

Women's Mobility and Literary Ethics: Ethical Conflicts in the Modern Japanese Novel *A Certain Woman*

Inseop Shin

Abstract: *A Certain Woman* (或る女 , 1919) by Takeo Arishima contributed to the new ethics necessary for establishing modern Japanese society. This novel is one of the first Japanese works to deal with women's pursuit of fulfillment of the modern self and ethical conflicts. So, how should the phenomenon of new attention to women's ethics in modern times be understood? When it comes to women's ethics, the most important of the various factors is that women have become bodies that move into public places. In this case, it is reasonable to assume that the problem of women on the move—that is, the problem of mobility—triggered the need to establish new ethics for modern women. This paper uses the concepts from Professor Nie Zhenzhao's theory and works on ethical literary criticism. The walking scene is essential in this novel. The female protagonist's mobility on foot is important because her walking is portrayed starkly to cause a cataclysmic shift in ethics. This article intends to argue that the female protagonist's orientation towards mobility, to go out to public places and receive public attention through walking, does not stem from the rational will. What is behind women's mobility, which lacks an ethical orientation, is an ethical line that throws the ethical status of the female protagonist into a contradiction. Depicting Yoko's ethical choices, this novel contains the total discrepancy that a modern woman faces on her way to self-realization.

Keywords: *A Certain Woman*; mobility; literary ethics; ethical conflicts; modern Japanese novel

Author: **Inseop Shin** is Professor and Director at the Academy of Mobility Humanities, Konkuk University, Korea. His research interests are mobility humanities, Japanese literature, Diaspora, multicultural studies (Email: seoha@konkuk.ac.kr). His paper was supported by Konkuk University in 2018.

标题：女性的移动性与文学伦理：日本近代小说《一个女人》的伦理困境

内容摘要：本文中谈到的有岛武郎的《一个女人》（1919）有助于形成近代日本社会所必需的新伦理。该小说属于最早涉及近现代日本女性寻求自我实

现和伦理冲突的作品。那么应该如何理解近代注重女性伦理的现象呢？说到女性伦理问题，在诸多因素中，女生的身体已经成为了她们进入公共场所的最重要因素。在这里可以合理地认为，女性移动的问题，即移动性问题，触发了确立近代女性新伦理的必要性。本文运用聂珍钊教授关于文学伦理学批评的理论和著作，审视了日本近代女性的新伦理。行走的场景在这部小说中很重要，而女主人公的步态移动性之所以很重要，是因为她的步态极为鲜明地被刻画成了引发伦理巨变的契机。本文认为，女主人公步行去公共场所并受到公众注目的移动性意图并非基于理性意志。一个缺乏伦理取向的女性的移动性行动，是在一条与女主人公的伦理身份相矛盾的伦理线为背景运作的，即该小说里关于叶子的伦理选择包含了近代女性为了实现自我遭遇的种种矛盾之总和。

关键词：《一个女人》；移动性；文学伦理；伦理困境；日本近代小说

作者简介：申寅燮，韩国建国大学移动人文研究院教授兼所长，研究方向为日本文学、流散文学、多元文化研究和流动人文研究。

1. Confusion of Ethical Identity

No one would deny that modern Japanese novels contributed to the formation of a new ethics that was necessary for the establishment of modern Japanese society. *A Certain Woman* (或る女, 1919) by Takeo Arishima (有島武郎, 1878—1923), which is covered in this paper, as well as earlier novels written by Ogai Mori (森鷗外, 1862—1922) and Soseki Natsume (夏目漱石, 1867—1916) attempted to express modernity based on ethical conflicts. In *Maihime* (舞姫, 1890), which marked the beginning of the modern novel in Japan, Mori portrayed a protagonist who had to make an ethical choice between the state and the love of an individual (Nie and Shin 24-34). Natsume dealt with the egoism¹ within the inner self of modern individuals in *Kokoro* (心, 1914), which is considered an essential part of the canon of Japanese modern novels.

He was active from late 1910, Shirakaba, a literary coterie that advocated humanism. “Takeo Arishima, a Japanese writer, Exposed to Western culture through his education and travels to the USA and Europe, he was brought up as an intellectual of international sensibilities, which was quite exceptional in Japan at the turn of the 20th century” (Shin, “A Narrative of Those on the Move” 215). In line with that, *A Certain Woman*, a representative novel of the Taisho era in Japan as a

1 Inseop, Shin. “Seoul National University Recommended Books 100 Books <71> *Kokoro* - Soseki Natsume.” *The Dong-A Ilbo*, June 25, 2005. <<https://www.donga.com/news/Culture/article/all/20050625/8203584/1>>.

narrative of ethical conflict, is evaluated as one of the top five novels in Japanese literature (Maeda 138). In fact, this novel is one of the first Japanese works to deal with women's pursuit of fulfillment of the modern self and ethical conflicts. In this novel, the attempt of its female protagonist to establish a modern self based on the "rational will" (Nie, "Sphinx Factor and Ethical Selection" 388)¹ ends in failure, but the novel was significant among Japanese novels for its portrayal of a woman's ethical conflicts. This is because women's modern self and ethics were not fully addressed until about 40 years after the Meiji Restoration, which was declared the starting point of modernity in Japan. *A Certain Woman* became a bestseller because of the shockingly unconventional behavior of the heroine during the Taisho era, but was not the subject of serious criticism because it was treated by critics as a popular novel (Yamada 1976, 3). This is probably because the basis for discussing the modernity of women raised by the author had not yet been formed at that time. However, as time passed and the novel began to be re-evaluated in Japan after the defeat in World War II, it received favorable reviews as a work depicting a tragic woman who had woken up to the modern self too early (Shin, *Light and Dark* 40-41). Her character became seen as a figure in opposition to the old customs, in line with the advancement of women's status at the time.

So, how should the phenomenon of a new attention to women's ethics in modern times be understood? When it comes to women's ethics, the most important of the various factors is that women have become bodies that move into public places. This is a view that has long been ignored by critics. In this case, it is reasonable to take the view that the problem of women on the move—that is, the problem of mobility—triggered the need to establish a new ethics for modern women. There is a problem with forming a view of women in the discussion of modernity in general without making such a hypothesis; that is, without considering the women's issue itself as a variable, whether active or passive. This is an idea that defines women a priori such that 'modern women should have this kind of subjectivity.' Underlying such a thought is the notion that the modernity of 'Western women' is a natural norm when discussing women's modernity in Japan, and that the East should learn it. In this way, it is common to fall into the trap of Orientalism without self-examination (Park 141-142). Perhaps Japanese modernity itself is a huge mass of Orientalism (Kamei 7).

Based on this observation, this paper intends to analyze the mobility of women in a well-known Japanese novel by drawing on ethical criticism. Through this, this

1 In this paper, I intend to use the concepts from Professor Nie Zhenzhao's theory and works on ethical literary criticism.

paper will approach the literary motif of a modern Japan that plunges the female protagonist's self into contradiction. Such an attempt could ultimately clarify that the confusion of the female protagonist's "ethical identity" (Nie, *Introduction* 263-265) is a mirror reflecting the ethical contradictions of modern Japan.

2. Slowly Walking Heroine

In what cases does the woman's body moving into public places raise a problem? In what way is this subject to ethical literary criticism? In *A Certain Woman*, means of mobility such as rickshaws, trains, and steamboats appear frequently. The walking scene is important in this novel. The female protagonist's mobility on foot is important, because her walking is portrayed in such a stark manner as to cause a cataclysmic shift in ethics.

For the sake of understanding, I will briefly outline the plot of the novel. *A Certain Woman* has a self-destructive narrative in which Yoko Satsuki commits adultery with a man for which she has a strong sexual attraction, even at the expense of her own social and economic foundations during her engagement. The heroine with a strong ego, reminiscent of Anna Karenina or Madame Bovary, is a 24-year-old single mother with a history of divorce. She was raised by a father, who ran a large clinic, and an Amazonian mother, who served as vice president of the Christian Women's Federation. However, after the death of her parents, she was in dire straits and had to worry about her livelihood, living with her two younger sisters and a daughter from her ex-husband. She was a woman of remarkable beauty and talent, but had failed in her relationship with her ex-husband Kibe, whom she had married despite her mother's opposition. Since then, she has had relationships with several men in a *que sera, sera* manner. On the other hand, this novel depicts the hypocrisy of the Christian community at the time (Yamada, *The world of Arishima Takeo* 203). Kimura, a young businessman who has emigrated to the United States, obtains the consent from Yoko's mother to marry Yoko by begging her, exploiting the trust he has acquired among the Christian community. Yoko hates Kimura, thinking him a hypocritical bourgeoisie with a calculating personality, but Kimura never gives up his love for Yoko. Reluctantly, Yoko embarks on a long voyage to the United States and falls in love with Kurachi, the ship's chief engineer. She meets her fiancé Kimura on the moored ship, but feigns illness and makes fun of him. But eventually she does not land in the United States, but returns to Japan.

What awaits Yoko upon her return to Japan, after disregarding the expectations of her relatives and society, is a cold reaction, surveillance, and punishment. Meanwhile, the more she becomes obsessed with Kurachi, who has come to live

with her, the relationship between the two gets twisted. As her jealousy deepens, he distances himself from her. In a relationship reminiscent of Anna Karenina and Vronsky, she finally falls into hysteria and suffers from a disease of the uterus, and the novel ends with her dying of uterine disease.

The symbolic message of the beginning of the novel is very important because it foretells the direction of the story and implies the intent of the author. The scene in which the female protagonist Yoko Satsuki appears in the station of Shinbashi is particularly impressive, as the novel opens with the following: "As I was passing Shinbashi, the second bell rang indicating the departure. The sound of the bell was heard in the misty September morning air, though it was not as thick as the fog" (Arishima 7).¹ Late for the train, the rickshaw driver carrying Yoko was running frantically. A young man named Koto was arguing with the station attendant who was about to close the ticket gate, asking him to wait.

A train waiting for late passengers may be an unfamiliar scene to us who are accustomed to the punctuality of train departure. The conductor, station attendants and passengers preparing for departure must have been waiting for the train to slide forward. A whistle sounds to announce the departure, but the passengers who arrive late and want to board are bound to be in a hurry. Even in this situation, Yoko walks in with a deliberately leisurely gait, as if she is ignoring the people in a hurry around her. Naturally, everyone's gaze is directed toward Yoko. "On the platform, everyone standing, including the station attendants and those who came out to see off people, looked towards the two people" (8). Even today, walking in a public place while receiving a lot of public attention would be quite stressful for anyone. Considering how the status of women at that time was different from today, we can imagine how intense this first scene was. It would be the desire to walk, pointed out by Rebecca Solnit. Walking is "the body and the mind with the world, of knowing the world through the body and the body through the world." In other words, "walking returns the body to its original limits again, to something supple, sensitive, and vulnerable, but walking itself extends into the world as do those tools that augment the body" (Solnit 29).

Mobility or immobility is "a generator of shared emotions and feelings, as well as a historical production. That is, their activities, their daily circulations in the restricted region, can be interpreted as a practice of 'ethic'" (Kim etc. 103). It can

1 Although this novel has an English translation (Arishima, Takeo. *A Certain Woman*. Translated by Kenneth, Strong. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978.), to preserve the nuances of the original text, quoted from the original Japanese edition (Arishima, Takeo. *A Certain Woman*. The Collected Works of Takeo Arishima, vol. 4. Tokyo: Chikuma Syobo, 1979.)

be said that the modern era brought women out of the house into society. This is because, unlike in the past, where they helped with farming or did housework, they came to take charge of social chores as cafe waitresses, bus conductors, or factory workers (Minami 256). In other words, it is in modern times that active mobility was given to women, who used to move passively within the house. But even in the modern era, the scene in which women like Yoko attract attention is a very exaggerated situation. Here, I want to confirm one more important point regarding her mobility. That is the concept of a “non-place” (Augé 78). A place is a space in which traces of a subject’s experiences and historical memories are recorded. On the other hand, a non-place is a concept that contrasts with the home or workplace, and it is an ambiguous space that cannot become a personal place, such as a waiting room at a station, airport, a compartment on a train, or the inside of a bus (Augé 41-48).

Yoko is a woman who appears in these non-places. In a word, the beginning of the novel maximizes the exaggerated expression of mobility. She comes in her rickshaw from her house, receives numerous glances, and slowly walks through a non-place called the station to catch the train, a symbol of modernity. It is not surprising that Japanese readers, who had never seen this type of heroine in a novel before, cheered on *A Certain Woman*. The nervous and rebellious heroine was laying a milestone in the history of Japanese modern fiction through her excessively self-conscious walking. The novel begins with a walk that can be called a mysterious excess of self-consciousness and ends with the immobility of the protagonist, who dies in a hospital bed. In between, the novel depicts how her long journey as a subject with an excess of self-consciousness becomes involved in conflicts in ethical identity.

In this way, the appearance of a woman who walks in an unconventional manner was cast to emphasize the narrative of the ethical conflict of the time. Alighting at Yokohama Station, Yoko walks along the harbor with Koto, a friend of her fiancé Kimura. She came to Yokohama, where there is a steamship company, to buy a ticket for a passenger ship to the United States, but the mobility of this walk was not so smooth.

Using the parasol as a staff, Yoko gingerly descended from the deck and came out to the ticket gates with Koto’s help. But as she walked slowly, the other passengers passed, leaving only the two of them behind. 14 - 15 rickshaw drivers for the station, who had not found customers, gathered in front of the waiting room, looking at the slender Yoko and talking about something. Words such as ‘the girl’ and ‘foreigners’ whore’ were mixed into their obscene chatter.

The coarse, vulgar atmosphere of the open port immediately vexed Yoko's nerves. (21)

Yoko, who had drawn attention at Shinbashi Station, this time draws attention as an object of sexual contempt. This passage foreshadows the shaky identity of Yoko, the daughter of a well-to-do family. Modernity is a period of great upheaval. In fact, Yoko's family was also falling apart, and that is why she came to Yokohama to buy a ticket on a steamer to the United States. The view of her as a sexual object shows how the ethical status of women's liberation given by modernity and the negative gaze on it are in conflict with each other. And the contradiction of the protagonist, whose ethical identity is not clearly defined, is what this novel is trying to portray. Ultimately, the problem that arises from the lack of a properly established self-identity gives birth to new ethical conflicts.

3. Contradictions in the Heroine's Ethical Choices

The appearance of the heroine who walks in an unconventional way heralds the turbulent journey of her life in the future. Behind such an exceptional manner is her self-consciousness that resists social conventions. A woman of exceptional versatility, she has always been in conflict with her mother, a social celebrity. She has spent most of her life resisting not only her mother but everything that suppresses her freedom. The first half of the novel, in which she embarks on a steamer to the United States to marry Kimura, who had emigrated there, well describes why she is forced to fall into the contradiction of her ethical identity.

First of all, she recollects that she has lived 25 years, enjoying her strong-willed personality since girlhood without caring about worldly affairs. Then "as she suddenly looks back on her past, she finds herself standing alone at the edge of an unfamiliar field, out of the customary life of a woman that has long been taken for granted" (42).

Her deviation from the generally accepted path for women can be explained in terms of three ethical choices in relation to marriage. First, she married despite her parents' opposition. Second, she divorced just two months after her marriage. Third, she is raising a daughter from her ex-husband. Here, it is not a problem in itself for the modern subject to marry by her own choice against the will of the parents. A woman may also divorce shortly after marriage, and raising a child from the marriage may be a natural choice in life. However, this novel invites the reader into the complex ethical conflicts involved in this issue.

First, let's take a look at how the main character married with vanity, and

without love. People were always gathering around her mother, who was a social activist as the vice president of the Christian Women's Federation. Her husband, Kibe, was also a young literary man she met at her mother's salon. Her love affair with him began out of a rivalry with her mother, as the following quote shows:

Especially when her mother, who had known Kibe for a long time, praised him as a very promising young man, or treated him in public as if he was her own child or younger brother, Yoko scoffed in her heart. And she opened her heart and started to be friendly to him. (13)

Kibe was determined to fulfill his love with Yoko at the cost of his own life, in the face of a strong opposition from her mother which was close to jealousy. Kibe's loyalty "created in Yoko's heart pure sympathy and unconditional devotion to the man" (13). The narrator evaluates this, saying, "Yoko is absurdly intoxicated by the trap she has made herself" (13). And the narrator concludes with criticism, "She's won a brilliant victory over a competitor who she should not have competed with" (14). To seduce and take away a man from her mother because he is the man the mother prefers is an act of forgetting the ethical identity as a daughter. Her understanding that her mother's objection is due to jealousy is not really grounded. Of course, in the novel, her mother lacks sincerity, but she is carrying an attribute of worshiping Christianity because it is a Western culture. Her mother is a strong-willed, extravagant Christian woman of political tactics, but overall, she is not portrayed as amoral.

This ethical choice in relation to marriage does not conform to the traditional ethics of filial piety, as well as the modern virtue of rationality. It cannot be denied that Yoko's selection of Kibe as her husband was due to considerations of her mother and the fact that he was a famous poet of genius. She started living with him in "a little house of a hideout" (14) and "it didn't take more than two weeks for their love to go away" (14). It can hardly be described as true love.

Kibe increasingly came to scrutinize Yoko's every move with a watchful eye. Less than half a month after they started living together, Kibe began to develop an attitude that was often overbearing and restrictive of Yoko's freedom. (15)

When a married couple realize that they have fallen out of love with each other, they either put up with the marriage, or choose to divorce. Yoko chooses to break up with Kibe over his attitude of "restricting Yoko's freedom" "with a watchful eye."

This is because such an attitude locks women into a situation of immobility and prevents their self-realization. The problem with choosing a divorce here is that it is not clear what kind of life Yoko was aiming for. There should be a certain direction that does not stop with a performance that draws the attention of many people in a public place, but she did not have that. The conflict between being confined in the house as a wife and being granted active mobility is an important element of the establishment of ethics faced by modern women. As seen earlier, Yoko's ethical choice is directed towards the mobility of attracting people's attention in public places. Her choices should have been made by rational will, but there is a problem in that she stayed with the natural will, which was not given a direction. This is not only her problem, but also the problem of modern Japan.

The remaining problem relates to the daughter from her marriage to Kibe. She persuaded him to give up his paternity rights by telling him, her daughter's biological father, that the child was from an affair with another man. There are also descriptions in several places in the novel of her having promiscuous affairs with many men. The "ethical line" (Nie, "A Basic Theory" 191) of marriage runs through the family relationship between Yoko's mother, Yoko and her daughter. The wrong choices made while forgetting the ethical identity of mother and daughter are bound to affect Yoko's daughter, who must grow up without a father after Yoko's divorce. It is questionable whether Yoko's daughter, who should be brought up as an illegitimate child, will support her mother's choice. The biggest problem is that the marriage to Kibe was not based on the love chosen through the rational will of modern times, and further, it was far from the ethical status granted by modernity of the liberation of women's self.

In defense of Yoko, it must be mentioned that this novel fails to properly present a clear realization of the rational will of the liberation of women's self—that is, the direction—in the historical context of the times. It could be said that this was what made her choose her negative ethical identity, which came from her natural will, faithful to her instincts. From this perspective, it is no exaggeration to say that this novel contains the sum total of contradictions that modern women face in the pursuit of self-realization concerning Yoko's ethical choices.

4. Lack of Ethical Orientation and a Mirror Split in Two

At the time this novel was published, Japan did not have the necessary orientation to establish the ethics of a woman required by modern society. By ethical orientation, I mean the discussions and directions proposed for establishing an ethical paradigm in a new era. Significantly, this novel shows the lack of orientation of modern women,

using the metaphor of a path.

Yoko sneered at others, and with contempt for herself, wandered unconsciously into a strange path, dragged by a pitch-black and enormous force, and eventually dashed at full speed. There was no one to guide her on her way, and no one to teach her the right path. (42)

The phrase “pitch-black and enormous force” can be interpreted as meaning that there was no rational will in Japanese society at the time to guide the instinctively cultivated free will to the right path. As the social system has modernized, it has become a daily routine for women to walk in public places and spend time in non-places outside of places. Then, women’s ethical status and social norms must follow. But in reality, the exploration of a new ethics for women was not an important issue. Instead of suggesting a rational will to the new society, women were prescribed an immobility that prevented them from appearing in public places, just as Kibe curbed Yoko’s freedom with a watchful eye, resulting in a blatant contradiction to modern times.

This is an idea that limits mobility through the ethical norms of “good wife” and “wise mother,” which is not in line with modernity. In other words, the roles are divided into mobility and immobility, which allows men to go out and women to stay in the house.¹ This is no different from what feminist studies have pointed out as the harmful effects of androcentrism (Hirata ix-xii). From the perspective of mobility, it can be said that prior to the conclusion of the ideology of a good wife and wise mother, the ethics of modern women on the move should have been established. Before leaving for the United States, Yoko, who wants to gain a clear understanding of the rational will of the liberation of women’s self, goes to meet Uchida, a prominent Christian philosopher. In my view, this scene depicts the ethical path she pursued to find an answer to the rational will of modern women. Uchida was modeled after Kanzo Uchimura (内村鑑三, 1861-1930), one of the most influential Christian intellectuals in Japan at the time (Yamada, *The world of Arishima Takeo* 197-198). His appearance in the novel can be interpreted as the collapse of the Maginot Line of the rational will.

Then, as the sun went down softly in the afternoon, Yoko visited an

1 To briefly introduce the idea of the immobility of modern women, until the defeat of Japan in 1945, women were not allowed to enter the library of the Imperial University. Of course, their admission into the university was also not permitted. The lack of any ethical reflection about such an irrational situation is criticized today (Shin 2009, 142-164).

acquaintance of her mother, Uchida, who lived in Otsukakubomachi. Uchida was a zealous Christian evangelist, a genius who hated those he hated like a viper and worshiped those he liked like a prophet. [. . .] People were afraid of him, but Yoko was not intimidated by him at all. Rather, when she encountered the affection lurking deep under his scathing exterior, she felt a kind of warmth that she just could not get from an ordinary person. (45)

Uchida cut ties with Yoko's family because he did not like Yoko's mother running a business for personal gain, but he continued to keep in touch with Yoko. Then, five years before, Uchida became furious about Yoko's marriage, denouncing it as "a terrible sin" (46). At that time, she stormed out of the gate of his house, saying indignantly, "I'll never come to this crank again!" (46) However, she confesses, "At the same time, she couldn't help but feel a strange loneliness in her heart, as if she had dropped something precious, as if the thread that guided her in this world was cut off" (46). Given this description, it seems that Uchida was the only one in the world who was able to help Yoko. But when she visits him to say her goodbyes before going to America to remarry, she is rejected at his doorstep. Then on her way back from him, she feels a strange sense of *déjà vu* that she has been there before.

Her lips still trembled in anger as she walked out of the door of his house. The sun was setting under the woods of the botanical garden, and the wind that had been blowing since morning calmed down in the air near sunset. [. . .] She came out of the door, turned to the left, and suddenly got caught on an abandoned stone on the side of the road and looked around as if her eyes were wide open suddenly. It is still Yoko, twenty-five years old. No. Once upon a time, I was struck by a stone, certainly. Thinking so, she looked at the abandoned stone once more, as if a devotee of some cult. [. . .] Even so, that abandoned stone remains in my memory. It has been there since time immemorial. With this thought in mind, Yoko vividly remembered that one day, when she and her mother came here to play, something upset her and then she fixed her gaze on the abandoned stone and stopped still. At the time, she thought it was a big stone, but it was only a small one like this [. . .] The figure of her mother standing in embarrassment vividly appeared before her eyes. (50)

Here, the abandoned stone symbolizes Yoko herself, being rebuffed in her pursuit of a path. In that sense, it can be interpreted that the road to Uchida's house is the road of ethics. But as seen above, Uchida fails to show any path to Yoko, and

avoids meeting her. I interpret this avoidance of confrontation as Japanese society's avoidance of the 'way' of modern Japanese women. The memory of Yoko being hit by a stone and hanging on to an abandoned stone in the past can be read as the resistance of a woman who struggles to find her own abandoned identity in vain. And the next moment, she bleeds from her nose on the road, and the mirror she was holding to her chest breaks. Having a nosebleed on the road symbolizes that for her, the ethical path is not working, and it is a clear indication of her impaired mobility. After stopping her nosebleed, she took out the hand mirror from her bosom to fix her face and found that it was smashed in two. Then, there is a description that the mirror at her chest was broken due to her furiousness. This means that the mechanism that allows the subject "to face ethics has been lost" (Yamada, *The world of Arishima Takeo* 206).

As discussed so far, this article intends to argue that the female protagonist's orientation towards mobility, to go out to public places and receive public attention through walking, does not stem from rational will. What is at work behind women's mobility, which lacks an ethical orientation, is an ethical line that throws the ethical status of the female protagonist into a contradiction. Depicting Yoko's ethical choices, this novel contains the sum total of the contradictions that a modern woman faces on her way to self-realization. As she longs for an ethical life and sets out on her path to find it, she trips over a stone and her mirror is split in two. The mirror reflects the protagonist and the modernity of Japan simultaneously. Like a mirror that is split in two and can no longer reflect objects, the novel does not actually suggest a clear ethical orientation for modern women in Japan. After the acceptance of the Western model, there was no concern about establishing a new ethics for modern women in the modern social system of Japan. To describe this, the novel featured Kanzo Uchimura (1861—March 28, 1930), a great thinker of the time, as a model. The motif of the novel, which seems to criticize Christian ethics as well, criticized society through its lack of ethical orientation, confusion in ethical identity, and series of ethical choices and ethical conflicts. This criticism remains valid today.

Works Cited

- Arishima, Takeo. *A Certain Woman*. The Collected Works of Takeo Arishima, vol. 4. Tokyo: Chikuma Syobo, 1979.
- . *A Certain Woman*. Trans. Kenneth, Strong. Tokyo: U of Tokyo P, 1978.
- Augé, Marc. *Non-Places Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. Trans. John Howe. London and New York: Verso, 1995.
- Hirata, Yumi. *Meiji History of Feminine Expression*. Tokyo: Iwanami syoten, 1999.

- Jung, Heonmok. *Non-Places of Marc Augé*. Seoul: Banbi, 2016.
- Kamei, Hideo. *On 'Novel'*. Tokyo: Iwanami Syoten, 1999.
- Kim, Jooyoung. & Kim, Taehee. & Lee, Jinhyoung. & Shin, Inseop. "Exploring Humanistic Layers of Urban Travel Representation, Imagination, and Speculation." *Transfers* Vol. 9, Issue3 (Winter 2019): 99-108.
- Maeda, Ai. *Women of Modern Literature-From "Nigorie" to "Mrs. Musashino."* Tokyo: Iwanami syoten, 2003.
- Minami, Hiroshi. Ed. *Taisho Culture*. Tokyo: Keiso shobo, 1965.
- Nie Zhenzhao. "Ethical Literary Criticism: A Basic Theory." *Forum for World Literature Studies* 2 (2021): 189-207.
- . "Ethical Literary Criticism: Sphinx Factor and Ethical Selection." *Forum for World Literature Studies* 3 (2021): 383-398.
- 聂珍钊: 《文学伦理学批评导论》。北京: 北京大学出版社, 2014 年。
- . *Introduction to Ethical Literary Criticism*. Beijing: Peking UP, 2014.
- Nie Zhenzhao and Inseop Shin. "Confession as an Ethical Device in the Formation of Modern Japanese Literature." *Foreign Literature Studies* 36.1(2014): 24-34.
- Park, Yonghee. "European Perceptions of East-Asia in 19th century: An Analysis of five European TravelWriting." *Journal of Asian historical studies*, vol.107(2009): 121-153.
- Shin, Inseop. "A Narrative of Those on the Move: The Case of Takeo Arishima." *Kritika Kultura* 28 (2017): 231-231.
- . *Light and Dark of Modern and Contemporary Japanese Literature*. Suwon: Japan Research 21, 2009.
- . "Seoul National University Recommended Books 100 Books <71> Kokoro - Soseki Natsume." The Dong-A Ilbo, June 25, 2005. Accessible at: <<https://www.donga.com/news/Culture/article/all/20050625/8203584/1>>.
- Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York: Penguin Books, 2001.
- Yamada, Akio. *Takeo Arishima: Posture and trajectory*. Tokyo: Yubun-syoin, 1976.
- . *The world of Arishima Takeo*. Sapporo: Hokkaido Shimbun Press, 1978.