had no contact with non-Koreans (whether defined as people or culture). In this sense, both *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night* are not only impregnated with patriarchal nationalism in their guard of Korean woman's racial-sexual chastity but also with the elitist didacticism of minjung ideology in their attempt to disillusion South Korean spectators with the American Dream as well as with Western/American culture.

CONCLUSION

Teresa de Lauretis warns against "the massive destruction or the territorialization" of woman under the sadistic desire of the Oedipal narrative that posits man as a hero in a mythical quest and woman as an obstacle, in particular a spatial hurdle like that of a dark cave that the hero must conquer or eliminate along his journey.[73] Although de Lauretis's schematic division between the male subject and the female object is very much akin to Mulveyan binaries between the male gazer and the female gazed, her observation pertains to the present discussion of the South Korean nationalist erotic films of the 1980s. For it is indeed woman that

is either destroyed or territorialized in male nationalists' quest for ethnocultural purity imperiled by South Korean modernization/Westernization. The Korean woman is inscribed as the "locus of unchanging authenticity" and the "soul of tradition-within-modernity" in the sadistic narrative of patriarchal nationalists' retreat into the premodern to find, serve, preserve, and protect her and her (South Korean) ethnocultural purity.[74] Concomitantly, the temporally regressive journey is, like de Lauretis's Oedipal narrative, often impeded by the ethno-sexually imperiled woman as a spatial obstruction, whom the nationalists must destroy or rescue from her perils.

However, this nationalist narrative, as mentioned above, interestingly belies the conventional bisections of the South Korean cinema of the 1980s into ero film (conformism) and minjung film (anti-establishmentarianism) and commercial film and artistic film by oscillating between each division in coupling commercial and artistic eroticism with the minjung ideology, particularly with minjung nationalism. On the one hand, nationalist ero film, as a subgenre of ero film that critiques South Korean developmentalism, illuminates the "somber side" of "a double-edged phenomenon" of the nation's compressed modernity in terms of a loss of ethnocultural identity through its Westernization.[75] On the other hand, the genre copes with the somber side by retreating from modernity or ongoing Westernization into the pristine essence of South Korean minjok. In so doing, elitist masculinism and ethnocentrism come to the surface of the minjung nationalist message of the film as in *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night*. Of course, patriarchy and racism are not necessarily the essential nature of minjung nationalism but internally supplementary to, as shown above, any nationalism. Thus, the conjunction of nationalism and eroticism in the two films constitutes the eroticized national allegories conjoined with patriarchal "conflation of individual and national body" under the "fantasy of shared victimhood" of politico-cultural imperialism. In this way, the minjung nationalism embedded in the nationalist ero film is inevitably transmuted into patriarchal ethnocentrism.

I intend neither to understate nor to underestimate the significance of the minjung movement and its anticolonial origin nor to draw Manichean division between good and bad types of nationalism; rather I have attempted to reconceptualize the nationalist ero film as a part of the minjung movement instead of as a sheer by-product of the 3S Policy. However, the minjung movement has its own dilemmas such as didactic elitism and its paradoxically shared promotions of Korean traditional/premodern culture as well as of unwittingly aspirational and teleological emulation of Western politico-economic models (democracy and capitalism) with those of the oppressive state, which are obviously and ironically detected in nationalist erotic films. Consequently, the films' overloaded ideological agenda attenuates and undermines their "pictorial" values, even in well-cinematographed films such as *Between the Knees* and *Deep Blue Night*.

In their verbally enunciated ethnocentric messages, the films, by way of minjung nationalism, seldom consider transnational cultural exchanges, in particular

the exchange between the West/United States and South Korea, other than that of unilateral invasion or violence like rape. The two nationalist erotic films thus express great misgivings about the enormous leverage American popular culture had on the South Korea of the 1980s: (1) young Korean people are incapacitated by the music and images of Michael Jackson to the extent that two copycats, Chich'ŏl in *Between the Knees* and Hobin's coworker in *Deep Blue Night*, lack humanity or morality in often ominously played diegetic songs; (2) South Korean men, who listen to Western music, rape Chayŏng in *Between the Knees*; and (3) South Korean people who have emigrated to the United States—in their admiration for the dream life in Hollywood cinema—have run into tragic endings by betraying their compatriots in *Deep Blue Night.* In their anticolonial fear, the male filmmakers of nationalist ero films, on a par with minjung intellectuals, overlooked the paradigmatic shift of popular culture—namely, the "pictorial turn" present in the late twentieth century. Highly visualized American popular culture not only entertained and captivated the eyes of South Korean common people in the 1980s but also prompted South Korean professionals to Koreanize the pictorial turn in South Korean national popular culture since the 1990s so that it can be enjoyed and loved by national and international audiences. In hindsight, minjung nationalists' demonization of American popular culture was the elitist fuss of the 1980s.

Although the post-1980s pictorial turn successively brought national and international attention to South Korean popular culture, post-1980s Korean cinema did not escape patriarchal nationalism, for it has been compulsively and implicitly resurrected.[76] Furthermore, while "modernity displays gendered emblems of nationalist identity," as Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcón, and Minoo Moallem note, "postmodernity expresses its social relations in a gendered manner as well, drawing upon national and transnational icons and discourses as needed."[77] Indeed, postmodernity and post-globality have not emancipated South Korean woman (including the wives of multicultural families in South Korea) from earlier modern, nationalist oppression but instead have added transnational mandates such as global "disjunctures between economy, culture, and politics" that are interrelated with what Arjun Appadurai calls ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes.[78] With these transnational flows of people, media, technology, capital, and ideology, the lived lives of South Korean women are multidimensionally complicated and leveraged by the rapid changes of local and global climates. Insofar as eroticism has resurged in South Korean cinema with graphically sexual images—incomparable to ero film—since the mid-2000s, transnational feminist vigilance is consistently required to ward off the potential linkage of new South Korean eroticism with the persistently resurrected patriarchal nationalist desire in the nationally and internationally changing landscapes of this postmodern, postideological, postnational era.[79] Otherwise, woman in South Korean cinema would be constantly spatialized like the character Chayŏng in *Between the Knees* or exterminated like Jane in *Deep Blue Night.*

NOTES

A large portion of this article comes from the first half of the second chapter of my doctoral dissertation, Yun-Jong Lee, "Cinema of Retreat: Examining South Korean Erotic Films of the 1980s." It has been almost entirely restructured, revised, and rewritten. The term "woman" is used here in the singular and without an article to emphasize the complexity of woman according to American feminist writing practice.

1. It seems that the word "*erō* " has been used in Japan since the early twentieth century—indicated by the presence of a Japanese film genre called ero-gro-nonsense or erotic-grotesque-nonsense (*ēro-guro-nansense*), which was a trendy genre of the 1930s. For the ero-gro-nonsense genre, see Miriam Silverberg's comprehensive study of 1930s' Japanese modern culture including cinema, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times*. David Bordwell has also elaborately discussed the genre of ero-gro-nonsense in his study of the Japanese film director Ozu Yasujiro in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*. In addition, *ēro* was adopted to designate the early form of Japanese soft-pornographic film of the late 1950s and early 1960s called "eroduction" (erotic film production) before the emergence of the genre's nomenclature, *pinku eiga* (pink film) in the mid-1960s. See Donald Richie's essay "The Japanese Eroduction" in his *A Lateral View: Essays on Culture and Style in Contemporary Japan*. In its sexual explicitness, Japanese pink film, including the Nikkatsu Roman Porno of the 1970s, is beyond comparison with South Korean erotic films of the 1980s.

2. Equipped with the (soft) pornographic abundance of female nudes and sexually intimate scenes of a man and a woman, ero video enjoyed its heyday between the late 1980s and the late 1990s after the increase of household videocassette (VHS) recorders in South Korea from the mid-1980s. Despite its legitimate status as a South Korean softcore pornography film, ero video's erotism is much lower quality than the contemporary soft-porns of the United States, Japan, and European countries. Even in comparison to the ero video, the ero film is quite modest in terms of its sexual explicitness and thematic approach to sexuality due to the severe censorship of the South Korean government in the 1980s.

3. Ella Shohat, "Post-Third-Worldist Culture."

4. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, "Introduction: Transnational Feminist Practices and Questions of Postmodernity," 17.

5. See Yun-Jong Lee, "Cinema of Retreat: Examining South Korean Erotic Films of the 1980s."

6. Laura Mulvey has observed that mainstream film, including Hollywood cinema, has endowed its main characters with gendered role divisions—namely, by assigning the roles of narrative agency to male protagonists and that of visual lure and pleasure to female protagonists—hence, woman as image or "to-be-looked-at-ness" and man as "bearer of the look." See Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 6–18.

7. Rick Altman has proposed that film genres should not be seen as a unilateral message transmission between sender (filmmaker) and receiver (spectator) but as a multilaterally struggling "site" of its users and a "complex situation, a concatenated series of events regularly repeated according to a recognizable pattern." Rick Altman, *Film/Genre*, 84.

8. Sang Mi Park, "The Paradox of Postcolonial Korean Nationalism," 67–94.

9. Laura C. Nelson, *Measured Excess: Status, Gender, and Consumer Nationalism*, 117. In the fourth chapter of her book, Nelson examines how the South Korean public

began to pay attention to the nation's full-fledged entrance into consumer society from the mid-1980s and how the moralist tenor of this public discourse specifically problematized "[i]mproper spending, such as expenditures on sexual services" (118).

10. Rachael Miyung Joo, *Transnational Sport: Gender, Media, and Global Korea*, 45. In her linkage of sport and South Korean developmental nationalism in chapter 1, Joo touches upon how (media) sports, especially the 1988 Seoul Olympics, played an important role in shaping nationalist discourse of progress under the operation of the 3S Policy in the 1980s. In the second chapter of *Measured Excess*, titled "Seoul to the World, the World to Seoul," Laura C. Nelson also pays attention to how the Chun regime undertook the wholesale urban development project of Seoul as a part of the preparation for the 1988 Olympics.

11. See Namhee Lee, *The Making of* Minjung.

12. Hagen Koo, "The State, *Minjung*, and the Working Class in South Korea," 142.

13. Chu Chinsuk et al., *Yŏsŏng yŏnghwain sajŏn* [A dictionary to Korean women filmmakers], 263.

14. Notably, minjung activists, particularly undongkwŏn students, were likely to be among the regular consumers of ero film. In an oft-quoted anecdote, scenarist Sim San nicely explains how he and his friends, as undongkwŏn students, spent their college years throwing rocks at the police and government officials during the daytime and watching ero films in theaters at night. See Sim San, *Aema puin ŭi abŏji: Yi Munung* [Madame Aema's father: Yi Munung] and a quoted paragraph in an English translation of Yi Yŏnho's (Lee Yeon-ho) *Korean Cinema from Origins to Renaissance*, edited by Mee Hyun Kim, 278–79.

15. Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebook*.

16. For details see the fifth chapter of Gi-Wook Shin's book, *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Genealogy, Politics, and Legacy*.

17. Laura C. Nelson locates Park's focus on South Korean prosperity in the threat of North Korean communism as well as in "the presence of thousands of relatively affluent American soldiers." Laura C. Nelson, *Measured Excess*, 11.

18. Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*, 11.

19. Ibid.

20. Chungmoo Choi, "The Discourse of Decolonization and Popular Memory: South Korea," 471.

21. Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, 332.

22. Before the 1990s, South Korean cinema, which is now called *Han'guk yŏnghwa* (韓國映畵, Korean cinema) in South Korea, used to be designated as *panghwa* (邦畵), meaning "dramatic picture." The erstwhile term originated from Japan, where the same Chinese-character word (pronounced *houga*) was used to refer to Japanese cinema. Interestingly, the term is no longer used even in Japan.

23. Kim Yŏngjin, *Yi Changho vs. Pae Ch'angho: Han'guk yŏnghwa-ŭi ch'oejŏnsŏn* [Lee Jang-ho vs. Bae Chang-ho: The forefront of Korean cinema], 97.

24. "Kŭkchangga sosik" [Box office news], *Maeil kyŏngje sinmun*, October 19, 1984.

25. Mi p'okryŏk yŏnghwa Kŭkchanggasŏdo hwalgae [Violent mihwa dominant in Korean box offices this year as well], *Kyŏnghyang sinmun*, November 11, 1985. *Rambo II* drew 600,000 spectators into cinema—seventy-six percent of all imported films. My translation and emphasis.

26. Ibid.

27. Andrew Higson, "The Concept of National Cinema," 54.

28. See Stephen Croft's "Reconceptualizing National Cinema/s," which exhaustively touches upon the disparate practices of national cinema making in response to Hollywood in various countries other than the United States. Tom O'Regan also tries to conceptualize Australian cinema, especially in its relation to Hollywood, in his *Australian National Cinema.* Also see Mett Hjort and Scott Macknzie eds., *Cinema & Nation*; and Valentina Vitali and Paul Willemen, eds., *Theorising National Cinema*.

29. Andrew Higson, "The Concept of National Cinema," 54.

30. W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 16.

31. Ibid., 5.

32. Yu Yanggŭn, *Yi Tuyong*, 108.

33. Theodore Hughes, *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea*, 26.

34. See Soyoung Kim, "Questions of Woman's Film," 192.

35. Although the Fifth Film Law Reformation in 1985 not only increased the number of film production companies with a simplified registration system but also separated the production sector from the distribution sector, especially of imported films, it also established a foothold for American film companies to distribute their films directly in South Korea. Upon the Sixth Revision of the Film Law in 1987, which followed the trade agreement between the United States and South Korea on direct distribution, the quantity of imported films indeed exponentially increased from ninety-nine films (including sixty-three Hollywood films) in 1987 to 175 in 1988.

36. I remember that director Chŏng Chiyŏng, who frequently headed public protests against UIP (United International Pictures) distribution, released non-poisonous snakes into cinemas playing *Fatal Attraction* at the time. Other protesters sprayed teargas into screening rooms, and some even set fire (soon extinguished, though) to film theaters.

37. Cho Kyŏnghŭi, "UIP chikbae yŏnghwa pancho minjok munhwa hweson [Prevalent UIP-distributed films desacralizing ethnic-national culture], *Hankyŏre sinmun*, January 21, 1990.

38. Chungmoo Choi, "Nationalism and Construction of Gender in Korea," 22.

39. See Fredric Jameson, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism," 65–88.

40. Ibid., 68.

41. See-moo Kim, *Lee Jang-ho*, 96.

42. Aijaz Ahmad, "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the 'National Allegory,'" 8.

43. Caren Kaplan and Inderpal Grewal, "Transnational Feminist Cultural Studies," 352.

44. Ibid., 353.

45. Kang Sowŏn mentions that "abnormal" women are often witnessed in many ero films. See Kang Sowŏn, "1980-nyŏndae Han'guk 'sŏngae yŏnghwa' ŭi seksyuŏllit'i wa chendŏ chaehyŏn" [The representation of sexuality and gender in South Korean sex films of the 1980s].

46. See-moo Kim, *Lee Jang-ho*, 60.

47. Christine Gledhill, "Rethinking Genre," 236.

48. Regarding seduction phantasy, see three case studies of neuroses in Sigmund Freud, *Three Case Histories*.

49. My translation and emphasis.

50. George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 1.

51. Ibid., 13.

52. Ibid., 52.
53. Ibid., 112.
54. Ibid., 98.
55. Terry Eagleton, "Nationalism: Irony and Commitment," 26.
56. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, 4.
57. Scene from *Between the Knees*, DVD translation.
58. Yi Hyoin, "Yi Changho kamdonk ron" [On director Lee Jang-ho], 35.
59. See-moo Kim, *Lee Jang-ho*, 95–96. My emphasis.
60. Kono Taeko, "Jikai" [Self displine], *Bungei* (July): 10–11; as cited in Michael S. Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa*, 46.
61. Ibid., 112.
62. Lydia Liu, "The Female Body and the Nationalist Discourse," 43–44. My emphasis.
63. Hyun Sook Kim, "*Yanggongju* as an Allegory of the Nation," 180.
64. Katharine H. S. Moon, "Prostitute Bodies and Gendered States in US–Korea relations," 157.
65. Chungmoo Choi, "Nationalism and Construction of Gender," 27.
66. Ibid., 14.
67. Ibid., 28.
68. Étienne Balibar, "Racism and Nationalism," 53.
69. Ibid., 48.
70. Chungmoo Choi, "Nationalism and Construction of Gender," 28.
71. See Minoo Moallem and Iain A. Boal, "Multicultural Nationalism and the Poetics of Inauguration." Moallem and Boal show how the melting pot discourse has switched to multicultural nationalism since the inauguration of US President Clinton and how the latter is as problematic as the former in terms of the paradoxical consolidation of Caucasian ethnocentrism.
72. Étienne Balibar, "Racism and Nationalism," 54. Original emphasis.
73. Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema*, 155.
74. Prasenjit Duara, "The Regime of Authenticity," 300.
75. Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, 7.
76. South Korean women are still persecuted and destroyed in so-called post-1980s national (*kungmin*) films such as *Sop'yŏnje* (directed by Im Kwŏnt'aek, 1993) and *Swiri* (directed by Kang Chegyu, 1999), both of which opened a new era of South Korean cinema with their phenomenal record-breaking successes. While the female protagonist of *Sop'yŏnje* is raped and blinded by her foster father in his egoistic hope of maturing her skills as a *pansori* singer by sublimating her complex responses to him into artistic achievement, *Swiri* leads its North Korean spy heroine to voluntarily kill herself for her love of a male South Korean intelligence agent.
77. Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcón, and Minoo Moallem, eds., *Between Woman and Nation*, 15.
78. Appadurai coins the terms "ethnoscape," "mediascape," "technoscape," "financescape," and "ideoscape" to explain the "fluid, irregular shapes of [the global and transnational] landscapes' of people, media, technology, capital, and ideology, respectively. See Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 33.
79. South Korean moviegoers have given a very warm welcome to the recent resurgence (since the mid-2000s) of erotic filmmaking that had barely stayed afloat in the 1990s and early 2000s.

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Choyonghan kajok [The quiet family]. Directed by Kim Chiun [Jee-woon Kim]. Myŏng P'illŭm. South Korea, 1998.

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