

# **Feminist Consciousness and Women's Education:**

**Ewha Womans University Then and Now**

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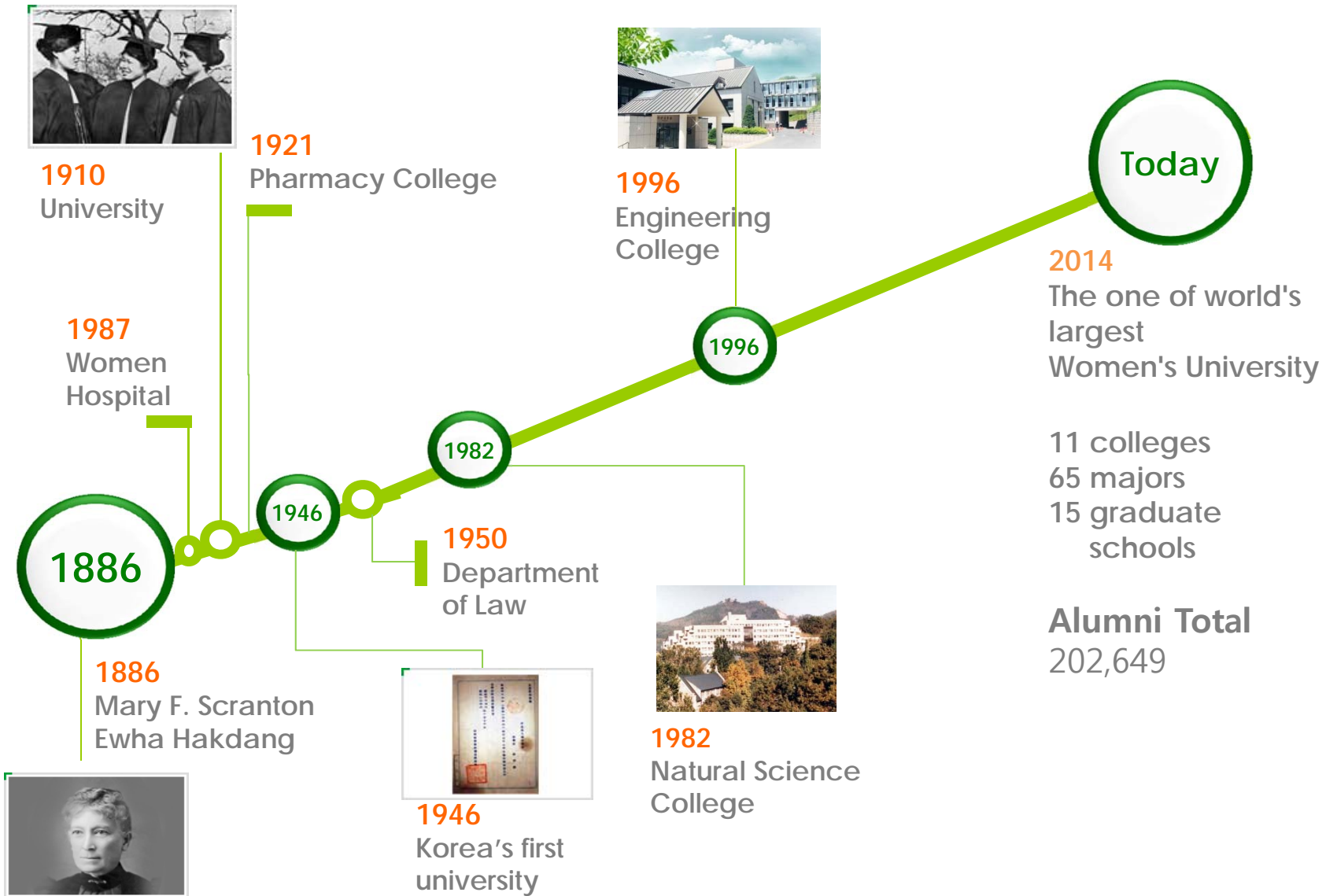
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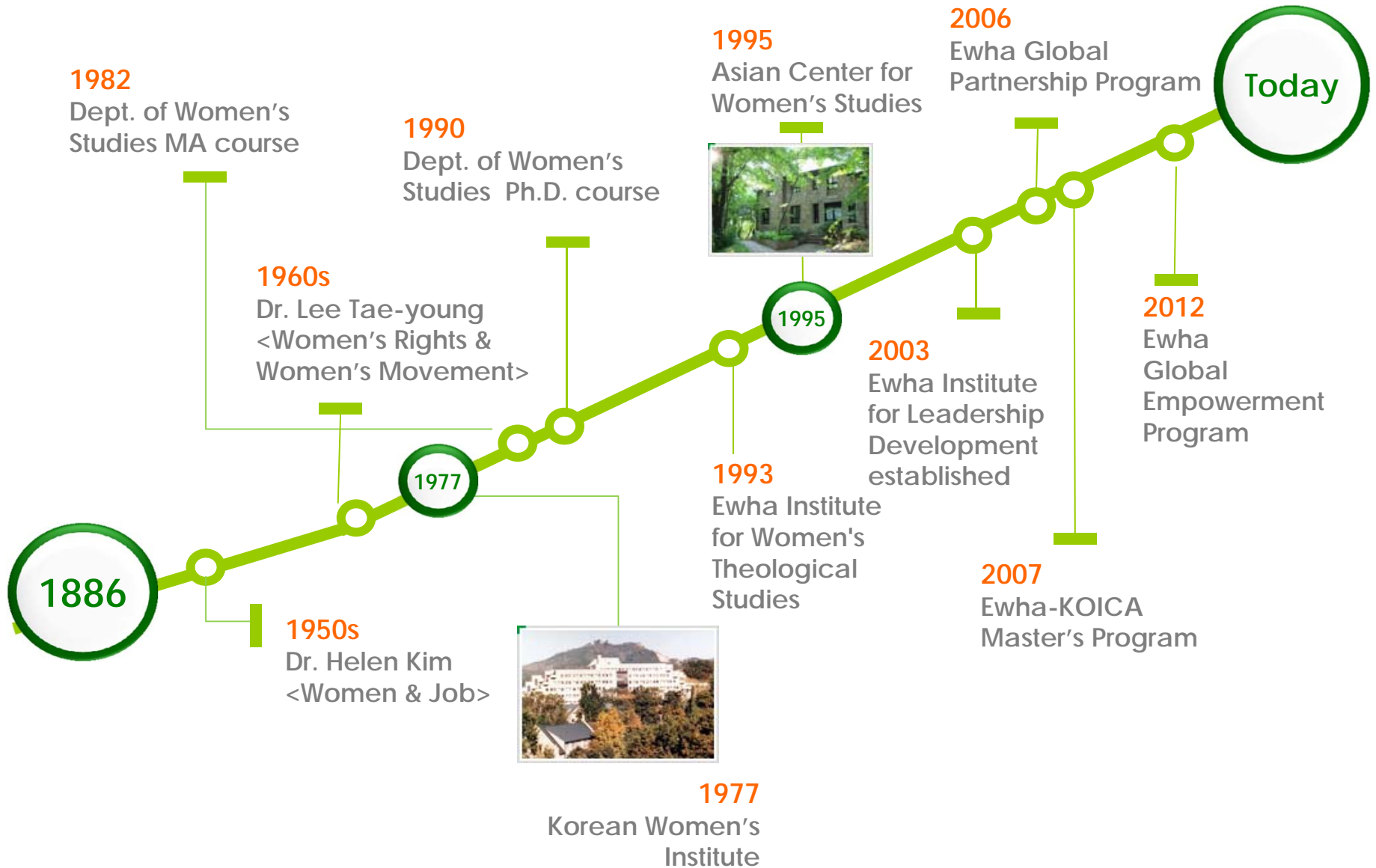
# 1. Introduction

- Unequal gender relationships have been influenced by socio-cultural and historical phenomena and structures.
- Feminist consciousness starts from the awareness of these societally determined unequal gender relations
- Feminist consciousness also brings into focus the importance of solid and sustainable institution-building in order to develop “the autonomous definition by women of their goals and strategies for changing their condition, and to develop an alternative vision of the future” (Lerner, 1993: 274).

# Ewha's Path towards Women's Education



# Ewha's Path towards Women's Studies



## 2. Early Struggles for Women's Education

- Ewha as the first school for women in Korea
- It stimulated the women's movement
- Ewha has survived over 128 years in a patriarchal society as a women-only institution, without losing its original objectives
- It becomes one of the largest women's universities

## 2. Early Struggles for Women's Education

- **Leaders Ewha Produced: The case of Dr. Helen Kim**
- The first Korean woman president of Ewha, appointed in 1939
- during the darkest period under Japanese rule at the end of the war
- ‘The cry of Korean women’—a symbol which guided Helen Kim’s devotion
- 14 years old;

One day, I heard the voice saying,  
**‘Don’t you hear that cry? That is the cry of Korean women. How can you sit here calmly and comfortably hearing that cry?’”**

## 2. Early Struggles for Women's Education



- “Ewha does not exist for Ewha only but for all Korean women.”
- The meaning of ‘**women leader**’
- “Every one of you (students of Ewha) is representing 200,000 Korean women. You are here in this higher educational institute in their place”



## 2. Early Struggles for Women's Education

- The Beginning of Korean Women's Education
- The Beginning of Women's Movement
  - > Demand for Women's Education
- Women's Movement as "Save the Nation" and "Independence"
- Critique of Male-Centered Sexual Morality

### 3. Educating Women at Ewha

#### - Education as a landmark of women's rights

- 1886-1910: 'Ewha Haktang' the first modern school for women
  - First modern educational institute for Korean women
  - Founder: Mary F. Scranton, American missionary
  - **The first students:** the underprivileged who were outside the dominant code of behaviour for women
- 1910-1925: College courses for women's higher education
- 1925-1945: Fostering a sense of calling and thirst for learning in students

# 3. Educating Women at Ewha

## - Education as a landmark of women's rights

- 1946-1961: accreditation as Korea's first university
  - 1946: First Korean university to receive government accreditation
- 1961-2000: Decades of progress as Korea's one of top university
  - 1963: First Ph.Ds awarded
  - 1977: Korea's first Women's Studies course
  - 1996: World's first Engineering College for women
- 2000-2010, Sharing and learning globally
  - 2006, Ewha Global Partnership Program
  - 2007, Ewha-KOICA Program
- 2010-present: Global hub for women's education and intellectual exchange
  - 2011, Ewha Global Empowerment Program (EGEP)

# 3. Educating Women at Ewha

## - Presidents of Ewha

제 1 대



제 2 대



제 3 대



제 4 대



제 5 대



제 6 대



제 7 대



제 8 대



제 9 대



제 10 대



제 11 대



제 12 대



제 13 대



제 14 대



## 4. Best Practices at Ewha

### - Theorizing Women's Studies

- Theorizing “women’s studies” and “feminist studies” not solely as “imports from the West”
- Establishing Women’s Studies Research Committee at Ewha
- Rethinking some fundamental issues:
  - how to bring the women’s movement back to university students
  - how to translate the Women’s Studies paradigm to Korean culture
  - how to confront problems of personal change in student consciousness-raising
  - a questioning of the basic assumptions about the old women’s liberation?
- Creating New Space for a Feminist “Knowledge Community”
- Conceptualizing “Asian Women” and “Asian Women’s Studies”

## 4. Best Practices at Ewha

### - Institution-building for Women's Studies

- Korean Women's Institute (1977)
- Department of Women's Studies (1982)
  - 1982-M.A, 1990- Ph.D, Undergrad Minor
- Korean Association of Women's Studies (1984)
- The Korea Sexual Violence Relief Center (1991)
- Ewha Institute For Women's Theological Studies (1993)
- Asian Center for Women's Studies (1995)
- The Center for Gender Affairs (2001)
- Ewha Leadership Development Institute (2003)
- Institute for Gender and Law (2008)

## **4. Best Practices at Ewha**

### **- Networking**

**Asian Women's Institute Network (**  
**Korean Association of Women's Studies (1984)**  
**Women's World (2005)**

**Asian Association of Women's Studies (2007)**

- Inaugural Congress in November 2007 at Ewha
- 2<sup>nd</sup> CAAWS at USM (2010) , 3<sup>rd</sup> CAAWS at UP Dilliman (2013)
- Institutional basis for Asian feminist research and education
- 40 Countries, 593 Individuals, 23 Institutional members (2014)

**MOU with UN Women (2012)**

**Partnership Agreement with ASEAN University  
Network (2012)**

## 4. Best Practices at Ewha

### - Publishing Journals and Curriculum Materials

- *Ewha Journal of Feminist Theology* (1995)
- *Asian Journal of Women's Studies* (1995)
- 8-Country Textbooks on Women's Studies (2005)
  - curriculum development workshops
  - Philippines, Korea, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, China,
- *Ewha Journal of Gender and Law* (2010)

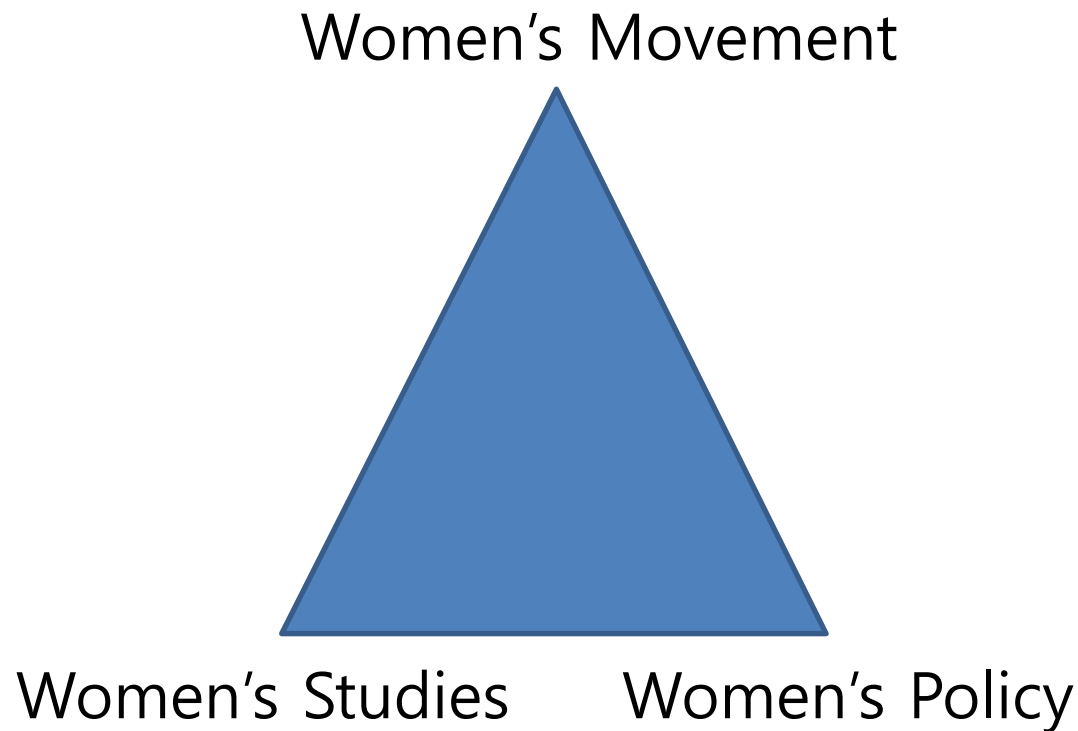


## 4. Best Practices at Ewha

### - Globalizing/Internationalizing Women's Education (ongoing)

- Ewha Global Empowerment Program (2011~Present)
- Ewha Global Partnership Program (2011~Present)
- Ewha-KOICA Master's Program (2011~Present)
- Korea-ASEAN Cooperation Project on Education and Exchange Programs for Young Scholars in Women's Studies (2012~Present)

# 5. Reflections



- Three spheres interact and collaborate mutual reinforcement.
- Efforts of university to promote gender equality lead gender equality of society.

# 5. Reflections

- Social Contributions
  - Legalization to prevent VAW
  - Gender Mainstreaming
  - Gender Budget and Policy
  - Women's Economic/Political participation
  - Women's Media

# 5. Reflections

- Independent Autonomous Women's Studies
  - Gender division of labor, Sexuality, Femininity..
- Interdisciplinarity of Women's Studies
  - Gender law, Women and health, Women & ICT ..

## 6. Discussions

To promote gender equality at the **university** level

- appropriating spaces for men and women in education
- prioritizing gender equality and addressing difficulties
- empowering and sustaining universities' motivation to promote gender equality
- engaging school administrators and getting their support
- indispensable role of an academic leader in promoting gender equality

# 6. Discussions

To promote gender equality at a **global** level

- 'Leadership' and 'Network'
- Collaboration with international bodies
- Partnership with other universities

# 6. Discussions

To create new spaces

- Sharing and caring economy
- Social Responsibility of University
- Inter connection : Academia, Civil Society, Public sphere
- Alternative paradigms