Ha Kilchong, a well-known film director and critic in the 1970s, wrote an essay in which he stated that he lived in negative times since film was still not “an art form of the individual” and had to function as “a collaborator or companion to policy issues.” This recognition of the artistic self in binary opposition has a certain similarity to the views of many of his seniors in the field. These seniors were hired by or were under the considerable influence of American-led propaganda machines during the Cold War. They, including Ha, acquired alternative knowledge to pursue an artist path through their meaningful exposure to the American film culture. This paper theorizes the specific type of subjectivity that was constructed through these Korean filmmakers’ intense, but ambivalent, relationship with the outside world in a Cold War setting. Focusing on their attitudes toward film as an art form, this paper suggests that their self-recognition as auteurs was related to the technology of a Cold War governmentality that led to the construction of a liberal, or entrepreneurial, subjectivity that was then optimized for the neoliberal paradigm with the demise of the Cold War in the late 1980s.