

Poems in resistance in the early colonial period in Korea, through Yi Won-Rok and Yun Dong-Ju poets

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This article is a study about the poems in resistance in the early colonial period of Korea. The colonial period of Korea begins in the first half of the 20th century and that period was from 1910 to 1945. Colonialism is the concept of one country taking over the authority and the control of another country by force. Korea was ruled by Japan until 1945. After the Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsula, Koreans faced a very difficult period due to the extreme brutality of the rules imposed. In late 1940s, at the end of the Japanese occupation, both teaching and using of Korean language were officially banned, and the Koreans were forced to change their names into Japanese style. These brutal actions made Koreans more irritated, and Koreans engaged to unite to achieve their freedom. Therefore, the first revolt against Japan began in 1919 after the death of the last king of Joseon, Gojong (고종). During this period Yi Won Rok was a teacher and an activist in the Korean independence movement. He delivered his liberation message through his poems. Yun Dong-Ju was a student who went to study literature in Japan during the colonial period. However, the official language was Japanese for administration and education during that time. Subsequently, most of the themes of the poems were about achieving personal freedom and freeing their country from Japan. Therefore, Yi Won-Rok and Yun Dong-Ju are the best poets of this period who should be studied, and some other famous poets were named national heroes because their poems strongly expressed the liberation of their motherland from Japan. In this study, an analysis of the books and later research about the colonial period in the Korean peninsula will be conducted. Some of the poems are written in Chinese characters, and their English translations are used for the analysis. Moreover, a study of Korean poems and research through books have been conducted for study. *Mirrored Minds: A Thousand Years of Korean Verse* is an open-source book published by the Literature Translation Institute of Korea and it has been used to extract English Translations of their poems. YouTube and other video sources, past literature research papers have been used to extract more details about their poems and other aspects. This study shows that both poets have been creating their poems waiting for liberation. Their main aim is to achieve personal freedom and independence. Therefore, their writing shows resistance without any vicious feelings. The futility of waiting for freedom can be discerned in Yi Won Rok's early writings. Yi Won Rok and Yun Dong-Ju used words and phrases in a very idiosyncratic way. They tried to convey the value of freedom to their Korean people. Although their efforts were successful, however, they could not enjoy freedom because they have already left this world. Nonetheless their writings and poems are still alive among all Koreans.

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