

"Beolrae" and Its Symbolism from Korean Modern Novels

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Among the Korean modern novels, a total of 76 literary works representing the insects in those contexts are found from the present study. The kinds of the insects from those volumes are enumerated with 62 groups belonging to 18 orders as insects and 7 groups of 3 classes as other arthropods except for the taxonomically unavailable ones. The group number of insects presented in each novel varies as the range from 22 to 1 per novel. The most frequently cited group of the insects in the analysed novels is butterflies (6.5%), followed by spiders (5.8%) and cicadas including their sound (5.0%). As the analysis on the symbolizing importance of the cited insects in each work, the 10 cases (CR) with the insects as a critical role in the subject, the 35 cases (SR) with the insects as a supportive role to the subject, and the 39 cases (DR) using insects as a partial descriptive role are recognized. The cultural meanings and symbols of the insects from CRs and DRs are provided. As a result, the present research suggests that the insects have been frequently used in the Korean modern novels and recognized as good materials for representing human's negative psychology.