



Yu Hyun-mok's Artistic Experimentation and Imitation in *The Empty Dream* (1965): Scene Comparisons with *Daydream* (1964)

Chonghwa CHUNG

Abstract

This article analyzes Yu Hyun-mok's experimental exploration and cinematic style within the context of the 1960s Korean film industry by conducting a comparative study of his film The Empty Dream (1965) with its original screenplay and scenes from the Japanese film Daydream (1964). What sets this study apart is its textual analysis through an examination of both the films and their respective screenplays. While both films are erotic in nature, explicit eroticism dominates in Daydream. The aesthetic achievement of Daydream lies in its treatment of reality using a fantastical atmosphere, a sophisticated mise-en-scène that expresses the structural circulation of reality and fantasy. The Empty Dream had two different screenplays: the screenplay for the Film Production Declaration, which replaced the opening and closing scenes of the Japanese version, and the final screenplay for dubbing, which returned the opening and closing scenes but differentiated itself from the Japanese version by the use of montage techniques and an expressionistic style. In directing The Empty Dream, Yu selectively incorporated visual elements from both versions of the screenplay, creating an experimental artistic film rare in South Korean cinema at the time. While film scholarship has often discussed The Empty Dream as a representative text in the history of censorship of obscenity, this article argues that the creative essence of the film is its combining imitation of the Japanese screenplay with the director's artistic experimentation.

Keywords: *The Empty Dream*, Chunmong, Daydream, adaptation, plagiarism, censorship of obscenity

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Introduction

The aim of this article is to examine the production process of the film *The Empty Dream* (*Chunmong*, 1965), while simultaneously analyzing the cinematic style its director Yu Hyun-mok (Yu Hyeon-mok), whose experimental exploration in this film was unusual for mid-1960s Korean filmmaking.¹ At this time, the South Korean (hereafter Korean) film industry was expanding rapidly, with commercially oriented genres such as melodramas, youth films, comedies, and action thrillers gaining popularity. The primary methodology of this study involves a textual comparison with the 1964 Japanese film *Daydream* (*Hakujitsumu*), directed by Takechi Tetsuji, from which *The Empty Dream* was adapted. Yu Hyun-mok, who directed *Aimless Bullet* (*Obaltan*) in 1961, had previously strived to secure a space for Korean-style art films adapted from literary works (*munye yeonghwa*), while also directing genre films such as melodramas and comedies. *The Empty Dream* represented a new direction in his directorial efforts. Although the film was categorized as an experimental art film² within the Korean commercialized film landscape, it was subjected to censorship and the director was prosecuted for obscenity (*oeseol*), ultimately receiving a guilty verdict. Meanwhile, the Japanese film *Daydream*, planned and directed by Takechi Tetsuji and adapted from the eponymous play³ by the novelist Tanizaki Jun'ichiro, also stirred controversy in Japanese society, blurring the lines between art and obscenity (Sharp 2008, 73–74). When *Daydream* was released in June 1964 by Shochiku in Japan, the Japanese

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1. "I am a director who is distant from eroticism, but for this film, *Chunmong*, I directed it in the experimental film style that I wanted to try when I was young. Although it was challenging for the general audience to understand, and the film failed commercially, I personally pride myself on the 'experimental' nature of it, considering it a success" (Yu 1995, 150–151).
 2. At the time, the production company described *The Empty Dream* as "one experimental work completed by veteran Yu Hyun-mok, who is motivated by artistic ideals and has been producing acclaimed art films for several years." For details, see "Proposal for production of feature film *The Empty Dream* (April 26, 1965)" from MPI Review Document (KOFA document no. RK01177-003).
 3. The play consists of four acts. *Chūō kōron* (Central Review), September 1926.

media engaged in debate on the uselessness of film ratings (EIRIN) and the revival of censorship. In this climate, the Tokyo Metropolitan Ordinance on the Healthy Development of Youths was passed by the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly in July of the same year (Yamada 1964, 101). In fact, *Daydream* was not exempt from government censorship; it became the first Japanese film to apply *fogging* to the depiction of female pubic hair (Weisser and Weisser 1998, 90, 102). Conflict between the creators and the guardians of public order did not end here but was just beginning. *Daydream* was a great commercial success amidst debates on art and obscenity, and *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Koukeimu*, 1964), also directed by Takechi, followed the same path. The following year, Nikkatsu distributed Takechi's *Black Snow* (*Kuroi yuki*, 1965), an erotic film that also reflected anti-American sentiments. This led to a trial for violation of the Law on Control of Customs and Manners that resulted in seven officials from the Film Ethics Regulation Control Committee being placed under house arrest (Tanaka 1976, 82–85). *Daydream* holds a place in the early history of Japanese “pink films” as the first erotic film to have a mainstream release (Sharp 2008, 71–72).

This article examines the textual relationship between *The Empty Dream* and *Daydream* through a comparative analysis of their screenplays and film versions. It also describes how Yu Hyun-mok's experimental exploration was possible within the framework of commercial feature film production in Korea. Central to this analysis is the fact that the Korean film *The Empty Dream* was based on a screenplay that was either plagiarized or adapted, depending on one's point of view, from the Japanese film *Daydream*.

Previous Research

Director Yu Hyun-mok's film *The Empty Dream* has garnered significant academic interest since its discovery, restoration, and re-screening in 2004.⁴ This attention can be understood through two perspectives. The first

4. The 35mm negative film of this movie was acquired by the Korean Film Archive from the production company Century Co., Ltd. in 1983. There were a total of 8 rolls, but in

revolves around the context of Korean censorship of obscenity, as explored in a study by Park Yuhee (2015). Park's study examines the relationship between the authorities' censorship of obscenity and film representation from the late 1960s to the early 1980s, focusing on *The Empty Dream* and *The Ae-ma Woman* (*Aema buin*). Park delves into the incident where Yu Hyun-mok was accused of obscenity on January 4, 1966, revealing the authorities' wavering stance between art and obscenity. Cho Junhyoung (2014) also mentions *The Empty Dream* in discussing the relationship between the Park Chung-hee regime and sexuality in films, citing it as a landmark case of the first Korean cultural product to be involved in an obscenity scandal.

The second perspective involves a comparison of *The Empty Dream* with the original Japanese film *Daydream*. Alexander Zahlten (2012) analyzes *The Empty Dream* not as a plagiarized version of *Daydream*, but as a "self-conscious positioning vis-à-vis competing fantasies of the other and of a national formation." Zahlten argues that, since it was impossible for Yu to directly watch *Daydream*, the act of comparison itself is "a partial fantasy," as it is a comparison between the Korean film and "an imagined other" (Zahlten 2012, 43–45)—i.e., what Yu *imagined* the original Japanese film to be like. Zahlten himself did not compare the screenplays of the two films; he only compared the two completed films, concluding that they were totally different films and that *The Empty Dream* is not a plagiarized film. While he includes a description of *Daydream* in his discussion of *The Empty Dream*, his aim is not to conduct a comparative analysis of the two films.

Hong Jinhyuk (2013) describes how the erotic scenes and narrative of

two rolls (7 and 8) the sound was missing. When a retrospective exhibition for director Yu Hyun-mok was held at the 4th Busan International Film Festival in 1999, this film was not included in the screening. In 2004, however, at the 8th Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, approximately 13 minutes of lost sound was restored, and the film was publicly screened for the first time in nearly 40 years. The current version available for viewing, totaling 71 minutes, is a creative restoration that includes film music by music director Cho Sung-woo and additional post-synchronized dialogues. Notably, voice actor Lee Kang-sik, who voiced for actor Shin Sung-il in the original *The Empty Dream*, participated once again in this restoration. For more details on this process, see H. Kim (2005).

Daydream are expressed in *The Empty Dream*, emphasizing the differences between the two films in terms of filmmaking conventions, directorial styles, and differences between Korea and Japan in cultural reception. Hong meticulously analyzes *The Empty Dream* using narration theory but reserves aesthetic value judgment related to plagiarism for future research (Hong 2013, 161, 180).

David Scott Diffrient (2023) compares *The Empty Dream* and *Daydream* based on the above two perspectives, arguing that *The Empty Dream* was an “illicit remake” of *Daydream* because the proper authorization process, which requires permission from the film production company, was not followed. While he conducts a very meticulous intertextual and metatextual analysis, he limits his analysis to the final (released) versions of the films, as previous studies did. Moreover, while he praises Yu for “transform[ing] a sexually explicit tale into a meditation on the medium’s ability to alter one’s perception of the world,” he mistakenly states, without citation, that Century Co., Ltd. (Segisangsa) received permission from the Japanese film director and screenwriter, Takechi Tetsuji (Diffrient 2023, 51).⁵ Other than the above-mentioned studies, which touch on but do not focus directly on the issue, the question of plagiarism versus adaptation as applied to a comparative study of both screenplays and films has not been extensively explored in existing research.

Beginning in 1958, the South Korean film industry underwent rapid expansion, particularly after the government took direct measures to regulate film production by enacting the Motion Picture Law in 1962 and its first amendment in 1963. During this time, it is no exaggeration to say that the film industry facilitated this quantitative growth by plagiarizing and imitating Japanese film screenplays. Film companies relied on Japanese screenplays as the basis for films they produced primarily for ease-of-planning and economic reasons. The direct result of this was a trend of youth films, based on plagiarized Japanese scripts, peaking in 1964. Despite

5. This seems to be based on Yecies and Shim’s unfounded statement that Guk Kwae-nam, the president of Segisangsa, bought the remake rights for *Daydreams* (Yecies and Shim 2016, 51).

the authorities' announcement in January 1965 of intensified censorship and a strict crackdown on plagiarism, production of the film *The Empty Dream* began, even though its screenplay was a plagiarized version of *Daydream*.

In this article I make a comparative analysis of the films *The Empty Dream* and *Daydream* considering not only the two films themselves but also their respective screenplays.⁶ I also review all the censorship documents⁷ produced by the Korean government for *The Empty Dream*, establishing a connection between the Korean and Japanese films. Employing a multi-layered archive, I explore how the Korean film text of *The Empty Dream* is constructed via a *middle path* between imitation of the Japanese film screenplay and artistic experimentation within the landscape of contemporary Korean film production.

My analysis of the Korean and Japanese film texts is conducted from the perspective of the “mode of cinematic plagiarism and adaptation” (Chung 2017) that operated in Korean cinema during the 1960s. Through this approach, a more complex picture emerges than is found in existing discussions (Yecies and Shim 2016, 51–55; Diffrient 2023) which have categorized the Japanese film *Daydream* as a pornographic film and the Korean film *The Empty Dream* as an experimental art film and merely conclude that *The Empty Dream* succeeded as an experimental film text. In this study I also analyze aesthetic differences between the two films.

The mode of cinematic plagiarism (*pyojeol*) and adaptation (*beonan*) includes various layers that can be applied to analysis of the two films in question. To begin with, in the early to mid-1960s, Korean plagiarism of Japanese films was not conducted through the visual dimension, but rather through unauthorized adaptation of Japanese screenplays: Korean

6. The screenplay source for the Japanese film *Daydream* is “Scenario: *Daydream*” in the magazine *Scenario* (Takechi 1964). The screenplay source for the Korean film *The Empty Dream* is the Korean Film Archive, which currently preserves the initial screenplay submitted for production declaration and the final screenplay for dubbing. For the analysis in this article related to Yu Hyun-mok's direction, I focus primarily on the latter, the screenplay for dubbing which is close to the final film.

7. *Chunmong* (*The Empty Dream*), MPI Review Documents, KOFA document set no. RK01177.

filmmakers translated Japanese screenplays into Korean, eliminating or abbreviating some scenes or lines and changing Japanese place names and personal names to Korean ones under the pretext of adaptation. The screenplays of *The Empty Dream* exhibit a more complex pattern; in the initial screenplay submitted for production declaration, a dental clinic in the original Japanese version was changed to a sky lounge in the opening and the closing scenes, while the rest of the content was left mostly unchanged. Except for the opening and closing scenes, the Korean film was basically a literal translation of the Japanese film. When it was pointed out during the censorship process that this was plagiarism, the production company went through a revising process. Specific lines of dialogue were changed, but the scene structure and overall flow remained almost identical to the Japanese film version, with the dental clinic returning to the prologue and epilogue. However, montages of colliding shots and graphic match cuts and expressionist motifs were reflected in the stage directions of the final screenplay for dubbing, evidencing a creative direction that differs from that of *Daydream*.

Secondly, the screenplay of the original Japanese film underwent considerable changes during production, with director Takechi Tetsuji changing certain parts of the screenplay during the filmmaking process. Yu Hyun-mok, in addition to adapting the Japanese screenplay, added his own visual elements beyond mere adaptation; there are even places in *The Empty Dream* where Yu Hyun-mok adhered more strictly to the original screenplay of *Daydream* than Takechi had. As described below, Yu's *The Empty Dream*, defined as an unauthorized remake, inevitably adheres closely to *Daydream*. Nevertheless, Yu's stylistic exploration, based on the spirit of cinematic experimentation and walking a path between plagiarism, adaptation, imitation, and creation, marks Yu Hyun-mok's film as a unique work in its own right.

A third point to consider is whether Korean film directors at the time watched the original Japanese films rather than only reading the screenplays. Korean films in the early to mid-1960s that plagiarized Japanese films were indeed inspired by the Japanese screenplays, but it is difficult to confirm whether the films' directors watched the original films and copied them.

Before the normalization of diplomatic relations between Korea and Japan in 1965, opportunities for Koreans to watch Japanese films were mostly limited to events such as the Asia Film Festival, held since 1954. Since there were no video cassette tapes, even if it were possible to watch films in Japan, analyzing and plagiarizing scenes from the original films would undoubtedly be a highly labor-intensive and inefficient process. Even though the original Japanese film of *My Wife Is Confessing* (*Anae-neun gobaekanda*, 1964, directed by Yu) was officially screened at the 9th Asian Film Festival held in Seoul in May 1962, only a limited number of film industry insiders were able to watch it (Chung 2022, 92–95). While there is no record of who attended the screening, it is possible that Yu watched the original Japanese film, though he explicitly stated that he intentionally avoided watching it (H. Cho 2004, 141). *Daydream* did not have the opportunity to be officially screened at any film festivals in Korea, so it is unlikely that Yu watched it before directing *The Empty Dream*. In a 2004 media interview, Yu stated that he had only read the screenplay of *Daydream*.⁸ Therefore, it can be said that Yu directed *The Empty Dream* by turning the Japanese screenplay, which he plagiarized and adapted, into his own visual image.

Controversies of Plagiarism and Obscenity: The Production Process of *The Empty Dream*

The production process for *The Empty Dream* can be described as director Yu Hyun-mok's adventurous pursuit of auteurism within the film landscape of Chungmuro—the name of an area in Seoul as well as a nickname for the Korean film industry. According to Yu, the Korean remake of *Daydream* began when President Guk Kwae-nam of Century Co., Ltd. (Segisangsa)

8. “[Inteobyu] 40nyeon man-ui gamgae muryanghan bokwon, *Chunmong-ui Yu Hyeon-mok gamdok*” ([Interview] Great Restoration after Four Decades, Yu Hyun-mok of *The Empty Dream*), *Maxmovie*, www.maxmovie.com/news/6017, July 29, 2004. In addition, in an interview for *My Korean Cinema*, Yu stated, “At first, I quickly read through the Japanese script, but...I haven’t watched [the movie.] It was difficult to travel to Japan then. Even if I had watched the movie, I couldn’t do it exactly as it was” (H. Kim 2005).

approached him with the screenplay⁹ (Yu and Cho 2004, 137). Despite the explicit nudity of women in the original Japanese film *Daydream*, which bordered on provocative pornography, President Guk Kwae-nam, who had watched the film in Japan, apparently convinced director Yu that if he were to create a Korean version, it would be categorized as an artistic film. Of course, it is likely that the production company also calculated that the film would be commercially successful due to its erotic elements, which would capture the audience's attention.¹⁰ Yu trusted that President Guk would allow him to create the film he wanted while borrowing certain elements from the Japanese original. In short, seeing that *Daydream* was a massive hit in Japan amidst debate about art and obscenity, President Guk aimed for commercial success by packaging the Korean version of the film with the artistry of auteur director Yu Hyun-mok. For director Yu, agreeing to remake the original provided a long-awaited opportunity to create an experimental film within the commercial film production environment. The desires for both commercial success and artistic expression converged in *The Empty Dream*, which reflected the level of sexual depiction that was acceptable in Korean cinema at the time.

Censorship documents from that time show that the film production declaration (*yeonghwa jejak singoseo*) submitted to the Ministry of Public Information (Gongbobu, hereinafter MPI) by Century Co., Ltd. was dated April 27, 1965. The declaration lists Kim Han as the original author (*wonjakja*), planning officer (*gihoek damdangja*), and adaptation officer

9. President Guk Kwae-nam of Century Co., Ltd. participated in the 10th Asian Film Festival held in Tokyo in 1963 and was a member of a civilian economic delegation that visited the United States in 1965. He was a person who could work globally. However, the person who approached Director Yu with the screenplay may have been CEO Wu Gi-dong, an executive producer in charge of film production at Century.

10. The Korean daily *Chosun Ilbo* reported that Yu's *The Empty Dream* featured "Park Soojung as the heroine, after she beat out more than 500 competitors to secure the main role along with Shin Sung-il. She portrayed a semi-nude character in the film." This information confirms the involvement of key figures in the casting process and highlights the provocative nature of the film ('Yeonye hwaje: Baeu-deul imsi hyueop? Nyu peiseu seonpung' [Entertainment Buzz: Actors on Temporary Hiatus? A Storm of New Faces], *Chosun Ilbo*, May 2, 1965).

(*gaksaek damdangja*). Kim Han was in fact another name for Kim Han-il, who made his directorial with *Enemy of Women* (*Yeoseong-ui jeok*, 1956) and was active as a director in the late 1950s. He joined Century Co., Ltd. in 1964 and was involved in various projects, including *The Desperate Chase* (*Pilsa-ui chujeok*, Dir. Jeon Eung-joo, 1964) and *The Devil's Stairway* (*Ma-ui gyedan*, Dir. Lee Man-hee, 1964), as planning producer. Notably, the films *My Wife Is Confessing* (Dir. Yu Hyun-mok, 1964) and *When Night Falls at Myeongdong* (*Myeongdong-e bami omyeon*, Dir. Lee Hyeong-pyo, 1964), both of which were accused of plagiarizing Japanese screenplays, were also planned by Kim Han.

Examining the censorship documents for *The Empty Dream*, I found that the stamped seal on the Certificate of Acquisition of Performance Rights (Gongyeongwon chuideuk jeungmyeongseo), guaranteeing the film to be the creator's work, is that of Kim Han. In January 1965, the year the film was produced, which also marked the 20th anniversary of Korean liberation from Japanese rule, the Ministry of Public Information announced major changes in film policy against plagiarized works of Japanese film screenplays, ahead of the signing of the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. The new policy stated that if a film were found to be plagiarized, its production declaration would not be accepted, and a review would be conducted by the authorities. The threshold for plagiarism was defined as "more than half of the plot being similar or identical to a foreign work." It was specifically stated that even if approval was obtained from the original creator, the production of Japanese works would be prohibited.¹¹ By the end of January, the first cases of rejected plagiarized scripts emerged. These included three films for which production declarations had been submitted in 1964: Hapdong Films' *Never Regret* (*Huhoehaji anketda*, Dir. Lee Sang-eon, 1965) and *Resist* (released as *For Whom He Resists* [*Nugu-reul wihan banhanginya*], Dir. Kim Dae-hui, 1965), and Century's *Daydream*

11. "Moseup dallajil banghwagye/gongbobu, saehae yukseong bangchim-eul balpyo, pyojeol deung eomjunhi dansok" (Domestic Film Scene to be Changed/MPI Announces New Year's Development Policy/Strict Crackdown on Plagiarism), *Dong-A Ilbo*, January 12, 1965.

(released as *The Empty Dream*, Dir. Yu Hyun-mok, 1965). In the case of *Resist*, even though it included a film adaptation approval letter from Mizuki Yoko, the screenwriter of the original *A Story of Pure Love* (*Jun'ai monogatari*, Dir. Imai Tadashi, 1957), its production declaration was rejected, in accordance with the new policy.¹² As a result, it became mandatory for a Certificate of Acquisition of Performance Rights to be attached to the film production declaration, and Kim Han personally signed and submitted one for *The Empty Dream* on February 1, 1965, declaring it to be his own work.

It appears that whether a film script was rejected due to plagiarism, and whether an appeal of such a rejection was successful, was influenced by prior coordination between the authorities and the film industry. Despite the unprecedentedly strict anti-plagiarism stance taken by the authorities, each film company was allowed to salvage one plagiarized project. The reason for these "salvaged cases" was that "although the film projects in question were indeed stolen goods, they had priority in terms of timing [early adoption], and there were costs incurred in the theft" (Choi 1965, 97). It is apparent that the interests of the authorities, who wanted to support the growth and scale of the Korean film industry, and the producers, were aligned.

One unclear point regarding *The Empty Dream* has to do with the handwriting of the name Kim Han 金漢 as the original author on the film production declaration. The film production declaration was submitted on April 27, 1965, to the MPI, via the Korean Film Producers Association (Hanguk yeonghwa eopja hyeophoe), which comprised ten film studios registered with the MPI. The space for the original author's name was initially left blank, and the name Kim Han was filled in later, but it was apparently written by someone else, as the handwriting is different from Kim Han's signature on the Certificate of Acquisition of Performance Rights. It appears that Century Co., Ltd. attempted to obtain approval from the author to use the original story upon which *Daydream* was based, but failed, and at the time of submission, the name Kim Han was written in as the

12. "Banhang deung 3-pyeon-ui jeopsu geobu/gongbobu pyojeol gakbon-e cheot jochi" (Rejection of Three Screenplays Including *Resist*/MPI Takes First Action Against Plagiarized Scripts), *Chosun Ilbo*, January 28, 1965.

original author on the documents.

Indeed, upon closely examining the censorship documents preserved in the Korean Film Archive (KOFA), it becomes apparent that the initial submission of the Film Production Declaration by Century Co., Ltd. was on December 31, 1964.¹³ The original title was *Daydream*, which was the same title as the Japanese original, and the Film Production Declaration submitted on January 29, 1965, was rejected. On February 15, the title was changed to *The Empty Dream* and a revised production declaration was submitted with changes to the screenplay. On April 22, the revised production declaration was rejected, citing “(1) plagiarism of *Daydream*,¹⁴ and (2) inappropriate content.” With regard to “inappropriate content,” it was noted that the film violated Clauses 13 and 14 of Article 5 of the Motion Picture Law Enforcement Regulations, which had been revised and implemented on July 8, 1963.¹⁵ In response, on April 26, the production company, under the name of its CEO Wu Gi-dong, submitted a proposal for the production of a feature film *The Empty Dream* that focused on the “inappropriate content” issue and completely ignored the plagiarism issue. The proposal stated, “Lee Jin-seop, a master of screenplays, has revised the script multiple times and voluntarily deleted or corrected the vulgar parts.” The proposal strongly defended the film, emphasizing “*avant-garde* film expression focused on imagery,” describing it as “an *experimental* work” pioneering a new aspect of film art, and asserting that Yu Hyun-mok, who was an *artistic* director,

13. “Notification of reception of production declaration of feature film *The Empty Dream* (May 13, 1965)” from MPI Review Document (KOFA document no. RK01177-004). The date is recorded as December 31, 1965, but from the flow of events this appears to be a simple mistake.

14. At that time, one of the review committee members pointed out that the only difference from the Japanese original work *Daydream* was that the prologue and epilogue had been slightly modified. “Rejection of the production declaration of the feature film *The Empty Dream* (April 22, 1965),” KOFA document no. RK01177-002.

15. Article 5 (Criteria for Screening Approval), Clause 13: When it is recognized that the depiction of genitalia or breasts, sexual acts, obscene contact (kissing), or other lascivious acts or gestures stimulates or arouses the viewer’s sexual desire, thus violating normal sexual decency or contradicting sound sexual morals. Clause 14: When depicting nudity or mixed bathing of men and women. On this, refer to the website of the Korean Law Information Center, <https://www.law.go.kr>.

was creating “an experimental piece in the form of an *art film* [emphasis added].”¹⁶

A revised film production declaration was submitted on April 27, and on May 13, the MPI responded, outlining three areas that required further revision. The production company was instructed to delete or modify explicit dialogue in scene #13, the place in scene #14 where a woman and a young man kiss with a pane of glass between them, and the place in scene #22 where the dentist undresses the woman. The issue of plagiarism of the Japanese film *Daydream* slipped into the background. There were no accompanying documents, such as a letter of approval from the Japanese story's original author confirming that the script was not plagiarized, as had been the case for Yu's film *My Wife Is Confessing* the previous year (Chung 2017, 96–97). At this point, the authorities announced that even if approval was obtained from the original author, any film production based on an original Japanese work would be prohibited. This made it impossible to include the name of the original Japanese author on the film production declaration. In fact, Century never received approval from the author, but that had ceased to matter. In the end, the authorities overlooked the plagiarism issue based on the revised screenplay, and approved production of the film. But as previously mentioned, the final screenplay did not entirely escape the shadow of the original Japanese screenplay.

The production company submitted the application for a film screening permit (*yeonghwa sangyeong heoga sincheongseo*) on May 24, 1965, after the film was completed. However, the subsequent censorship process for this feature film did not go smoothly. There was a delay due to intervention by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA).¹⁷ An official letter dated June

16. “Proposal for production of feature film *The Empty Dream* (April 26, 1965),” KOFA document no. RK01177-003.

17. During the film censorship process, it was common for the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) to intervene in the case of anti-communist films. *The Empty Dream* was not an anti-communist film, however, it appears that the intervention of the KCIA was due to Director Yu Hyun-mok being charged with violating the anti-communist law on July 13, 1965. While director Lee Man-hee was on trial for the case of *Seven Female POWs*, Yu made a statement during a seminar on the topic of “Freedom Behind the Silver Screen,”

映畫製作申告書

第一張書式

映畫法第四條 規定에 依하여 國產映畫을 製作하고자 하는 자
같이 신고하여야 함

1. 映 畫 題 名 空 夢

2. 製 作 者 金 基 東

3. 製 作 所 金基東映畫社

4. 企 劃 映 畫 者 金基東

5. 脚 本 映 畫 者 金基東

6. 監 導 映 畫 者 金基東

7. 攝 影 映 畫 者 金基東

8. 圖 像 映 畫 者 金基東

9. 音 聲 映 畫 者 金基東

10. 音 聲 映 畫 者 金基東

11. 音 聲 映 畫 者 金基東

12. 土 演 者 朴 忠 南 崔 貞 浩 朴 永 順 金 基 東

13. 助 演 者 金基東 金龍 趙 洙 金 基 東

14. 外國人參與映畫許可證號碼 無

15. 宣 告 日 月 日 1965. 2. 25

16. 完 成 日 月 日 1965. 5. 1

申告責任者 金基東 申告責任者 金基東

電話 712-1111 商號 金基東映畫社

姓名 金基東

官 貴 下

Figure 1. Film Production Declaration of *The Empty Dream*

Source: KOFA Document No. RK01177-001.

기 안 지

제 1 장	총감독 김희하	감독 김희하	각본 김희하	제작 김희하	제작 김희하
제 2 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 3 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 4 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 5 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 6 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 7 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 8 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 9 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 10 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 11 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 12 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 13 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 14 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 15 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 16 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 17 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 18 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 19 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 20 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 21 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 22 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 23 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 24 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 25 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 26 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 27 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 28 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 29 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 30 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 31 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 32 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 33 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 34 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 35 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 36 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 37 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 38 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 39 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 40 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 41 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 42 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 43 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 44 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 45 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 46 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 47 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 48 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 49 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 50 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 51 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 52 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 53 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 54 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 55 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 56 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 57 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 58 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 59 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 60 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 61 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 62 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 63 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 64 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 65 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 66 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 67 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 68 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 69 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 70 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 71 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 72 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 73 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 74 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 75 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 76 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 77 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 78 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 79 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 80 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 81 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 82 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 83 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 84 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 85 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 86 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 87 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 88 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 89 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 90 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 91 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 92 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 93 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 94 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 95 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 96 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 97 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 98 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 99 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하
제 100 장	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하	각본 김희하

중동서식 1-2 (상) (16쪽지)

Figure 2. Rejection of Production Declaration of the Feature Film *The Empty Dream*

Source: KOFA Document No. RK01177-002.

5, sent from the Security Division of the KCIA to the MPI's Film Division, states, "It is advised that reexamination of the film *The Empty Dream* reveals content depicting aspects of masochistic perversion which poses a significant risk of harming the sound morals and ethics of the public. It is deemed to violate Articles 243 and 244 of the Criminal Law. Please take necessary measures in cooperation with the prosecutor."¹⁸ Consequently, on June 21,

organized by the Korean branch of the World Cultural Freedom Conference on March 23, 1965. Yu stated, "a national policy cannot be anti-communism." This remark drew attention from the authorities as it was seen as undermining the anti-communist law. This incident occurred while Yu was actively participating in public discussions on cultural freedom and expression ('Yu Hyeon-mok gamdok ipgeon/nonmun malseong' [Yu Hyun-mok Indicted/Controversy Over the Presentation], *Chosun Ilbo*, July 14, 1965).

18. "Message: Notification of film reexamination (June 5, 1965)," KOFA document no.

the MPI's Film Division informed the Security Division of the KCIA that six scenes (comprising 16 small segments)¹⁹ needed to be deleted or modified for the film to be granted a screening permit.

At this point, the MPI's Film Division also categorized *The Empty Dream* as an "unconventional avant-garde film" (*isaekjeok jeonwi yeonghwa*).²⁰ It accepted Wu Gi-dong's earlier statement in the proposal for production of the feature film *The Empty Dream* that "the avant-garde film expression focused on imagery will create a new creative spirit in our film industry."²¹ As Diffrient (2023, 54) put it, "Wu made sweeping rhetorical moves that were in excess of what other motion picture producers at that time were doing in their own responses to the MPI." The MPI resolved its conflict with the KCIA by accommodating the production company's stance. Ultimately, by presuming the removal of *obscenity* during the release stage, the authorities acknowledged that the film was an *art film*, aligning with the views of the production company and director. The original runtime was 10 reels (100 minutes), but the screening permit records show that this was reduced to 8 reels (based on the Korean Movie Database). The existing film preserved by the Korean Film Archive, made from the negative film (8 reels), is 71 minutes long. It can be assumed that the runtime of the theatrical release would have been similar. *The Empty Dream* was shown at Myeongbo Theater for only a week, from July 3 to July 9, 1965. Before its release, newspaper advertisements used a provocative image of the actress in promoting the

RK01177-009.

19. The six scenes that were subject to deletion or modification were as follows:

#14: The woman being raped in an apartment room – one part

#26: The nude woman in a department store – one part

#26: Exposing the woman's breasts – 2 parts

#29: A pedestrian picking up money – one part

#54: Exposing the woman's breasts – one part

In addition, one part in scene #14 included 11 shots that were to be deleted. A total of 16 shots in 6 scenes required deletion. This indicates that rather than removing scene #14 entirely, it was selectively trimmed into smaller segments.

20. "Permission for screening of the domestic film *The Empty Dream* (June 30, 1965)," KOFA document no. RK01177-010.

21. "Proposal for production of feature film *The Empty Dream* (April 26, 1965)," KOFA document no. RK01177-003.

Table 1. Timeline of the Censorship Process of *The Empty Dream*

Date	Outline	Title of documents	Notes
Dec. 31, 1964	Century Co., Ltd. submits the film production declaration for <i>Daydream</i> (the initial title of the Korean version) to the Film Division of the MPI.	No documents preserved	For details, see “Notification of reception of the production declaration of <i>The Empty Dream</i> ” (May 13, 1965).
Jan. 29, 1965	The Film Division of the MPI rejects the film production declaration of <i>Daydream</i> .	No documents preserved	See Figure 2. Rejection of production declaration of the feature film <i>The Empty Dream</i> (April 22, 1965).
Feb. 15, 1965	Century Co., Ltd. submits the film production declaration of <i>The Empty Dream</i> (new title) to the Film Division of the MPI.	No documents preserved	For details, see “Proposal for the production of the feature film <i>The Empty Dream</i> ” (April 26, 1965).
April 22, 1965	The Film Division of the MPI rejects the film production declaration of <i>The Empty Dream</i> .	Rejection of the production declaration of the feature film <i>The Empty Dream</i>	Reason for rejection is violation of Article 5 (Examination Criteria for Screening Permit), Clauses 13 and 14, of the Motion picture law enforcement regulations.
April 26, 1965	Century Co., Ltd. responds to the rejection of the production declaration by submitting a proposal to the Film Division of the MPI outlining revisions to be made to <i>The Empty Dream</i> .	Proposal for production of the feature film <i>The Empty Dream</i>	Revisions made to 14 parts of the screenplay are described, and it is stressed that <i>The Empty Dream</i> is an experimental, avant-garde art film.
April 27, 1965	Century Co., Ltd. resubmits the film production declaration.	Film production declaration of <i>The Empty Dream</i>	The Certificate of Acquisition of Performance Rights is attached to the declaration with the seal of Kim Han.
May 13, 1965	The MPI responds, accepting the production declaration, specifying three areas that require further revision.	Notification of reception of the production declaration of the feature film <i>The Empty Dream</i>	Specification of changes required in scenes #13, #14, and #22.
May 24, 1965	Century Co., Ltd. applies for a film screening permit.	Application for film screening permit	The credits section for the original author states screenplay by Kim Han and adaptation by Lee Jin-seop.

Date	Outline	Title of documents	Notes
June 5, 1965	The Film Division of the MPI notifies Century Co., Ltd. that the review process by relevant agencies is still ongoing.	Notification of application for film screening permit	On May 31, 1965, simultaneous deliberations take place at the Film Subdivision Committees of the KCIA and the MPI.
June 5, 1965	The KCIA's Security Division requests the cooperation of the Film Division of the MPI in coordination with prosecution authorities.	Message: Notification of film reexamination	Opinion on violation of Article 243 (Distribution of Obscene Material, etc.) and Article 244 (Production of Obscene Material, etc.) of the Criminal Code
June 21, 1965	The Film Division of the MPI notifies the KCIA that it is taking measures to allow a screening permit to be granted.	Message: Completed the reexamination of the domestic film <i>The Empty Dream</i>	Deletion of obscene parts related to Article 5 of the Motion picture law enforcement regulations
June 30, 1965	The Film Division of the MPI grants a screening permit to Century Co., Ltd.	Permission for screening of the domestic film <i>The Empty Dream</i> and Certificate of film screening permit	The film is designated an "unconventional avant-garde film," with deletion of six scenes.

Source: Author.

film, but emphasized its artistic value with the catchphrase, "An artistic and extraordinary masterpiece, the first of its kind in Korean cinema!"²² However, the obscenity issues surrounding *The Empty Dream* did not end here.

On July 13, Yu Hyun-mok was charged with violating anti-communist laws.²³ This was due to his expression of support for director Lee Man-hee, who was on trial for violating the Anti-Communist Law on the grounds that he portrayed the national army as a powerless force, praised the so-called People's Army of North Korea, and exaggerated the horrors of the "Yankee princesses" (prostitutes for the US military) in his film *Seven Female POWs* (*Chilin-ui yeoporo*).²⁴

22. Newspaper advertisement for *The Empty Dream*, *Chosun Ilbo*, July 2, 1965.

23. "Yeonghwa gamdok Yu Hyeon-mok ssi ipgeon" (Film Director Yu Hyun-mok Under Investigation), *Kyunggyang Shinmun*, July 13, 1965.

24. "Bangongbeop-e geollin *Chilin-ui yeoporo*" (*Seven Female POWs Caught Violating Anti-Communist Law*), *Dong-A Ilbo*, December 18, 1964.

This marked the beginning of a tumultuous period for Yu. On January 4, 1966, he was indicted without detention on charges of obscenity and violations of the anti-communist laws. Yu's indictment on charges of obscenity was a first in the history of Korean cinema, and the anti-communist charge was the second following Lee Man-hee's. The indictment for obscenity was based on the allegation that, during the filming of *The Empty Dream*, Yu showed newcomer actress Park Su-jung completely naked from behind in a set, in order to depict the perverted fantasy of the dentist.²⁵ Notably, this scene took place in front of approximately 20 male staff and actors in the studio.²⁶ The details of this indictment were contentious. A close examination of the scene in the currently available version of the film shows that there is a moment where the woman's dress is torn by the dentist's shoe, revealing her back, but her lower undergarments are still in place, and immediately afterward she escapes while wearing see-through clothing in a jump cut.

On February 3, 1967, a prosecutor from the Public Security Department of the Seoul Central District Prosecutor's Office (Seoul jigeom gonganbu) sought a prison sentence of one year and six months for Yu Hyun-mok with a suspended sentence of one year and six months.²⁷ On March 15, 1967, during the first trial, he was found guilty.²⁸ Yu appealed, claiming that he first shot the female character wearing only panties, but then re-shot her wearing a nylon negligee out of "self-censorship." The shot with her wearing panties was never shown, either to the censors or the public. At that time, members the legal community supported the director's position, stating that he should not be charged with obscenity for filming a scene that was not used in

25. "Yu Hyeon-mok ssi-reul giso/bangongbeop wiban·eumhwa jejo hyeom-ui-ro" (Yu Hyun-mok Charged with Violating Anti-Communist Law and Producing Obscene Materials), *Joongang Ilbo*, January 4, 1966.

26. "Yeonghwagye hwaje" (Topic of the Film Scene), *Sina Ilbo*, February 7, 1967.

27. "Yu Hyeon-mok gamdok-e 1-nyeon 6-wol guhyeong" (Prosecutor Sought One Year Six Months Jail Time for Director Yu Hyun-mok), *Chosun Ilbo*, February 5, 1967.

28. "Yeonghwa *Chunmong* eumhwa-ro pangyeol/beolgeum 3-man-won/bangongbeop bubuneun mujoe" (Verdict on Obscenity Charge for Film *The Empty Dream*/Fined 30,000 won/Acquitted on Anti-Communist Law Charges), *Chosun Ilbo*, March 16, 1967.

the film.²⁹ The appeal verdict was delivered on September 24, 1969.³⁰ The ruling stated that “even though artistic merit is recognized, the work should be punished for obscenity if it causes normal individuals to feel sexual embarrassment.”³¹ Although Yu received a suspended sentence, the verdict was guilty.³² As indicated in Park Yuhee’s study (2015), the obscenity case of *The Empty Dream* subsequently influenced the censorship of obscenity in Korean films. In this way, walking a fine line between sexuality and artistry, *The Empty Dream* became a significant text in the history of obscenity censorship (*oeseol geomyeol*) in Korea.

Scene Comparisons between *Daydream* and *The Empty Dream*

While the obscenity issue received much attention during the censorship process and just before the release of *The Empty Dream*, the issue of plagiarism of the Japanese film *Daydream* did not fade away. On June 22, 1965, just after the signing of the Treaty on Basic Relations Between the Republic of Korea and Japan, and the day when the first-run showing of *The Empty Dream* ended, newspaper articles alleging plagiarism of *Daydream* resurfaced.³³ Even in the January 1966 reports of Yu Hyun-mok’s indictment on obscenity charges, phrases like “Japanese film *Daydream*’s translation” were repeated. During the director’s trial for

29. “Gonggae jeon sakje...Yujoe-ro bogi himdeureo” (Deletion before Release, Hard to be Seen as Guilty), *Chosun Ilbo*, March 21, 1967.

30. “Eumhwa bubeun seongo yuye” (Suspended Sentence for Obscenity), *Chosun Ilbo*, September 25, 1969.

31. “Yeonghwa Chunmong seongo yuye/hangso-sim ‘yesulseong injeonghana eumranhada” (Suspended Sentence for *The Empty Dream*/Appeal Court Acknowledges ‘Artistic Merit but Deems Film Obscene’), *Dong-A Ilbo*, September 25, 1969.

32. “Chunmong yujoe pangyeol-gwa yeonghwagye-ui chunggyeok” (Guilty Verdict on *The Empty Dream* and Shock in Film Industry), *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, October 4, 1969.

33. “Hanguk-eul neomboneun il yeonghwa/hapjak yeonghwa mikki/suip aptun jeonchojeon” (Japanese Films Enter Korea/Strategies for Korean-Japanese Film Co-production/Preparations of Import for Upcoming Frontline Battle), *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, July 10, 1965.

obscenity, however, the focus shifted towards the issue of the female actor's nudity, and the fact that "the film copied the Japanese film *Daydream*"³⁴ did not receive much attention.

The original screenplay of the Japanese film *Daydream* consisted of 28 scenes, and the runtime of the main film is 93 minutes. In contrast, the final screenplay for dubbing of the Korean film *The Empty Dream* had around 30 scenes, with a runtime of 71 minutes. As can be inferred from the relatively low number of scenes in both films compared to typical feature films of that era,³⁵ both films unfold exclusively within a limited set of spaces, in the following order: 1) a dental clinic, 2) a nightclub, 3) a hotel (or apartment),³⁶ 4) a night street (with the addition of a desert fantasy scene in *The Empty Dream*), 5) a rooftop garden, 6) a late-night department store, 7) Ginza (a busy street), 8) a return to the dental clinic, and 9) the road in front of the dental clinic. This limited set of locations suggests that both directors, rather than sticking closely to the Japanese screenplay, developed their own distinctive audiovisual styles based on it.

1) Opening: Sexual Symbolism and Entry into Fantasy

The films *Daydream* and *The Empty Dream* reveal their respective orientations through the opening credit screens. The two films present entirely different concepts in their execution, primarily due to the absence of design descriptions for the opening scenes in either screenplay. In *Daydream*, the opening sequence starts with the logos of the distributor Shochiku and the production company Daisan Production, followed by a text written by the original author Tanizaki Jun'ichiro praising director Takechi for successfully turning the original work into a film. Then a Filmmaker's Note

34. "Yeonghwa Chunmong yujoe" (*The Empty Dream is Guilty*), *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, March 15, 1967.

35. As an example, the screenplays for the Japanese and Korean films with the same title, *A Wife Confesses* (*My Wife Is Confessing* according to the Korean Movie Database), consist of 119 and 120 scenes, respectively. The running times are 91 minutes for the Japanese version and 100 minutes for the Korean version.

36. The information within the parentheses pertains to the Korean film *The Empty Dream*.

reveals that Takechi's film includes strong sexual content.³⁷ The opening screen in the dental clinic displays explicit sexual symbols, featuring a gray background with dense white liquid flowing, accompanied by the moans of a woman, echoing with the soundtrack of a shamisen performance. Visual depiction like this continues throughout the film, portraying the subtle oscillation between pain and pleasure of a woman using elements related to the female body. *The Empty Dream*, while also focusing on erotic expressions based on the Japanese original screenplay, explores a different direction from the outset.

The Empty Dream begins with credits indicating the film is produced by Century Co., Ltd. (Segisangsa) and made by Segi Studio. The opening scene showcases three children dancing on a stage with an artificial cactus, accompanied by waltz music. The scene symbolizes the characters (a woman, a young man, and a dentist) and the plot of the film. In particular, the visual connection between the film and art is emphasized, departing from the overt eroticism of the Japanese version. The opening sequence is directly related to the desert scene created by Yu in the film, followed by an image of an extended willow tree, signifying the transformation from a daytime fantasy (*Daydream*) to a fleeting spring daydream (*The Empty Dream*).

Scenes #1–5 of both films are set in a dental clinic, but they have different symbolic meanings. In *Daydream*, these scenes depict realistic dental procedures, including the use of dental instruments and the patient's pain, intensified by explicit sexual nuances. *The Empty Dream* also portrays dental treatment with subtle sexual undertones, highlighting the symbolic relationship between dental treatment and sexual intercourse. The process of treatment is depicted by repeatedly juxtaposing the sparks of a grinder with the noise of the machine. This element is not present in the original Japanese script for *Daydream* but was added in the final screenplay for *The*

37. "In this film, *Daydream*, I depict issues related to humanity and sociality within the dual structure of expression. In this film, nudity symbolizes not only extreme human situations but also conditions of alienation from humanity. The film serves as a medium that elevates expression to the realm of sociality" (Filmmaker's Note from *Daydream*).

Empty Dream. In *Daydream*, the dental treatment scenes are presented as explicit sexual symbols, going beyond close-ups of the woman's mouth and the dentist's gestures to explicitly convey sexual connotations. An intriguing aspect of *Daydream* is the shifting perspective based on the camera's point of view: when the point of view is that of the camera, the scene appears as a normal dental treatment, but when it is from the dentist's perspective, it takes on sexual meaning. In contrast, *The Empty Dream* presents a scene where the young man observes the female protagonist receiving treatment. The film captures the moment from the young man's point of view, focusing on the lips of the woman and the dental instruments, subtly evoking thoughts of sexual intercourse as in *Daydream*.³⁸ At the end of the introductory dental clinic scene, *Daydream* transitions from a close-up of a young man with his eyes open, who appears to have lost consciousness, to an extended dissolve of his eyes. The film then transitions to a fantasy entry point, the nightclub scene, which means the fantasy will be viewed by the young man. On the other hand, *The Empty Dream*, which emphasizes the young man's voyeuristic perspective, blurs the point of view as the camera (directed by Yu) zooms in on him, creating an effect that suggests the camera is entering his unconscious desires. The simple description in the final screenplay of *the Empty Dream*, which only mentions a "young man with faintly opened eyes," can be understood as an example of Yu's creativity.

2) Fantasy Section: Fantastical Realistic vs. Expressionistic Spaces

Both films portray spaces where fantasy unfolds: a nightclub, a hotel (an apartment in *The Empty Dream*), the rooftop garden of a department store,³⁹ and the late-night interior of a department store. Connecting these spaces is the extreme fantasy depicted in the street scenes at night. In the case of *Daydream* (scene #21), color processing is employed, while in the case of

38. In the final screenplay for *The Empty Dream*, the stage direction does not explicitly describe sexual nuances, but the director also considered the setting from the original Japanese screenplay: "A mouth wide open represents the female genitalia. Dental instruments are associated with males. This was my thinking..." (H. Kim 2005).

39. Scene #22 in *Daydream* and scene #25 in *The Empty Dream*.

The Empty Dream (scene #24), the desert scene was added, creating the deepest fantasies within each film. The desert scene in *The Empty Dream* is not in the final screenplay but was added by director Yu in the final version of the film.⁴⁰ In contrast to *The Empty Dream*, which consistently utilizes expressionistic sets, the stages in the Japanese film *Daydream* are more realistic spaces, apparently using actual locations, although they are filmed in a way that occasionally suggests ruptures in reality, with fantasy emerging through the ruptures. In *Daydream*, there is one scene (#9) in the nightclub waiting room which is framed with oblique angles; it shows the young man peeking at the woman and the dentist through a rectangular hole in the ceiling which resembles the reception window of the dental clinic.⁴¹ This is not present in the original script but only in the film. This part connects two moments via a fantastical atmosphere: the moment when the woman appears in the dental clinic and when she moans between pain and pleasure at the end of the scene. The abrupt juxtaposition of realistic spaces and fantastical spaces is a distinctive feature of *Daydream*. To give another example, in the first hotel scenes (#10–20), following the nightclub scenes (#6–9), although the hotel exterior is a realistic space, the use of a long take at night creates a fantastical atmosphere.

The Empty Dream has more scenes than *Daydream*, particularly in the nightclub and apartment sequences (#6–12), which lead to the car driving off (#13–23). At the nightclub the female protagonist, illuminated by spotlight, sings the song *Padre* (in place of the erotic *enka*-style song in *Daydream*), revealing expressionistic spaces with hotel waiters dressed like toy soldiers as the lighting gradually brightens. While settings like “a waiter in white uniform” and “a waiter standing like an object” from the Japanese screenplay and the screenplay for production declaration (deleted in the final screenplay) are not utilized in *Daydream*, they are incorporated into *The Empty Dream*, in a way that furthers the creation of expressionistic spaces.

40. This scene, which depicts the struggle between good and evil over a woman involving a gentleman and a young man, evokes the desert scene from *Arirang* (Dir. Na Un-gyu, 1926).

41. The setting in the *Daydream* screenplay was the young man eavesdropping outside the room, as in *The Empty Dream*.

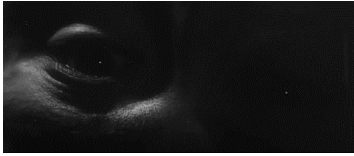





Additionally, unlike the dentist in *Daydream*, depicted as a Dracula-like count, who bites the woman's breast in the clinic, the dentist in *The Empty Dream* wears a high-top fedora from the nightclub scene, recalling the image of Dr. Caligari from *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Dir. Robert Wiene, 1920) and Dr. Jekyll from *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Dir. John S. Robertson, 1920) in German expressionist films. After the woman's song ends in *The Empty Dream*, a two-minute scene is added showing a half-naked woman dancing. This scene suggests that Yu is attempting to package a high level of erotic commercialism into an art film, while also emphasizing the surreal aspect of the dancer's bizarre body movements.

In *Daydream* there is an extended sequence dedicated to the interior of the department store and the hotel (lasting over 22 minutes in total). The department store portion (scenes #23–25) begins with the woman coming out from under a display shelf.⁴² This serves as a passage connecting reality and fantasy. In the end, she tries to escape the department store, but the electronic sound symbolizing the presence of the dentist is heard again, showing her inability to escape. The woman, in pain due to the electrical noise, is barely able to crawl to the stairs. To make her appear completely nude, it appears that the camera lens may have been draped by a mesh-like fabric to avoid exposing her private parts. Since the Japanese original screenplay also had a setting of a naked woman running down the stairs, the film and the final screenplay of *The Empty Dream* had to omit this scene.

The sequence in the department store in *The Empty Dream*, allocated about 10 minutes (scenes #26–28) is constructed as a highly staged set, unlike in *Daydream*, which utilized actual spaces. In *The Empty Dream* it resembles a space in a cubist painting, with abstract sculptures, including umbrellas, hanging from the ceiling and mannequins displayed that are disguised as people. Considering the film's origin as a play and the exploration process that took place in its adaptation to film, it can be assumed that director Takechi also had expressionistic spaces in mind. This is suggested by his description "the bizarre appearance of the night at the strange store. Mannequins standing still..." (Takechi 1964, 155), and by the

42. The screenplay setting involves her pushing open the bathroom door and coming out.

Table 2. Comparison of main scenes of *Daydream* and *The Empty Dream*

Places	<i>Daydream</i>	<i>The Empty Dream</i>
Intro: Entering into fantasy		
Fantasy: Night-club waiting room		
		
Fantasy: Inside the depart-ment store		
		
Closing: Street		
		

Sources: Takechi (1964); Yu (1965).

spatial direction of the scene. However, Takechi chose to utilize real spaces. Therefore, Yu's film, which was shot entirely in formal sets, can be said to be more closely related to the original play and expressionistic spaces.

Both films structure the hotel scenes to show the suffering of the woman from the perspective of the young man, while the scene at the department store is structured to repeat the torment from the perspective of the woman. In *The Empty Dream* the dentist attempts to forcefully grab the woman, but while his shoe tears her dress, she manages to escape. This scene later became problematic for Yu, as it was part of the reason he was charged with obscenity. It is interesting that this scene in the Korean film is more faithful to the original Japanese screenplay than the corresponding scene in *Daydream*, which is portrayed more violently, with the dentist, who is dressed in a suit and looks like a gentleman, directly tearing off the woman's clothes.

3) Closing Section: Fantasy Leading into Reality

The conclusions of both films depict fantasy leading back into reality, but their detailed directing approaches differ. In *Daydream*, the closing sequence (scenes #26–29) begins on a Ginza street, portraying a nightmarish fantasy against the backdrop of the bustling heart of Tokyo. This scene serves as a buffer space for returning to the real clinic from the preceding fantastical parts and emphasizes the connection between reality and fantasy by bringing the pinnacle of the fantastical narrative back into reality. This reality means documentarist reality, as it shows an actual urban landscape. The choice of using the woman's voice as a signal to return to reality underscores the point that the fantastical journey, initiated through the young man's observations, revolves around her desires. The film *Daydream* unmistakably communicates the existence of a link between reality and fantasy, as the nurse is portrayed as an accomplice sharing a secret with the dentist in both the initial and final dental clinic scenes. The director created these nuanced scenes from the screenplay. Another beautiful woman is called into the dentist's room at the clinic, initiating an erotic examination. Meanwhile, the previous patient, who has left the clinic, gives a ride to a young man in front of the clinic. Driving away, she realizes that there is a

mark on her chest; she covers it with a handkerchief and smiles. This serves as confirmation that the events took place in the reality within the film. As the car enters the main road and disappears, the fantasy as a rupture sinks beneath the surface, as if disappearing under water. The ending, reflecting this, is the emergence on the screen of the Japanese character for "The end," rising above a concentrated liquid.

The conclusion in *The Empty Dream* (scenes #29–31) takes place in a large studio space with an expressionistic set. While the space and characters are an extension of expressionistic forms, the dialogue and situations mirror those from *Daydream*, where the young man confesses, "I killed the woman who is a prostitute," while pedestrians ignore him and pass by. The scene shifts from a close-up of the young man embracing the woman's corpse to his face in the dental clinic through zooming in and out. In this way, *The Empty Dream* emphasizes that the journey it has embarked on was an exploration of the young man's desires. Once he gets into the woman's car, the film shows a close-up of their lips, followed by the car entering the main road. Subsequently, images of willow and cherry blossoms are presented, concluding an empty dream.

Conclusion

This article presented a comparative analysis of the two films *The Empty Dream* (1965) and *Daydream* (1964), along with their respective screenplays. The analysis delves into the textual relevance of the Korean and Japanese films, examining the directorial strategies and aesthetic effects of each movie. It highlights how Takechi Tetsuji, through the film *Daydream*, depicted the abstract theme of human alienation with provocative eroticism, while Yu Hyun-mok, in *The Empty Dream*, vividly symbolized ethical conflicts within human society as a confrontation between good and evil while modifying the erotic elements of the original work to align with the standards of contemporary Korean society.

The film *Daydream* follows the basic narrative structure set in the screenplay, but the visually executed results are so provocative and shocking

that they would have been deemed unacceptable for Korean cinema at the time. While *The Empty Dream* also incorporates an erotic atmosphere, it is handled at an observational level. In contrast, *Daydream* features explicit erotic depictions and, in the latter part of the film, has scenes that include female nudity. The sophisticated connecting of realistic space with an imaginative atmosphere, depicting the intertwining of reality and fantasy, is considered an aesthetic achievement of *Daydream*.

In the screenplay for the film production declaration of *The Empty Dream*, the initial and final scenes of the Japanese screenplay, set in a dental clinic, are transformed into a sky lounge, with the rest of the settings left almost unchanged. The final screenplay incorporates expressionist spatial composition that creates symbolic meaning through the montage technique of editing, featuring a collision of shots that condense space, time, and information. During the actual directing, elements from both screenplays were selectively applied to create a film with the director's visual style. This resulted in *The Empty Dream* being a pioneering art film in Korean cinema for its time. The creative essence of *The Empty Dream* can be said to be a product of the interplay between imitation of the Japanese screenplay and the director's artistic experimentation.

The Empty Dream is more a work that highlights that director's creative aspirations than it is an exploration of profound thematic consciousness as was written in the proposal for production submitted to the Ministry of Public Information under CEO Wu Gi-dong's name. The director's desire to experiment with film aesthetics was realized by satisfying the producer's desire to package sexual elements as art and create a commercial film. However, *the Empty Dream* ran into trouble due to its sexual depictions. Yu Hyun-mok, aware of the intensified censorship of obscenity, attempted to combine the eroticism-based commercialization desired by the producer with the aesthetics he sought to achieve as director. However, during two rounds of censorship by the authorities of both the script and the film itself, he was forced to remove scenes deemed provocative. Ultimately, he was charged and found guilty of obscenity for a scene that was not included in the film. As a result of compromises made to satisfy the authorities, the final film failed to capture the attention of contemporary audiences. In the history

of South Korean cinema, *The Empty Dream* is recorded as a unique case of obscenity censorship in which the authorities negotiated a path between imitation and re-creation.

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