

## **ABSTRACT**

FILM, CULTURE AND GENERATION GAP: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL  
STUDY OF *CHIMHYANG*, A KOREAN FEATURE FILM

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This dissertation explores the symbolic world of a Korean feature film with special reference to a generation gap manifested in the production, the reception and the representation of the film. By conceptualizing key feature filmmakers and a group of staff members involved in feature filmmaking as cultural producers and the university class as an "interpretive community", the research demonstrates that the study of a feature film as a "cultural document" is useful for exploring changes in and continuity of core values, beliefs and ideals in contemporary Korean society.

The dissertation is presented in six chapters. Following the introductory chapter is Chapter 2, which contains the theoretical backgrounds of the study. Chapter 3 focuses on an ethnographic study of the production activity and producers of the film. Firstly, the researcher's ethnographic activity is reflexively explained. After a brief explanation on the scale of the filmmaking, there is an analysis of the organizational

networks of a filmmaking community, the filmmaking process as a form of collective actions, hierarchy, power relationships, conflicts and negotiations, and the relationships between staff members. Chapter 4 provides an explanation of the film as a cultural text. By relating the narrative of the film and Victor Turner's "liminality," it explores the ideology and messages of filmmakers. Chapter 5 deals with the reception of the film. Firstly, it outlines an ethnography of the reception study in the university class. Secondly, socio-historical background for social changes and generational conflicts in Korea are briefly stated. Thirdly, building on Stuart Hall's "oppositional reading," it explicates cultural differences between two generations. The final chapter draws a conclusion that the cultural system of hierarchy based on age and status has not changed much and still prevails in Korean society, while core values and ideal definitions of such traits as patriarchy, gender, sexuality and family have changed in a more noticeable way. This study has also called upon anthropologists to rethink the ways in which we have situated visual anthropology and suggested that we extend the scope of it to the study of various areas of visual culture in contemporary societies.