

# [Male crisis in new korean cinema: reading the early films of park kwang-su](https://assignbuster.com/male-crisis-in-new-korean-cinema-reading-the-early-films-of-park-kwang-su/)

Male Crisis in New Korean Cinema: Reading the Early Films of Park Kwang-suKim, Kyung Hyun, 1969positions: east asia cultures critique, Volume 9, Number 2, Fall 2001, pp.

369-399 (Article)Published by Duke University PressFor additional information about this articlehttp://muse. jhu. edu/journals/pos/summary/v009/9. 2kim02. htmlAccess Provided by Macquarie University at 11/05/11 10: 57PM GMT"Male Crisis in New Korean Cinema: Reading the Early Films of Park Kwang-su Kyung Hyun KimPark Kwang-su’s ? lm Chilsu and Mansu [Ch’il-su wa Man-su] (1988) depicts the lives of two working-class billboard painters in Seoul. At the beginning of the ? lm, Ch’il-su has a date with Chi-na, a college-educated woman he has been pursuing outside his economic class.

The attempts to woo her have already cost Ch’il-su one job after he arrived late for work. Ch’il-su cajoles Chi-na into going to see Rocky IV. In the movie-within-a-movie, with James Brown singing “ Living in America” before a boxing match, Rocky displays the supermasculine gestures of the last-minute Cold War showdown with a Soviet boxer while the counterculture African American icon from the 1960s blesses his triumph. This scene, evidently inserted in Rocky IV to ? aunt U. S.

patriotism and celebrate the Reagan-era facade of the multicultural alliance (between Italian American and African American), is deliberately appropriated by Park for two reasons. First, the scene, with its crass Las Vegas–type setting, produces a visual fantasy that enactspositions 9: 2 © 2001 by Duke University Press"positions 9: 2Fall 2001370Ch’il-su’s desires. Second, through the activation of the spectatorial desire of a character in the movie, it also reminds Chilsu and Mansu’s viewers of Ch’il-su’s reality where his potency and masculinity have been constantly undermined. By specularizing Rocky, Ch’il-su’s emasculation is exposed. He has been lying to Chi-na, who is looking for her prospective husband; he tells her.

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