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THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW WOMAN IN KOREA UNDER THE JAPANESE RULE

I. Introduction

A growing number of interdisciplinary studies have been recently devoted to the phenomenon of the "New Woman" in colonial Korea under the Japanese rule (1910–1945), also referred to as the Japanese Imperial Period *Ilje shidae* (일제시대 日帝時代)[1]. Similar studies have been conducted on the New Woman in Japan and China[2]. In this paper, the emergence of the New Woman *shinyŏsŏng* (신여성 新女性) in colonial Korea with a particular emphasis on her appearance in literature has been examined. The New Woman became a social, literary and cultural phenomenon in the 1920s and 1930s and marked a significant departure from traditional gender roles in Korea under the influence of modernisation *kaehwagi* (개화기 開化期)[3] that came directly from Japan and indirectly from the Western countries, as a small number of young Koreans gained education at Japanese universities, and after returning to Korea, they tried to incorporate progressive ideas in their own country. It should be emphasised that in Korea numerous enlightened intelligentsia, including some women, and officials had made attempts to modernise the country[4]. However, due to the opposition of conservative forces, interventions by the world powers, corruption among local officials and peasant unrests, reforms were implemented very slowly[5].

At the outset, the origins of the New Woman in Western culture at the turn of the 19th century and the subsequent manifestations of the New Woman in Japan and China in the early 20th century have been traced. Next, the conditions

[1] See e.g.: Mun (ed.) 2003; Pak 2001; Kim Yung-Chung (ed.) 1977; Choi Hyaeweol 2013; Kim Yung-Hee 2010.

[2] See e.g.: Beahan 1975; Sato 2003; Mackie 2003; Bardsley 2007; Lowy 2007; Hu 2000; Feng 2004; Ma 2010; Gulliver 2012.

[3] Kaehwagi (개화기 開化期), literally flowering season, refers to the enlightenment and modernisation of Korea during the period of 1876–1910 and social changes of Korean society.

[4] Chŏn (ed.), 2004: 248-252.

[5] Kim Kyŏng-t'ae 1994: 209-214.

of women in premodern Korea are briefly described, with focus on the cultural and literary ferment in colonial Korea in the 1920s which gave rise to the emergence of the New Woman in Korean literature and culture. In the final part of the paper, a brief overview of the achievement of three Korean New Woman writers, Kim Myŏng-sun (김명순 金明淳 1896–1951), Na Hye-sŏk (나혜석 羅蕙錫1896–1948) and Kim Wŏn-ju (김원주 金元周1896–1971), who expressed in their works concerns about gender inequality and introduced the genuine feminine voice to modern Korean literature has been made. This paper does not aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of the New Woman phenomenon in colonial Korea but rather serves as an introductory survey, with emphasis on the contribution of the three outstanding Korean New Women writers.

2. The New Woman phenomenon in Western Europe, Japan and China

The final two decades of the Victorian era were marked by a gradual transition from patriarchal society and female dependence towards a greater gender equality. One of the manifestations of this movement was the emergence of the New Woman in the public sphere in England, and the United States. The term New Women was introduced in public by the English writer and public speaker Sarah Grand (1854–1943) in the magazine *North American Review* in 1894, and it referred to young, educated English and American women "who struggled against the constraints of Victorian norms of femininity" in their pursuit of an alternative life[6]. The New Woman soon became a symbol of modernity and change in gender relations in Europe, America and Asia.

In Japan, the term New Woman was introduced for the first time in July 1910 by Tsubouchi Shōyō (坪内逍遥 1859–1935), Professor of Literature at Waseda University, in his lecture *Kinseigeki ni mietaru atarashiki onna* (近世劇に見えたる新しき女, 'a New Woman seen in the theatre of the new times'), when he discussed women characters such as Nora in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879), Magda in Hermann Sudermann's *Magda* (1896), and Vivie in George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1893). In 1911, the label New Woman became better known in Japan thanks to the actress Matsui Sumako[7], who introduced Ibsen's Nora and Wilde's Salome to

[6] Choi Hyaeweol 2013: 145.

[7] Matsui Sumako (松井 須磨子1886–1919) was a Japanese actress and singer. She became renown for her roles of Ophelia, Nora, and Salome, but was expelled from the *Bungei Kyōkai* (文芸協会, Association of Literature) in 1913 because of a romance with the literary critic and leader of *shingeki* [(新劇, literally 'New Drama' stands for New Theatre that performed Western or Japanese plays influenced by Naturalism and Symbolism], Shimamura Hōgetsu (島村 抱月1871–1918). After Hōgetsu's sudden death in November 1918, Sumako committed suicide to follow her lover.

the Japanese audiences. Finally, the term was popularised in the Japanese language as *atarashii onna* (新しい女) by Hiratsuka Raichō (平塚 らいてう1886–1971) and the *Seitōsha* (青鞜社, Bluestockings Society)[8]. However, as Melanowicz has pointed out, the term New Woman was invented in Japan earlier, during the Rokumeikan era (鹿鳴館, 1883–1890), when in September 1888 a new periodical *Nihon Shinfujin* (日本新婦人, 'the new japanese woman') was published. The term soon went into disuse for two decades as it was contrary to emerging *kokusuishugi* (国粋主義, nationalism) and the ideology of *ryōsai kenbo* (良妻賢母, 'good wife and mother')[9].

After its emergence in England and America at the turn of the 19th century, the New Woman ideal led to the redefining of gender roles and transcended the boundaries of the Western world, laying its roots in Japan, China and Korea[10]. The discourse on gender relations in these countries took place alongside modernisation, industrialisation, as well as developments in labour relations (increased feminisation of the labour force), emergence of education for women, better sanitation, and the rise of female consumer culture. The New Woman appeared in popular press and literature as a new and controversial female icon and as a reaction to the oppressive gender relations imposed by Buddhist and Neo-Confucian values.

Under the rule of the emperor Meiji (明治天皇 1868–1911), the traditional treatment of women did not undergo significant changes. Women were still not allowed to attend political meetings and participate in public activities. They had the right to own property, but its control was in the hands of their husbands. Adultery by women was punishable, but that by men was not. Men were still allowed to keep secretly concubines[11]. In Japan, however, women started to contest their assigned gender roles as early as the 1870s, i.e. from the beginning of the Meiji Reforms, which were carried out under the slogan "Civilisation and Enlightenment" *bunmei kaika* (文明開化)[12]. Eventually, these reforms provided women with basic human rights and free education. The status of Japanese women was dramatically affected by the westernisation processes. During the late Meiji period (1890–1912), private and governmental educational institutions were set up for both male and female students. However, the official ideology of women's education was that women were to be taught to become a 'good wife' and a 'wise mother'[13].

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[8] Hiratsuka founded the group called *Seitōsha* and its literary magazine *Seitō* (青鞜, 'Bluestockings') in 1911. The association adopted the term Bluestocking, applied to intellectual women in eighteenth century England and especially to Elizabeth Montagu (1718–1800), the leader of the Bluestocking Society in England. The members of the Japanese group referred to themselves as *shinfujin* (新婦人, 'new women').

[9] Melanowicz 2013: 227.

[10] Kim Yŏng-na 2005: 66.

[11] Choi Pongsun Allen 1958: 40.

[12] A term coined by Fukuzawa Yukichi (福澤諭吉 1835–1901), the most prominent educator and tireless propagator of Western knowledge in Meiji Japan.

[13] Gössmann et al. 2004: 183.

The appearance of the first women's magazine, *Jogaku Zasshi* (女学雑誌, 'a magazine for women's education') from 1885 to 1904 contributed to the popularisation of modern education for women in Japan. Iwamoto Yoshiharu (巌本 善治 1863–1942), one of early advocates of women's education in the late Meiji period, together with the Japanese New Woman, Tsuda Umeko (津田 梅子 1864–1929) founded in 1885 the Meiji Girls' School (明治女学校), which stressed the importance of equal education for both girls and boys.

Since the emergence of the *atarashii onna* (New Woman) in Japan was associated with the feminist literary journal *Seitō* (Bluestockings), established by Hiratsuka Raichō, the journal was edited by women and its contributing writers were women, members of *Seitōsha*[14]. The female authors criticised the confinement of women to domestic sphere and urged them to give expression of their creative talents. The magazine *Seitō* published or reviewed the works of Western authors, such as George Bernard Shaw and Henrik Ibsen, but above all it published Western New Woman writers, such as Emma Goldmann, Ellen Key, Sonya Kovalevsky, the first Russian important female mathematician, and Olive Schreiner, the South African feminist writer, the author of *Women and Labour*.

In 1920, Hiratsuka, who was one of the major representatives of the prewar Japanese feminist movement, founded, together with the fellow women's rights activist, Fusae Ichigawa (市川 房枝 1893–1981), an organisation called *Shin Fujin* (New Woman) or *Shin Fujin Kyōkai* (New Women's Association). The Association was active from 1920 to 1922. The New Woman phenomenon grew in strength in the 1920s, when Japan enjoyed a great economic prosperity. In this decade a new mass culture began to develop in Japan. It was termed "Americanism" or "Modernism". In the sphere of gender relations it was manifested by the emergence of *moga* (モガ, 'modern girl') and *mobo* (モボ, modern boy), who shocked the traditional and conservative members of the society by their scandalous, western lifestyle and appearance[15].

The New Woman movement started in China at the turn of the 19th century. The first women's magazines appeared in China in 1898, as a consequence of modernisation and westernisation of the country. In the early 20th century women's magazines created a powerful image of the *xin nüxing* (New Woman), which was opposed the old ideal of a woman as *liangqi xianmu* a (賢母良妻, 'good wife' and 'good mother'). The popular press, particularly illustrated magazines, and popular literature, as well as left-wing cinema of the 1930s, questioned traditional gender roles and propagated modernity together with the image of the New Woman and

[14] For a comprehensive overview of the Japanese New Woman phenomenon, see Lowy 2007: 497-499.

[15] Gössmann et al. 2004: 186.

modeng gou'er (摩登狗兒, 'modern girl')[16]. New Chinese literature, which adopted Western ideas, became a platform for disseminating the New Woman ideal. The Chinese terms *modeng nüxing* (摩登女性, 'modern woman') and *modeng guniang* (摩登姑娘, 'modern girl') were used in China until the 1930s.

The Chinese *New Woman* or *Modern Girl* wore short hair and stylish, modern Western clothes. She attended school to prepare for a professional career. She was free, independent, had a deep emotional interior, sought meaning in life, and struggled against gender inequality. She paid attention to modern technologies such as hygiene and nutrition and took care of her personal appearance[17].

Ibsen's advocacy for women's independence and freedom in marriage exerted a great impact on a generation of Chinese playwrights who composed works that depicted female characters much akin to Nora in A *Doll's House*. Some of the most well-known examples of Chinese adaptation of Ibsen's Nora are Hu Shi (胡適 1891–1962)'s *Zhongshen dashi* (終身大事, 'the greatest event in life', 1919) and Tian Han (田漢; 1898–1968)'s *Kafeidian zhi yiye*, ('one night in a café', 1920)[18]. An important New Woman writer was Ding Ling (丁玲1904–1986), whose early stories, such as *Shafei nüshi de riji* (莎菲女士的日記, "Miss Sophia's Diary", 1927) and *1930 Nian Chun Shanghai* (一九三零年春,上海, "Shanghai, Spring 1930") focused on the lives of young and independent Chinese women. Due to the political situation in the late 1930s and 1940s, the New Woman in Chinese literature lost much of her early characteristics and gradually shifted towards left-wing political activism[19].

The term *shinyŏsŏng* (New Woman) first appeared in Korea in the early 1920s in the magazines *Shinyŏsŏng* and *Shinyŏja* (신여자 新女子, 'new women'). The concept of *Shinyŏsŏng* referred to Korean women who not only achieved education according to Western standards, but who adopted Western lifestyle. The New Woman ideal, which appeared in public discourse in the 1920s and 1930s in colonial Korea, became a powerful symbol of modernity, change in gender roles, and women's emancipation. The emergence of the New Woman contributed to the redefinition of traditional gender roles in colonial Korea.

3. Conditions of women in premodern Korea

According to many interpretations, "Confucianism had not only deprived women of their basis rights, but also promoted a strict social structure that was not conducive to the recognition of women's talents and dignity"[20]. Although this

[16] Stevens 2003: 82.
[17] Ibid., 86.
[18] Guo 2013: 2.
[19] Stevens 2003: 95.
[20] Kim Youngmin 2011: 11.

view has been contested recently[21], it is generally agreed that women in patriarchal society during the Chosŏn period (조선 朝鮮, 1392–1910) had an inferior social and family status. Before the Chosŏn rule, when Neo-Confucianism was adopted as the official ideological basis of Korean society, women enjoyed more freedom and had more rights, although they were not treated on an equal footing with men. "Under the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392), women enjoyed a great deal of social and economic freedom"[22].

In the Chosŏn period, however, the freedom of women was severely limited. Men and women were separated from the age of seven years. Men lived in the outer part of the house called *sarangch'ae* (사랑채 舍廊房), while women remained in the inner part *anch'ae* (안채 上房). Based on the rigid social hierarchy, age, gender, and class, women were encouraged to follow Confucian ideals and the achievement of Confucian virtues. In the late Chosŏn society, separate male and female spheres were still recognised and undisputed. Under the strict patriarchal system, women were confined to the domestic or private sphere. Of course, Confucianism cannot be reduced merely to the idea of patriarchy[23]; nevertheless, Korean women were excluded from participation in the public sphere and were considered domestic representatives of the family and home. This does not contradict the observation that diverse women in the Chosŏn era, from elite *yangban* (양반 兩班) women to enslaved women used various strategies to seek a better status, economic rights, and more comfortable existence.

In the late Chosŏn dynasty, the subordination of women to men was considered to be a natural phenomenon and elite women rarely participated in nondomestic activities. In line with traditional Confucian values, women were subordinate to men: to father, husband and the eldest son. Men could have several wives and concubines, but women were not allowed to meet with anyone outside the narrow circle of relatives. The woman did not have a voice in marriage. It was arranged by parents, and after the wedding, she became part of the family of her husband. Women did not even have a name, they were identified by their position relative to men. They could not have property or work outside home, and had to cover the face when outside home. In addition, widows could not remarry, but were expected to commit suicide to show loyalty to their husband. The distinction between primary and secondary wives contributed to the inequalities imposed on women.

The year 1894 marked a sharp turning point in the modern history of Korea, which led to the collapse of the Chosŏn dynasty, and revealed the failure of attempts to modernise the country because the Korean elites did not want to open the country to outside influences. At the turn of the 19th century, women in Korea still

[21] Ibid., 12.
[22] Deuchler 2003: 143.
[23] Ibid., 13.

remained on the margins of politics, economy, culture, and even religion. Women of the upper classes were taught proper manners, elaborate speaking skills, obedience and the native writing system *han'gŭl* (한글), which at the time was considered appropriate only for the lower classes and women. Recommended reading was the virtuous lives of women. A small number of educated women used *hanmun* (한문 漢文)[24], but most Korean women accepted *han'gŭl*. Of course, a certain number of women in earlier times were engaged in literary creation. They wrote, among others, long, didactic poems meant for their daughters mostly dealing with family etiquette as well as loves and sorrow within the family. But because these songs, called *kyubang kasa* (규방 가사 閨房歌辭) or *naebang kasa* (내방 가사 內房歌辭), were for the most part written in *han'gŭl*, they did not gain recognition as serious literature. Moreover, even when educated women wrote their works in *hanmun*, they usually remained anonymous because it was inappropriate for women to go beyond the realm of home. As a result, even though a lot of literature has been written by Korean women in premodern times, relatively few works have survived to the present day, and virtually almost all of them have survived as anonymous works[25].

At the turn of the 19th century under the influence of Western ideas, a new national consciousness began to emerge. Literature written in Chinese began to be displaced by literature written in *han'gŭl*, called *shin munhak* (신문학 新文學, New Literature). At the end of the Yi (Chosŏn period) dynasty, Western missionaries encouraged education for women. Western cultural influence and modernisation of Korea prompted king Kojong (고종 高宗 1852–1919) to issue an edict in 1882 that allowed education in state schools of children of all classes. The king stressed the importance of modern education in the following words:

> When one looks at the state of affairs in the world, one finds that, in all those nations that maintain their independence through wealth and power and thus have gained ascendancy, the citizens are enlightened in their knowledge. Enlightened knowledge is attained through excellence of education, and so education truly is of fundamental importance in preserving our nation[26].

Yugyŏng-kongwŏn (육영공원 育英公院, Royal English School), founded in 1886, was the first school in Korea in the modern sense. It employed American missionaries as teachers who taught English. There were also schools established by Western missionaries. They contributed to the early development of modern education in Korea. In the years 1876–1910 in Korea nearly 3,000 schools were

[24] *Hanmun* (한문 漢文) was the koreanized form of the classical literary Chinese and the official literary language of Korea until the late 19th century.

[25] Fulton 1996: 65.

[26] Yi 1984: 331.

created by wealthy aristocrats, government officials, traders, Confucian thinkers, impoverished elite Koreans returning from abroad and Western missionaries[27].

In 1895, after the *Kabo* reform (갑오개혁 甲午改革), the newly formed *Mun'gyobu* (문교부 文敎部**,** Ministry of Education) established obligatory elementary public schools for boys from all classes. Girls were still denied admission to public schools, but after the introduction of Christianity in Korea, foreign missionaries promoted education for both boys and girls. In 1886, Mary Fitch Scranton, an American Methodist missionary, established the first modern school for girls, Ewha Haktang (이화학당 梨花學堂). Girls were taught *han'gŭl*, English, and elementary understanding of western knowledge (the Bible, ethics, philosophy), as well as practical skills, such as sewing and embroidery[28]. The aim of Christian missionaries was by no means to create New Women but creating "modern homemakers"[29]. However, more and more Korean women from the upper classes received modern, western education and began to voice their discontent about the conditions of women in Korean society. In 1898, the first Korean women's rights organisations, *Ch'anyang-hoe* (찬양회 讚揚會, 'praise association')[30], was established, and it issued the declaration of the rights of women in Korea demanding more schools for girls in the *Hwangsŏng Shinmun* (황성신문 皇城新聞, 'capital gazette') on 8 September 1898:

> Why should our women live on what their husbands earn as if fools, confining themselves to their deep chambers all their lives and subjecting themselves to regulations imposed by their husbands? In enlightened countries, both men and women are equal. Women's skills and principles are equal to those possessed by their husbands... We are going to establish a girl's school with the aim of making women equal to men[31].

Modernisation of women was crucial in the effort to modernise Korea as a nation. The purpose of *Ch'anyang-hoe* was to start schools for girls who would share in the responsibility for building a progressive society[32]. Members were generally housewives from wealthy upper class families in the country's capital[33],

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[27] Yuh 2008: 217.

[28] Kim Ai Ra 1996: 13.

[29] Ibid., 14.

[30] *Ch'anyang-hoe* (찬양회 讚揚會) was founded in 1898 to support women's education. The organisation consisted of 304 upper-class women. The group submitted the petition to emperor Kojong to establish the first school for girls.

[31] Tétreault 1994: 163.

[32] Chŏn (ed.), 2004: 181–185.

[33] The capital of Korea, Seoul, has been known in the past by the names: Wiryesŏng (위례성 慰禮城, Paekche era백제 百濟), Hanju (한주 漢州, Shilla era신라 新羅), Namkyŏng (남경 南京 Koryŏ era 고려 高麗), Hansŏng (한성 漢城 Paekche and Chosŏn era, 백제 百濟 and 조선朝鮮), Hanyang (한양 漢陽 Chosŏn era조선朝鮮), and Kyŏngsŏng (경성京城 colonial era, 1910–1945).

the men fans and some foreign missionaries. In 1908, the government established the first public girls' high school, (관립한성고등여학교 官立漢城高等女學校, Hansŏng Girls' High School. In the next two years several private schools for girls were established. Education for women was promoted because they were expected to become 'wise mothers and good wives', and that they would provide education for their children, therefore, women could contribute to the prosperity of the nation.

The development of independent modern education in Korea was interrupted by the Japanese occupation in 1910–1945. The colonial authorities introduced to Korea the Japanese model of education and banned teaching the Korean language and history. The education system imposed by the Japanese government aimed at the marginalisation of the native culture. During the Japanese occupation Korean women were allowed to pursue secondary and higher education. However, it should be noted that education opportunities for girls were limited to a small percentage of girls from the upper classes. In the 1930s, 90 percent of Korean women remained illiterate[34]. Nevertheless, the introduction of women's education in Korea at that time was a "revolutionary" move because there was no other social structure to support women in their emancipation.

4. The origin of the Korean New Woman

The term New Woman (*shinyŏsŏng*) received a wider recognition in 1920 when Kim Wŏn-ju and a few other graduates of the Ewha Womans School started a new journal *Shinyŏja* (New Woman) with the aim of propagating enlightenment and gender equality[35]. Another magazine *Pu'in* (부인婦人, 'Madame'), devoted to feminine issues, was also established in 1920. It was renamed in 1923 as *Shinyŏsŏng*. These magazines "promoted women's rights and also helped to make these terms more widespread"[36].

Like in Japan and China, the term New Woman referred to young, educated women who strongly opposed the traditional Neo-Confucian gender roles. They were, as a rule, graduates of the new girls' schools established by Christian missionaries, young female teachers, writers, and artists. Many of them studied in Japan. After the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, a number of young Korean intellectuals, both men and women, went to Japan to study. They were exposed to new literature, especially Western literature in the Japanese version. After returning to Korea, they formed literary groups, established literary journals and began

[34] Kim Ai Ra 1996: 15.
[35] Kim Yŏng-na 2005: 65.
[36] Hyun 2004: 44.

to write modern Korean fiction, which resembled western literature in the form and technique, but it conveyed Korean themes and mood.

The contribution of women writers to the development of modern Korean literature, however, was not regarded as equal to that of men. Women writers were called *yŏryu chakka* (여류작가 女流作家, women writers), while men writers were simply called *chakka* (작가 作家, writers). Generally women writers were either rejected or downplayed by literary critics and the reading public[37].

The emergence of the New Woman in Korea is usually associated with the public appearance of four types of women. The first was a leader who had gone overseas to study and had returned to Korea; the second had graduated from a women's high school in Korea and had gained employment; the third had also graduated from a women's high school and had become a modern homemaker, who, for example, did not wear her hair in the traditional style; and the fourth category was a female worker who could read *han'gŭl*[38]. In contrast to the traditional stereotype of Korean women, the Korean New Woman was single and independent economically. For her free love took on special significance. Falling in love was an expression of personal freedom and choice.

Broadly speaking, the New Woman in colonial Korea impersonated not only emancipated and educated women who fought with gender oppression, but also women whose dress and appearance imitated modern Western styles in fashion and behaviour. Examples of such New Women include Esther Pak (a.k.a. Kim Chŏng-dong, 김정동 金點童 1877–1910), a graduate of Ehwa College[39], who later became the first and only woman physician who practised Western medicine and one of the few university graduates during her generation. The Korean New Woman, like Esther Pak, wore a Gibson hairstyle, kept a parasol and walked in high-heeled shoes. She also wore a shorter version of a traditional skirt (치마, *ch'ima*), together with a short jacket (저고리, *chŏgori*)[40]. The appearance and lifestyle of the New Woman became a public debate in the 1920s in Korea. The stereotypical opinion was rather negative. The *Tong-A Ilbo* (동아일보 東亞日報, 'East Asia Daily') published an article in 1925, listing and critisising the most extravagant women in the capital: "Seoul's extravagant women are first the New Women, second the bourgeois mistress, and third the *kisaeng* (기생 妓生)"[41]. Likewise, the *Chosŏn Ilbo* (조선

[37] Fulton 1996: 65.

[38] Kim Yŏng-na 2005: 66.

[39] Ewha College (이화학당 梨花學堂 Ihwa Haktang) was a mission school for girls established in 1886 by Mary F. Scranton (1832–1909). In 1945 the school became a university by the name Ehwa Womans University.

[40] Lee 2008: 204-207.

[41] *Kisaeng* (기생 妓生), sometimes called Kinyŏ (기녀 妓女) were professional female entertainers of aristocracy and kings during the Chosŏn period (1392–1910) often highly skilled in poetry, music and dance.

일보 朝鮮日報, 'Korea Daily') wrote: "If she says free love, she is a New Woman. The woman of divorce, free love or a bob, does not of herself demand that she be called a New Woman, so why do members of our society carelessly call them a New Woman?"[42] In the 1930s this term was gradually replaced by the "Modern Woman".

The three women writers, Kim Myŏng-sun, Na Hye-sŏk, and Kim Wŏn-ju, as well as the soprano singer Yun Sim-tŏk (윤심덕 尹心悳 1897–1927), were strongly associated with the New Woman phenomenon in Korea. They actively promoted new roles for women in literature, art and life, as well as free choice in marriage and the rights of women as individuals[43]. Other outstanding New Women include educators Kim Hwallan (a.k.a. Helen Kim, 김활란 金活蘭 1897–1970), Kim Mirisa (a.k.a. Ch'a Mirisa, 차미리사 車美理士 1879–1955), social activists such as Hŏ Chŏng-suk (허정숙 許貞淑, 1908–1991), Chu Se-juk (주세죽 朱世竹 1901–1953), and Pak Wŏn-hŭi (박원희 朴元熙 1899–1928). In the 1920s, they broke the restrictions imposed by the traditional, patriarchal Korean society on women, and in their literary and critical works they began to express female experience.

All the three New Woman writers, Kim Myŏng-sun, Na Hye-sŏk, and Kim Wŏn-ju, were among a group of Korean students sent to study in Japan in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Their views were heavily influenced by the Japanese New Woman movement and Western writers, such as Ellen Key and Henrik Ibsen. These young Korean women promoted free decision of women in the question of marriage and formulated a new sexual morality. It is difficult to define the New Woman explicitly, but no one can deny the divide between the Old Woman and the New Woman[44]. In this sense they contributed to reform Korean family system and provided women with a feeling of meaningful life.

5. The emergence of the New Woman in Korean literature

In the 1920s, the New Woman writers challenged the traditional gender roles and met with hostility from both men and women who adhered to Neo-Confucian values. These New Woman writers wanted to introduce a new feminine voice to modern Korean literature. They did not participate actively in the national independence struggle, but they used their literary skills to propagate social reforms and called for the improvement of women's position in society.

This first generation of modern Korean women writers, represented among others by Kim Myŏng-sun, Na Hye-sŏk and Kim Wŏn-ju, in fictional form expressed their thoughts and feminine sensibilities and demonstrated that women could

[42] Kim Yŏng-na 2005: 69.
[43] Hyun 2004: 45.
[44] Hyun 2004: 98.

be engaged both in imaginative writing and public affairs. They expressed their views about literature and the condition of women in patriarchal society. They rejected the Neo-Confucian social values, which consigned women to the domestic sphere and believed that a reformed family system was necessary to liberate the Korean women. Thus, the emergence of the New Women was a mark of modernity in Korean history.

When in March 1920 Kim Wŏn-ju established the *Shinyŏja* magazine, which became a good platform to disseminate feminist views. The emancipated Korean New Women could then express quite freely their feminist beliefs and opinions. In the first issue of the magazine, Kim Wŏn-ju published Kim Myŏng-sun's second short story, *Chŏnyŏ ŭi kanŭn kil* (處女의 가는 길, 'a maiden's path'), and her own first short story, *Kyeshi* (계시 啓示, 'revelation'). The next issue contained Kim Wŏn-ju's article "Uri shinyŏja ŭi yogu wa chujang" (우리 신여자 의 요구 와 주장, 'our demands and claims as new women'), which attacked female oppression in Korean society. It also contained her second short story, *Ŏnŭ sonyŏ ŭi sa* (어느 소녀의 사, 'death of a girl'), which recounted the suicide of a young girl whose parents tried to force her to become a concubine of a wealthy profligate. Na Hye-sŏk, another founding member of *Shinyŏja*, contributed a cartoon illustrating the contrast between a modern Korean woman and two old-fashioned Korean men. Na Hye-sŏk's other contributions to the magazine included a short diary titled *Sanyŏn chŏn ŭi ilgi chung'esŏ* (4년 전의 일기 중에서, 'from my diary four years ago') and another cartoon depicting Kim Wŏn-ju's daily routine as both the editor of the magazine and a wife.

The remaining part of this essay outlines briefly the turbulent lives of these three Korean New Women writers, who were the most prolific of the first group of the New Woman writers and advocates of extensive reforms to improve women's right. Being members of wealthy families and elites, they felt morally obliged to enlighten Korean women humiliated by the Confucian ideology. Thus, their efforts and writings about dignity for women as human beings strongly deserve serious consideration. As Choi (2009: 165) has written, Kim Myŏng-sun, Na Hye-sŏk and Kim Wŏn-ju:

> popularized the image of the New Women in the 1920s print media. They were the symbol of educated, talented females. At the same time, they posed a serious threat to the stability of gender morality and the family. They challenged the oppressive nature of Confucian gender ideology and the double-standard that had been applied to women and men. Their scandalous love affairs fundamentally defied the ideal of chastity. They even questioned the sanctity of motherhood that had been the centerpiece of patriarchal social arrangements[45].

[45] Choi 2009: 165.

Although the Korean women intellectuals of the 1920s gained excellent modern education, they had no choice but to marry and become "a good wife and wise mother". Otherwise, they had to meet with social ostracism and criticism by society stunned by their ideas of women's liberation.

5.1. Kim Myŏng-sun – a New Woman in the colonial period

Kim Myŏng-sun, pen name T'anshil (탄실 彈實 'berry seed'), or Mangyangch'o (망양초 望洋草 'nostalgic grass'), was born in Yungdŏk village in the P'yŏngyang district. Her father was Kim Hŭi-kyŏng (김희경 金羲庚), a wealthy merchant, and her mother was a concubine who had been previously a *kisaeng*. Kim was an intelligent girl endowed with literary skills, but the fact that she was the illegitimate daughter left a scar on her. In 1903, she began to attend the Namsanhyŏn school (남산현학교 南山峴學校) in P'yŏngyang and in 1905 she continued her education in a Christian missionary school. Next in 1908, she went to a school for girls, Chinmyŏng (진명여자고등학교 進明女子高等學校) in Kyŏngsŏng[46], and graduated in 1911. As a schoolgirl, Kim revealed her versatile talents. In 1910, she wrote a poem about the tragic fate of the country under the Japanese rule. At school she also suffered insults as an illegitimate daughter. After graduation, she went in 1913 to Tokyo to study at the literary department of a women's college. While studying in Japan, Kim Myŏng-sun became interested in feminist ideas and a had a negative opinion about traditional marriage in Korea. She did not finish her college studies and entered a language institute, where she learned English and French and eagerly read literary works[47].

Kim Myŏng-sun returned home in 1916 and continued her studies at Sungmyŏng*yŏja kodŭnghakkyo* (숙명여자고등학교 淑明女子高等學校, Sungmyŏng Girls' High School). In 1917, she began her literary career taking part in a literary competition announced by the influential magazine *Ch'ŏngch'un* (청춘 靑春, 'youth'), which appeared from 1914 to 1918. The jury, which included the well-known writer of the enlightenment literature, Yi Kwang-su (이광수 李光洙 1892–1950), highly appreciated Kim Myŏng-sun's short story *Ŭishim ŭi sonyŏ* (의심의 소녀, "A Girl of Mystery"), in which she described in a realistic and unsentimental way the tragic life of a woman. Her short story received the second prize in the competition. It was praised for its realism and lack of moralism which was characteristic of traditional novels.

Ŭishim ŭi sonyŏ is a tragic story about the beautiful young girl Pŏmne, her grandfather and her dead mother. The true identity of Pŏmne and her family is

[46] For the old names of Seoul see footnote 33.

[47] Kim Yung-Chung 1977: 279.

recounted in an aura of mystery until the epilogue. The most moving parts of the story reveal a dark and sad side of the girl's memories. After visiting her mother's grave, who committed a suicide because of her husband's infidelity, Pŏmne and her grandfather walk back to the village along a moonlit road. The atmosphere in the story emphasises abandonment and the desolate existence of the girl and her grandfather, who live alone far away from the rest of the village. The story reaches its climax when Pŏmne recalls a sad goodbye to T'ŭkshil on the banks of the River Taedong. Kim Myŏng-sun's short story had a simple plot and unembellished depiction of the story. *Ŭishim ŭi sonyŏ* is a forerunner of modern realistic Korean literature with a distinct female voice[48].

In 1918, Kim went back to Japan and joined the Tokyo Women's College, where she studied literature and music. She also participated in the meetings of Korean students studying in Japan. There she met the writer Chŏn Yŏng-t'aek (전영택 田榮澤 1894–1968). Thanks to him she started to contribute to the influential literary magazine, *Ch'angjo* (창조 創造, 'creation')[49]. In 1920, Kim Myŏng-sun published her first poem, "Choro ŭi hwamong" (조로의 화몽, 'the dream of a flower on a dewy morning') in *Ch'angjo*. She also worked as a reporter for the newspaper *Maeil Shinbo* (매일신보 每日申報) and even starred in a movie called *Kkot changsa* (꽃장사, "The Florist")[50] which brought her popularity as an actress. Since then, Kim Myŏng-sun also published poems, essays and short stories in the student journal *Yŏjagye* (여자계 女子界, 'the world of women') in Tokyo. In 1924, her autobiographical novel, *T'ansiriwa Chuyŏng'i* (탄실이와 주영이, 't'anshil and chuyŏng') was published. It expressed her tribulations as a victim of prejudice and discrimination based on her low origin and family status. She also denounced exaggerated rumours about her private life in Japan. The year 1925 marked a peak of Kim Myŏng-sun's literary career. She published her collected works, *Saengmyŏng ŭi kwashil* (생명의 과실, 'fruits of life'). It was the first publication of the collected works by a female writer in Korea.

In the years 1927–1930, Kim played major roles in at least five films[51]. However, the film career slowed her literary work. At the same time she began to have financial problems. As an unmarried woman with no special skills besides writing, she

[48] Ibid., 280.

[49] *Ch'angjo* (창조 創造, 'creation') was a first purely literary magazine founded by the writer Kim Tongin (김동인 金東仁 1900–1951) and started to appear in 1919.

[50] *Kkot changsa* (꽃장사, "The Florist" 1930) was a drama film directed by Ahn Jong-hwa (안종화 安鍾和 1902–1966) in which Kim Myŏng-sun played a leading role.

[51] Among others, she played in *Kwangnang* (광랑 狂浪, 'wild waves' 1927) directed by I Kyŏng-son (이경손 李慶孫 1905–1977), melodrama *Naŭi ch'inguyŏ* (나의 친구여, "My Dear Friend" 1928) directed by Yu Chang-an (유장안 柳長安), historical film Sugyŏngnangjajŏn (숙영낭자전, "The Story of Lady Suk-yŏng", 1928), directed by I Kyŏng-son, drama *Chŏlmŭn-i-ŭi norae* (절문이의노래, 'the song of a young man' 1930) directed by Kim Yŏng-hwan (김영환 金英煥 1898-?).

struggled with everyday problems. Little is known about her activities and whereabouts in the years 1932–1935, but reportedly, she returned to Tokyo and studied music and the French language. She returned to Korea in 1936, where she tried to revive her literary career by publishing fables for children and confessional poems that reflected her years of suffering and despair of social ostracism. Her poem *Kŭmŭm pam* (그믐밤, 'the last night of the month'), published in the January 1939 issue of *Samchŏlli* (삼천리 三千里, 'Korea') marked the end of her literary career. Soon she disappeared from the literary world. There were unconfirmed rumours that Kim Myŏng-sun returned to Japan in 1939 and lived in extreme poverty until her presumed death in 1951 in a mental hospital in Tokyo.

T'anshil was a prolific writer. She published approximately 170 pieces, which heralded the beginning of modern Korean women's literature. Theresa Hyun writes that the views on sex, love, marriage and morality of the Swedish feminist and educator Ellen Key exerted a big impact on the work of Kim Myŏng-sun[52]. Among the first generation of the Korean female writers, Kim Myŏng-sun's life and works may be regarded as an expression of the struggle for the equality and freedom of contemporary Korean women. Thus, she has proven pivotal in the New Women's attempt to overthrow the patriarchal nature of Korean society.

5.2. Na Hye-sŏk – in search of identity of the New Woman

Na Hye-sŏk is considered as the first female modern painter in Korea and an original writer. She published her works not only in the women's magazines like *Yŏjagye*, *Shinyŏsŏng* (신여성, 'the new lady'), and *Shinyŏja* (신여자, 'new women') but also *P'yehŏ* (폐허 廢墟, 'ruins'), a pure literary magazine established in 1920 and *Samchŏlli*, a monthly magazine established in 1929 focusing on politics, history, culture and arts.

Na Hye-sŏk was born in Suwŏn. She was the fourth child of a wealthy family. She attended the Samil Girls' School (삼일여학교 三一女學校) for elementary education, founded by Mary Scranton, and next Chimmyŏng High School for Girls, where her exceptional intelligence and artistic talent was noticed. Her elder brother, who was educated in Japan, encouraged her to go to Tokyo to study at the Private School of Fine Arts for Women (동경미술학교 東京美術學校). In Japan, under the strong influence of the *Seitō* movement, Na Hye-sŏk became a keen enthusiast of the feminist movement, which is reflected in her works and life. During her studies in Tokyo she was one of the founders of the Association of Korean Students in Japan and contributed articles to the magazine *Yŏjagye*.

[52] Hyun 2004: 53.

It was in Tokyo, which was the scene of the emergence of the New Woman movement, that Na Hye-sŏk learnt about Ellen Key's concept of ethical marriage which was based on mutual love of both spouses. In Tokyo, Na Hye-sŏk became involved in the New Woman debate. In *Isangjŏk puin* (이상적 부인 理想的 婦人, 'perfect wife'), her first essay published at the age of eighteen years in the journal *Hakchigwang*[53] (학지광 學之光**,** 'light of learning') in 1914, she presented a new woman's voice that looked out to the world for its inspiration of an ideal new womanhood, while looking at the hypocrisy and tyranny of traditional gender relations[54]. Na Hye-sŏk described qualities which an ideal woman, i.e. the New Woman, should acquire:

> [These women are]: Katusha [Katerina Maslova], who embraced revolution as her ideal; Magda, who upheld egoism as her dream; Nora, who pursued genuine love as her ideal; Mrs. Stowe, who held equality derived from religious belief as her ideal; Mrs. Raicho who believed in women's genius, and Mrs. Yosano, who had dreams for a harmonious home... We cannot regard a woman as an ideal simply because she has fulfilled the role of a conventionally moral wife, that is, when she has carried out her socially expected roles. We have to equip ourselves with qualities that go beyond such expectations by improving ourselves in whatever we do; and we should not simply accept the motto of "good wife and wise mother" as our ideal, either. Then how can we become real women? It goes without saying that we have to acquire knowledge and skills. We need to develop our abilities to take care of worldly matters with common sense, no matter what befalls us. We need to become women who possess a clear sense of purpose and a consciousness to live up to their full individual potentials. We should become pioneers of our age in terms of understanding modem philosophies, knowledge, and character. We ought to be ideal women ourselves, who are true and powerful sources of a mysterious inner light that brightens interpersonal relationships[55].

Na Hye-sŏk 's early essay is recognised as the first Korean feminist manifesto[56]. It was a critique of the patriarchal system and marginalisation of women in Korea. She criticised patriarchal constraints on women that had suppressed selfhood and glorified women's role in the family as wife and mother. In both her writings and her life, she resisted the prevailing notion of 'wise mother, good wife' rooted in Confucian gender ethics, Japan's Meiji gender ideology (*ryōsai kenbo*), as well as in American missionaries' Victorian notions of domesticity[57].

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[53] *Hakchigwang* (학지광 學之光, 'light of learning') a magazine founded in 1914 in Tokyo delivered news about academic matters, literature and modern trends. It was an organ publication of *Chae Ilbon tonggyŏng Chosŏn yuhaksaeng haguhoe* (재일본동경조선유학생학우회 在日本朝鮮留學生學友會, The Association of Korean Students Studying in Tokyo).

[54] Choi Hyaeweol 2009: 167.

[55] Kim Yung-Hee 2002: 8-9.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Choi Hyaeweol 2009: 170.

In 1917, Na Hye-sŏk published her second feminist essay, *Chapkam* (잡감 雜感, 'miscellaneous thoughts') in *Hakchigwang*. Her essay, written in an epistolary form, appealed to Korean women to follow the path of liberated women in Western countries.

> In my dormitory room, I once said to you, older sister, "Isn't it time for Korean women to be truly human beings? Shouldn't we become real women? In America women are in a true sense women because they exercise reason and have philosophy; French women are the same because of their science and arts; and German women, for their courage and hard work. Then, isn't it long past time for us now to take our first step as real women? Our misfortune is too harsh"[58].

In the first issue of *P'yehŏ* in 1920, Na Hye-sŏk published her essay on art under the title *Yanghwa-wa shiga* (양화와 시가, 'leather shoes and poetry'), in which she compared forms of expression in painting and in poetry. Her essay proved that she was competent both in art and literature. In the same year, she married Kim U-yŏng (김우영 金雨英1886–1958), a widower and lawyer educated in Japan who had courted her from his student days in Japan. At the end of 1920, Na Hye-sŏk returned briefly to Japan to continue her study of painting. In Korea, she organised in March 1921 in the capital an exhibition of paintings, which became a sensational social and artistic event attracting crowds of people and bringing fame to the artist. As the first Korean she began to paint pictures in the western style. For example, her *Self-Potrait* reminds of the portrait of Gertrude Stein by Pablo Picasso.

Na Hye-sŏk made her literary debut in February 1918 with the novella *Kyŏnghŭi* (경희, the name of the protagonist), which appeared in *Yŏjagye*, a magazine published in Tokyo. Her most important story recounts a woman's self-discovery on the threshold of period modernisation and her subsequent quest for meaning in life as a New Woman. The author deals with the issue of inequality between the sexes, relationships in patriarchal marriage and the new identity of women. The heroine of the story is looking for the new meaning of life and tries to redefine her identity as the New Woman. Critics have recognised *Kyŏnghŭi* as the first feminist work in Korean literature. As Choi (2009: 172) asserts:

> Her novella, *Kyŏnghŭi* (1918), brilliantly captures the birth of selfhood inspired by a feminist vision that questions the patriarchal order that determines the "proper" space for women in the domestic sphere. Na frankly scrutinizes the bodily constraints caused by pregnancy and motherhood and recognizes that they could hinder women's pursuit of self and creative work. Therefore, those keenly interested in self-realization might not be interested in marrying or getting pregnant[59].

[58] Kim Yung-Hee 2002: 10.
[59] Choi Hyaeweol 2009: 172.

In September that year, she published in *Yŏjagye*, her second short story, *Hoesaeng'han sonnyŏ ege* (회생한 손녀에게, 'to a granddaughter who revived'). In spite of her strong criticism of the traditional notions of marriage and motherhood Na Hye-sŏk was a wife of a prominent political figure, Kim U-yŏng, who was a vice consul in Manchuria. During her marriage she travelled with her diplomat husband on several tours sponsored by the Japanese government. Among others, they visited Paris, Warsaw and New York. She became an eager observer of Western culture, art and family life. Soon after returning from the world tour, she held an art show in Suwŏn, her home-town in September 1929. Unfortunately, the prestigious marriage ended in divorce in 1930 after she had revealed an extramarital affair with Ch'oe Rin (최린 崔麟 1878–1958), the leader of Ch'ŏndogyo (천도교 天道敎, Religion of the Heavenly Way) during her brief stay in Paris. What is more, she announced her divorce in public and was ostracised by the Korean society. The harrowing ordeal shaped her later tragic life. In 1934, she published an article entitled *Ihon kobaekchang* (이혼고백장, 'confession about divorce'), which referred to her former husband. She pleaded with him to forgive her in order to protect their four children. In order to revive their marriage, she had even promised to become a *hyŏnch'ŏ yangmo* (현처양모 賢妻良母, 'wise wife, and good mother'), the very ideal she had criticised earlier in her writings. However, she still upheld her views on the double moral standards in Korean society. She wrote in her essay:

> The mind of the Korean man is strange. They do not embrace the idea of chastity for men. But they demand chastity of their wives and all other women. Worse, they try to violate other women's bodies. In the case of people in the West or in Tokyo, if they do not cherish the idea of chastity, they understand and respect the view of others who do not hold the idea of faithfulness. [...]
>
> I also feel pity for the women of the educated class, the so-called new women. They still spend their childhood and marriage within the feudal family system so that their lives are incredibly complex and chaotic. Half-baked knowledge does not help them strike the necessary balance between the old and the new, and it only provokes a depressing temper. They learn a philosophy of life in college and have the opportunity to observe family life in the West or Tokyo, don't they? They have ideals and will as high as the sky, but their bodies and work are on earth, aren't they? They marry based on sweet love, but husband and wife follow their own separate ways so that they do not find any meaning in life[60].

Five years later, in 1935, Na wrote another essay, *Shin saenghwal e tŭlmyŏnsŏ* (신생활에 들면서, 'beginning a new life') in which she recalled her affair in Paris. She felt alienated and isolated in colonial Korea and wanted to go back to Paris,

[60] Quoted after Choi Hyaeweol 2009: 173.

where she hoped to revive as an artist and woman. As a New Woman, she presented her unorthodox view of chastity, which reflected the modern ideas.

> Chastity is neither morality nor law. It is only a taste. Just as we eat rice when we want to eat rice, and we eat rice cake when we want to eat rice cake, chastity depends on our will and usage. We should not be constrained… In order to keep chastity, we often suppress our natural desire, our irresistible passion and our point of view. How ironic is it? Therefore, our liberation begins with our liberation from chastity. I believe that we have to look to a reality where sexual anarchy makes some people want to keep chastity. In Paris, where sexual anarchy prevails, there are men and women who keep chastity. They do so after they have already experienced everything and return to the old fashioned ways. Like Parisians, we also need to experience everything and then choose whichever. That is a less dangerous and more proper way[61].

After Na Hye-sŏk's divorce, she could not sell her paintings or find employment abandoned by her relatives and friends. In 1948, she was found dead on the street. Her body was stored in a hospital morgue until her identity was determined.

5.3. Kim Wŏn-ju – fight against patriarchal and national oppression

The third notable New Woman writer Kim Wŏn-ju, better known under her pen name Kim Ilyŏp (김일엽 金一葉), was a founder of the first feminist magazine *Shinyŏja*. Yi Kwang-su (1892–1950), the author of the first Korean modern novel *Mujŏng* (무정 無情, 'heartless'), appreciated the literary output of Kim Wŏn-ju and gave her the pen name Ilyŏp ('one leaf') in recognition of her unique literary talent.

Kim Wŏn-ju was born in P'yŏngyang in the family of a Methodist pastor. As she wrote in her diary, her mother was a very active woman, who did not recognise the traditional roles assigned to women, such as cooking and sewing. She encouraged her daughter to learn, as if she were a boy. Her mother and four sisters died during the epidemic.

Kim Wŏn-ju was brought up by her grandmother. As a young girl Wŏn-ju revealed a literary talent. At the age of eleven she published her first poem, *Tongsaeng ŭi chugŭm* (동생의 죽음, 'death of a sister'). She attended the high school for girls Ewha between 1913–1918, and then studied at the Ewha College. She was married to an older businessman. Then she continued her studies, by the year 1921, at a film school in Tokyo. After returning home, she actively participated in the feminist movement, which was supported by the young and educated women

[61] Ibid., 175.

and men, and was opposed to Neo-Confucian values. Kim Wŏn-ju was already a well-known, outspoken feminist who advocated freedom, independence, and "free love" *chayu yŏnae* (자유 연애), and criticised the absurdity of the ideology of chastity, which had been imposed only on women[62].

Kim Ilyŏp's private life was scandalous in the eyes of her contemporaries. Her first marriage failed, and next she was involved in a few extramarital love affairs. In 1928, she abandoned her life of the New Woman and became a Buddhist nun and for the rest of her life she lived in the Sudŏksa temple (수덕사 修德寺). Thereafter, she did not write much on women's issues.

The most important period in her literary activity was 1920, when she started a feminist magazine, *Shinyŏja* with a financial help of the Ewha College. The magazine had only four issues from March to June 1920, but it exerted a great influence on the budding feminist movement and women's writing in Korea.

In the first issue Kim Ilyŏp published her first short story, *Kyeshi* (계시 啓示, 'revelation'). The next issue contained her article *Uri shinyŏja ŭi yogu wa chujang*, which criticised stereotypical attitudes to women in Korean society, and her second short story, *Ŏnŭ sonyŏ ŭi sa* (어느 소녀의사, 'death of a girl'), which recounts the tragedy of a young girl who commits a suicide because she refuses to become a concubine of a wealthy profligate. Altogether Kim Ilyŏp published one novel, 58 poems, 16 short stories, including *Kyeshi*, *Ŏnŭ sonyŏ ŭi sa*, and *Nanŭn kayo* (나는 가요, 'I am leaving'), and two random thought pieces. The three short stories deal with women's struggle against victimisation in an abusive patriarchal system[63]. She called for the liberation of women through self-awakening, independence, education, love and marriage without submission, breaking away from the old family system and oppressive Neo-Confucian values.

Kim Ilyŏp's novel, *Chagak* (자각 自覺, 'awakening') was published in the newspaper, *Tong-A Ilbo* in 1926. It propounded the idea of women's self-awakening and liberation from the oppressive submission to men. The novel dealt with ethical problems, but it did not convey a moral lesson[64]. After the magazine *Shinyŏja* was closed, she published in daily newspapers, such as the *Tong-A Ilbo* and the *Chosŏn Ilbo* and in literary magazines, such as *Chosŏn Mundan* (조선 문단 朝鮮文壇, 'literary world of Korea') and *Kaebyŏk* (개벽 開闢, 'creation').

Kim Ilyŏp's literary works reflect the situation of Korea in the 1920s. Like two other New Woman writers, Kim Myŏng-sun and Na Hye-sŏk, she tried to avoid direct confrontation with the Japanese occupation authorities and mainly focused on social reforms and the creation of a new identity of Korean women. Her works also expressed a sense of utter despair and resignation due to her personal

[62] Choi Hyaeweol 2009: 166.
[63] Cho 1996: 9-30.
[64] Kim Yung-Chung 1977: 282.

experience and the tragic fate her beloved homeland. In the introductory essay to the first issue of *Shinyŏja*, Kim Ilyŏp wrote:

> What should we rebuild? We should rebuild the whole society. If we want to rebuild society we need to restructure the family which is the basic unit of society. If we want to reorganize the family, we need to liberate women. If we [Koreans] want to live like other people in the world, if we don't want to be defeated by other powerful people, we need to rebuild all aspects of society. In order to do this, we must liberate women[65].

In the second issue of *Shinyŏja*, Kim Ilyŏp published another feminist essay, *Uri shinyŏjaŭi yoguwa chujang*, in which she calls for self-awakening of Korean women and rejection of the rule of three obediences, which stated that a woman was required to obey her father, husband, and son, in that order. As Cho (1996: 7) points out in her essay, "Kim Ilyŏp was revolutionary in her ideas on the Korean family system"[66]. She was opposed to the traditional, oppressive family, which inhibited women's freedom.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, the emergence of the New Woman ideal in colonial Korea in the 1920s and 1930s has been examined through the example of three most prominent Korean female writers who are generally considered to be the symbol of the New Woman. In Korea, the New Woman stemmed from the first generation of women who received secondary or university education. They tried to oppose the Neo-Confucian system of patriarchy and propagated new values and lifestyles. The critical assessment of the achievement of the New Woman writers in Korea awaits a more extensive research of their literary works which are dispersed in periodicals. The existing collections of their works, are far from complete. Critical appraisals of their works begin appear both in Korean and other languages. Contemporary interest in the New Woman writers was often biased and focused on their unconventional lifestyles and tragic lives but in recent years a growing number of analytical articles have been focused on the social phenomenon of the Korean New Woman and her literary manifestations.

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[65] Quoted after Cho 1996: 18.
[66] Ibid., 20.

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論文概要
アンナ・ディニェイコ

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日本統治下の朝鮮における「新女子」の出現

本論文は、植民地時代の朝鮮（1910-1945）における「新女子」の出現に光を当てる。第一に、筆者は19世紀の西洋文化および20世紀初頭の日本や中国に見られる「新女子」の起源を記述する。次に、前近代の朝鮮における女性の置かれた状況を、1920年代の植民地朝鮮における文化的・文学的動揺に焦点を当てながら簡潔に記述する。この動きは朝鮮文学と文化における「新女子」の出現の契機となった。論文の最後には、金明淳（1896-1951）、羅蕙錫（1896-1948）、金元周（1896-1971）といった、三人の朝鮮の「新女子」作家の業績を概観する。こうした作家達は、作品の中で性の不平等について表現し、偽りのない女性の声を現代朝鮮文学に知らしめた。本論文は、植民地時代の朝鮮における「新女子」の現象を理解・分析するのよりもむしろ、傑出した三人の朝鮮の「新女子」作家達の貢献を強調しながら、入門的に概観することが目的である。

Key words: new woman, Korea, Japanese occupation, feminism, modernization, shinyŏsŏng, gender roles, family system, Korean literature, search of identity