

If your 135mm f/2.8 lens from the 1980s:

was made in Korea
(markings vary)



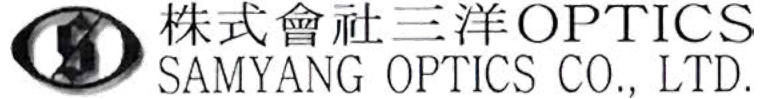
has 52mm filter threads
(often with ø symbol)



and looks like this
(distinctive DOF scale)



It was probably manufactured by:



Argument #1:

Many examples of the lens feature the **Albinar**, **Super Albinar**, or **Albinar ADG** brand names:



"SY Corporation Co., LTD" filed Korean trademark applications for these brands on Dec. 30, 1982.



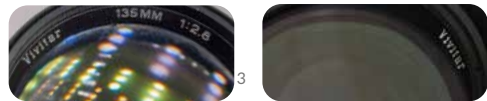
"SY Corp." is Samyang. Trademarks filed under that name now list Samyang as the right-holder.



In the 80s, **Albinar** was a **Best** store-brand for photo gear like this lens (see [USPTO 7328969Z](#)). It is probably unrelated to the earlier brand with the same name.

Argument #2:

Vivitar-branded examples of the lens from the mid-1980s have serial numbers starting with #81 (but some late-80s examples start with #89):



[Stephen Gandy's CameraQuest](#), citing "a former Vivitar executive," claims the first two digits of the brand's serial numbers "generally indicate lens manufacturer," and that manufacturer prefix #81 refers to "Polar."

"SY Corporation Co., LTD" (see arg. #1) filed a South Korean trademark application for **POLAR** on Dec. 5, 1981, and Samyang has filed related trademarks as recently as 2008.



"SAMYANG OPTICAL INDUSTRY" applied for the U.S. trademark on Nov. 6, 1984; it was rejected.



[USPTO 7350751Z](#) (excerpts)

Argument #3:

The lens was also available with **Sears** branding. A 1988 article in *Popular Photography* magazine links Samyang to both Sears and Polar (see arg. #2):



their own. **Samyang**, one of the two major Korean lens makers, whose lenses had previously appeared only as Sears Roebuck optics, will now make their debut as **QTI** optics. (Although available in other countries under the Polar label, a Samyang spokesman explained that "Polar" was a bit too close to the name of a well-known U.S. maker of instant-photography products.)

Popular Photography
Jan.-Mar. 1988, p.77

The article claims Samyang's lenses were *only* available in the U.S. market as Sears optics, which is incorrect. They were also sold under (at least) the **Albinar (Best)**, **JCPenney**, and **Vivitar** brands.

The Samyang spokesman provides a possible explanation for the USPTO rejection of the "Polar" trademark: It is too similar to "Polaroid."



1: JCPenney (1985), [Scott Bradford](#)
2: Sears (yr. ?), [3WXTTraders.eBay](#)
3: Vivitar (1983), [That Canon Guy.eBay](#)
4: Super Albinar (1986), [Back Rds. Resale.eBay](#)

5: Albinar ADG (1988), [mhbas_lshb5vql.eBay](#)
6: Super Albinar (yr. ?), [2nd Time Finds.eBay](#)
7: Vivitar (1985), [jasoblac71.eBay](#)
8: Sears (1984), [mrdevices.eBay](#)

