

**CREATING REALISTIC TYPIFICATION OF HUMAN CHARACTER AND
LIFE THOROUGHLY**

A Talk to Writers
February 10, 1967

The great leader saw the play *The New Spring* in Sokkaeul adapted from the novel of the same title, the film *Fierce Wind* scenarized from the novel *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* as well as the film *Through Darkness* and pointed out the serious ideological and aesthetic shortcomings contained in these works. He also clearly indicated the direction and ways for rectifying the errors committed in the field of literature and art and bringing about good improvement.

Writers and artists should clearly understand the essence of the shortcomings and errors recently revealed in the creation of works of literature and art and the cause for them by closely studying the instructions of the leader. They must soundly develop our literature and art on the basis of the creative method of socialist realism.

We can see from the ideological and aesthetic mistakes committed recently by some writers in the creation of works of literature and art that our writers have not yet firmly armed themselves with a revolutionary world outlook nor acquired a proper class viewpoint and that they have not correctly applied the creative method of socialist realism in their work.

If works of literature and art are to reflect reality truthfully, provide impressive artistic solutions to a profound ideological content and make an effective contribution to the revolutionary education of the people, they should create a realistic typification of man and life thoroughly.

The main object of the description of such works of literature and art as the novel, the play and the movie is man and his life, and thus human character occupies the central place of the artistic representation of these works. Depicting typical human character in works is the main factor in ensuring the true representation of life and their high ideological and artistic value as well as in guaranteeing their cognitive and educational significance.

The reason that some writers recently made serious mistakes in the creation of literary and artistic works is due to the fact that they portrayed the character of revolutionaries or workers, peasants and middle-class people in a distorted way instead of presenting typical human character.

If writers are to create typical character in works of literature and art, they must write them in such a way that the socio-class essence is clearly revealed in the portrayal of characters.

What is typical in human life and in literature and art embodies social essence. There can be nothing representative apart from social essence.

Man is a social being. Man lives and conducts his activity as a member of a class in some social system. Therefore, human character is infinitely varied and individualistic, and yet it has the general and common features of the class to which it belongs. In works of literature and art the personality of the characters can become a pattern only when it embodies the general and essential features of a specific class, through individual characteristics.

If writers, in creating works, make the essential features of a class vague, on the plea of preserving the individualistic features of the characters, they will violate the principle of realistic typification and distort human character.

The novel *The New Spring in Sokkaeul*, and the play of the same title dramatized from this novel, described old man Ma, who had been a poor peasant in former days and received land during the agrarian reform, as a character opposing the agricultural cooperative. In the days of Japanese imperialist rule old man Ma eked out a hard life in poverty because he had no land but his life became better after he had received land following liberation. Therefore, he must be depicted as actively supporting the Party's policy of agricultural cooperation. In fact, in our country those peasants, who had lived a hard life in the past as poor peasants before they received land, fully supported the Party's policy of the cooperative reorganization of agriculture and stood in the van in organizing agricultural cooperatives. The fact that old man Ma was portrayed as a man opposing the agricultural cooperative was a distortion of the essential features of our poor peasants and runs counter to the class policy of the Party on firmly relying on the poor peasants when admitting peasants of various sections into the cooperative economy. At the time when agricultural cooperatives were organized there might have been some people who acted like old man Ma. However, such people were, in all situations, individual cases but not typical ones.

The mistake that violated the requirement for typifying the character in works of literature and art and distorted the socio-class essence of man was revealed seriously in the movie *Through Darkness*. This film made a farm hand, a hired worker in a rural area, into a fool and a reactionary. Hired peasants constitute the main class of the revolution in the rural areas. The fact that a hired peasant was described as a fool and as going over to the side of the reactionary class is a debasement of the main class of the revolution and a gross violation of the Party's class line.

The novel *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* and the film *Fierce Wind* cinematized from this novel put a worker as their hero. However, these works did not portray their hero in such a way as to reveal the essential features of the working class but distorted his character.

The working class is the most progressive and revolutionary class whose historic mission is to lead the masses to destroy all the exploiting classes and exploitative societies and build socialism and communism. The working class is the most progressive and revolutionary class because they have a high degree of ideological integrity, a strong sense of organization and a great capacity for

united action.

If a typical character of a hero was meant to have been portrayed in the novel *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* and the film *Fierce Wind*, a truthful picture should have been given of the process in which his ideology developed and of how he acquired the essential features of the working class. However, he was described as a man of combative spirit who had a strong fist and was brawny. This is a blasphemy against the working class because the hero was described as a ruffian who was engaged in fighting instead of giving an in-depth portrayal of the process in which his class consciousness was increased and he was tempered during the struggle. By portraying the hero in this way it is impossible to show correctly the ideological and mental aspect and strength of the working class as the leading class of the revolution.

In the novel *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* and the film *Fierce Wind* not only the character of the working class was described in the wrong way but also the character of middle-class people was not typified.

Sun Yong is a woman intellectual who comes from middle-class people. Her father practices medicine in a small drugstore and he has a national conscience. He took part in the March 1 Movement and he is a nationalist who has preserved his patriotic constancy throughout his life. Sun Yong was educated by her father, influenced by the hero and also received some schooling. Judging by her living conditions, circumstances and the level of her knowledge and education, Sun Yong can fight well on the road of the revolution to liberate the country. However, in the novel and the film she was described in such a way that she not only turned renegade during the revolutionary struggle, but moreover, in the end she became the wife of the head of the punitive force. This means that Sun Yong's character was not depicted truthfully and the middle classes were dealt with in a mistaken way.

Middle-class people belong to the working class in that they live by their own labour, but are akin to the propertied class in that they have a means of production or other property, although in a small amount. The middle-class people waver between the working class and bourgeoisie in their attitude towards the revolution because of their socio-class position.

Revolutionary works of literature and art must portray the middle-class people in such a way that they, after having wavered between the working class and the bourgeoisie, gradually acquire a revolutionary consciousness and follow the road of struggle on the side of the working class. This is the way to depict the typical character of the middle-class people. It is true that among the middle-class people there are some who take an active part in the revolutionary struggle on the side of the working class but on the contrary, there are also some who serve the bourgeoisie. In literary works the middle class may be described either as positive characters who follow the road of the revolution or as negative characters who betray their country.

It is important for revolutionary works of the working class to give a skilful portrayal of the typical character of those middle-class people who learn the truth of the revolution and take an active part in the struggle. Only then is it possible to clarify correctly the position and role of the middle-class people in the revolution. In particular, intellectuals and other middle-class people in colonial countries have an anti-imperialist revolutionary spirit and constitute the motive force of the revolution because they are subjected to oppression and national contempt by foreign imperialists.

Our works of literature and art can correctly reflect the Party's class line and exert a good influence on the south Korean people only when they truthfully portray intellectuals and other middle-class people who, experiencing setbacks and other difficulties in the course of their lives, gradually acquire a revolutionary consciousness and fight staunchly on the road of struggle. When a literary work depicts, in accordance with the characteristic features of the subject matter and the requirements of the theme, a man belonging to the middle class who has turned against the people and gone over to the side of the enemy, it must give a clear artistic explanation that the road he follows is the road of degeneration and ruin that will destroy his destiny.

The novel *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* and the film *Fierce Wind* have also the shortcoming of failing to portray the main character in historic concreteness and depict the personality in such a way as to reveal the distinctive features of the times.

If works of literature and art are to portray a typical character, they must describe him in such a way that the character not only typifies the socio-class essence but acquires the essential features of the times. Since human character is restricted to some degree by socio-historical conditions, the characters of literary and artistic works must assume the features of those times if they are to become typical ones. These persons can become a pattern and truthfully show life and history only when they clearly assimilate the essential features of their class as well as the features of the times.

In the novel *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* and the film *Fierce Wind* Mun Kyong Thae was not represented in historic concreteness and his character did not accurately reflect the special features of the early communist movement in the first half of the 1920s. These works described the fact in a mistaken way as if there were such a 'mentor of the revolution' as Mun Kyong Thae in the 1920s and idealized and embellished his character.

The communist movement in our country in the first half of the 1920s was in its infancy and experienced grave difficulties and had many shortcomings. Those who were said to be engaged in the communist movement in the first half of the 1920s played some role in disseminating Marxism-Leninism in our country. However, the overwhelming majority of them were pseudo-Marxists and factionalists. They only indulged in wordplay divorced from the masses and disrupted the ranks of the communist movement through factional strife. As a result, the Korean Communist Party founded in

1925 ended its existence before long as an organized force. The communist movement in our country entered the correct road of its development when the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung started to lead the Korean revolution. The leader shaped the bright future of the Korean revolution by standing in the van of the revolution in his early years, developed the national liberation struggle of the Korean people and the communist movement in our country into a new, higher stage by organizing and waging the heroic anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle and established the glorious revolutionary traditions of our Party and people.

However, the novel *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* and the film *Fierce Wind* have made serious mistakes. They described the hero as becoming a revolutionary under the guidance of Mun Kyong Thae and so distorted history when they depicted the revolutionaries of the 1930s growing up under the influence of those who were said to be engaged in the communist movement in the first half of the 1920s. They also showed that the root of our Party's revolutionary traditions began back in the early communist movement in the first half of the 1920s. Furthermore, these works have the shortcoming of describing as traitors and philistines all those engaged in the communist movement in the first half of the 1920s under the guise of showing their defects.

In literature and art the question of the typical is a political matter before being an artistic matter. If a work sets in the forefront what is unessential instead of typifying human character and life, it will distort human life and social life and make political and ideological mistakes. Therefore, writers and artists should tirelessly strive to create typical images in literary and artistic works.

If writers are to create fine typical characterizations in their works, they should first be firmly prepared politically and ideologically. In the creation of literary and artistic works the ideology and world outlook of the writers plays a decisive role. The depth of the artistic typification of human character and life also depends on the political and ideological level of the writers. If the writers do not have a correct world outlook and are not informed of the Party's line and policies, they can neither accurately find out what is essential and typical in a complex and varied reality nor give it profound artistic generalization.

The main cause for the serious mistakes made by writers in the novels *The New Spring in Sokkaeul* and *The Fog Creeps over a New Hill* and in the play and the movie dramatized and cinematized respectively from these novels as well as in the movie *Through Darkness* is that they do not have a thorough knowledge of the Party's line and policies and have not established a revolutionary world outlook. Since the writers did not know the principles of the revolution and the Party's class line and had no proper class viewpoint and stand, they failed to depict correctly typical human character in their works and distorted life and history.

Writers must study a great deal as the great leader has instructed. In order to improve their political and ideological qualifications,

writers must study the leader's instructions and works. The leader's instructions and works clarify in a comprehensive and profound way our Party's idea and theories as well as its line and policies. It is only when they possess the Party's ideas and theories as well as its line and policies by intensifying their study of the leader's instructions and works that writers will be able to establish a revolutionary world outlook, have a correct stand and attitude towards reality and give profound artistic representation of human character and life in the creation of their works. Literary and art circles should adopt measures for giving proper education to writers. If writers are to create typical images they should also experience life conscientiously in reality and have a wide knowledge of society and human life. Writers must also know well the history of our country, in particular, they must have a correct understanding of the history of our Party's struggle and its revolutionary traditions. Writers must also work steadily to improve their artistic skill. I hope that you will rectify as soon as possible the errors you have committed in your creative works and produce many revolutionary works of high ideological and artistic value and thus prove yourselves worthy of the deep political trust of the great leader. In the immediate future you should direct your efforts into completing the film Fierce Wind and make it into a fine work of art.

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