

## ***DEVELOPING A NEW TYPE OF REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE***

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A Talk to the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Korean Writers Union  
February 7, 1966

Today again the great leader, recollecting the years of his anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, gave us a valuable talk. I think you, Comrade Chairman of the Writers Union, too, were moved deeply. The leader has been here with you for nearly a fortnight. This is the first time that he has summoned writers to his side and spent five to six hours, everyday, talking to them about the historical roots of our revolution and about the history of the long-drawn-out, arduous struggle, from his own experience and from what he had witnessed during the revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialists. In the days immediately after liberation he spent a few evenings with some writers, unable to decline their earnest request, but never before has he spent so many hours on talks of the history of his revolutionary struggle, going into such details of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle as he has done this time.

The great leader is here now by a decision of the Political Committee of the Party Central Committee to give him a chance to take a rest and take care of his health. Nevertheless, he, putting off his rest, summoned writers and has been giving them valuable instructions. This is a great honour for our writers.

Writers must clearly understand why the leader has taken precious time off from his rest hours and has been talking to them about the revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialists. If they do not understand it, it is pointless for them to hear these priceless stories from him. It is for the purpose of explaining to you, Comrade Chairman of the Writers Union, correctly, the essence of the leader's instructions given to the writers this time and of causing a fresh advance in the development of our literature as he intends, that I am seeing you today.

The account of the historical facts the great leader has given from his own experience, by tracing back to the annals of his revolutionary struggle that covers half a century, is very important in developing revolutionary literature of a new type.

“Let us develop a new type of revolutionary literature!” This is the militant slogan that must be upheld by our literature today.

We must develop a new type of revolutionary literature. By a new type of revolutionary literature I mean a literature that describes the leader in the true sense of the word.

Developing a new type of revolutionary literature is the requirement of our revolution today.

We are now faced with a hard, yet honourable task of consolidating

the established socialist system, speeding up the building of socialism in the northern half of Korea and reunifying the country independently and peacefully by driving out the US imperialists from south Korea. This hard task can only be carried out successfully when all the people are completely acquainted with the leader's revolutionary thought and united in mind and purpose behind the leader. To this end, the leader's greatness and his noble personality must be made known to all Party members and other working people so that they are loyal to his revolutionary cause.

The work of providing the people with the leader's revolutionary thought and uniting them behind him by means of literary works can not be successful unless a new type of revolutionary literature is developed. Revolutionary literature has a major effect on people in establishing their revolutionary outlook of the world and in their revolutionary training.

Finding the main point in the development of a new type of revolutionary literature is important.

There is the core or the main link in the whole chain of any undertaking. Finding and grasping the main link is the key to success. We must hold fast to the main point in developing a new revolutionary literature and concentrate our efforts on it. In order to deal with the main link successfully for the development of a new type of revolutionary literature, it seems necessary to make a careful review of the history of the development of the literature of socialist realism.

I have given much thought to the path that has been traversed by the literature of socialist realism. I am thinking about whether the literature of socialist realism, the lifeblood of which is the Party spirit, has overlooked the fundamental link in fulfilling its mission or not, and if it has, shouldn't we find it and develop revolutionary literature in a new way?

The literature of socialist realism, ever since its emergence on the historical arena, has shared the same destiny with the working class. Its historic mission is to stimulate the people so that they will accomplish the revolutionary goals of the working class in the building of socialism and communism. The essential characteristic of the revolutionary cause of the working class, that distinguishes itself from the previous struggles, is that this revolutionary cause is pioneered and guided by the leader of the working class. The revolutionary cause of the working class is precisely the cause of its leader. The leader is the top brain of the revolution and its highest leader and as such he plays the decisive role in the accomplishment of the revolutionary cause of the working class. Since the leader occupies an authoritative position and plays a decisive role in carrying out the revolutionary cause of the working class, the literature of socialist realism, which contributes to this cause, must naturally bring up the matter of the leader as a central question and find a proper solution to it. Describing the leader of the working class is a fundamental matter that decides the destiny of the literature of socialist realism. A review of the path that has been traversed by this

literature shows that it has failed to see the main point.

In the course of its development, the literature of socialist realism has produced some works dealing with the leader of the working class, but it has not yet done this work as the core of literary endeavors or as the main line of efforts. If this state of affairs continues, it will be impossible for the literature of socialist realism to fulfil its mission assumed before the times and before history and develop on a sound basis into the revolutionary literature of a new type which has established the principle of Juche. In developing a new type of revolutionary literature that depicts the leader, we must pay primary attention to finding out and holding fast to the main link that has been overlooked up to now by the literature of socialist realism.

We must not, of course, take a nihilistic attitude towards the history of our revolutionary literature which has depicted the leader. It is not that the matter of depicting the leader has been raised only now.

Revolutionary literature in our country began to depict the leader as early as the years of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle. The revolutionary legends of the General, which were created by the people before liberation and handed down, are a valuable source for the development of revolutionary literature devoted to a portrayal of the leader. Not all of them have yet been discovered, and I think there may be many works that praise the General, among the anti-Japanese revolutionary songs and other songs composed and sung by our people.

In the days immediately after liberation many works dealing with the leader were created. Our writers and artists who were unable to repress their surging emotions of reverence for our leader who liberated the country and gave them the joy of building a new country produced many works of literature in various genres. Among them were the revolutionary paean Song of General Kim Il Sung, the epic Mt. Paektu, the long dramas Thunder and Mt. Paektu, and the novels Triumphal Return Home and A Thorny Path. In this way they took the proud first step towards creating revolutionary literature that depicts the leader. The revolutionary paean Song of General Kim Il Sung is a masterpiece that is sung now not only by our people but also by the revolutionary people throughout the world. The epic Mt. Paektu is also a masterpiece which is impeccable both in its ideological content and in its artistic level.

In the subsequent years, too. Ode to Marshal Kim Il Sung, the epic The History of a Forest, the novels History, Mangyongdae and many other works that depict the leader have been produced. The drama Fog Is Lifting from the Mountains and Rivers of the Homeland which has been produced recently is a good piece of literature describing the leader.

Works that depict the great leader have also been produced in no small number in the field of fine arts, as well as in the forms of song, poetry, novel and drama. We can be proud particularly of the oil painting The Torchlight Raised at Pochonbo which is widely known to the people as a representative work of fine arts that depicts the leader.

All these successes that have been achieved in the portrayal of the leader are a noble expression of the warm feelings of reverence for and loyalty to the leader, the feelings entertained by our people, writers and artists.

Notwithstanding the success that has been achieved by our literature and art in the portrayal of the leader, there are still many shortcomings in literary endeavours.

Until now, the efforts of revolutionary literature devoted to the portrayal of the leader have not been made in an organized, planned manner, but in a scattered, spontaneous manner. The production of works that depict the leader in the field of literature, for instance, has not been the central concern of the Writers Union, and consequently the Writers Union is not directing this effort purposefully. The work of developing a new revolutionary literature that portrays the leader should not be left to the mercy of an individual's choice and spontaneity.

The leader's greatness has not been described properly by many literary works that have depicted the leader. Writers are unable to describe his greatness because they have not a good knowledge of it. An analysis of the literature that has depicted the leader shows that there is not only a small number of books but their quality in general is low, except for a few works. From the point of view of their qualitative level, the literary works that deal with the leader must contain the crystallization of humanics, since literature is humanics. The present state of affairs cannot and does not ensure that revolutionary literature, which is devoted to the depiction of the leader, will consist of an independent realm with the necessary influence and authority in terms of both quantity and quality.

In order to develop a new type of revolutionary literature, the Writers Union must make the job of creating the leader's image its central task and press ahead with it by concentrating its efforts on the main link.

If the revolutionary literature that depicts the leader is to become the core of literature in general, it must occupy the central position in the development of literature and play the pivotal role. From this angle we must discover the shortcomings that have been overlooked by our literature and develop a new type of revolutionary literature.

Writers must have a correct understanding of the pressing needs of the revolution and the times and devote all their creative talent and energy to meeting this challenge. They must think that from now on literature has to blaze its own path. We must make a prudent review of the work of creating the leader's image and also make radical changes in this field. In this sense the leader's talk to writers on this occasion was a historic event.

The leader has told our writers about the revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialists this time, but the writers must not understand his account merely as the history of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle. The history of the revolutionary struggle of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung is precisely the history of the Korean revolution. The Korean revolution was started by our leader

and traversed the path of victory and glory under his leadership. There can be no Korean revolution apart from the leader, and the history of the Korean revolution is inconceivable apart from the history of his revolutionary struggle.

Our leader is the pre-eminent revolutionary leader who has made the greatest revolution in history and the greatest achievements that mankind has ever known before. He is the paragon of a great revolutionary, of a great man, the incarnation of a genuine communist personality at the highest level. You say that you comrades were moved to tears by the leader's story, and I think that is true. When the leader was talking about the arduous march, you, Comrade Chairman of the Writers Union, were so strongly impressed that you asked him to show you his feet. His body is full of signs of suffering.

As you have heard from him the story of his revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialists, our leader is, in fact, worthy of being highly praised as a peerless, legendary hero and as a pre-eminent revolutionary leader merely for the brilliant exploits he as a young General performed in those years. Each of the accounts he has given us can be made into an excellent novel, poem or a film, even without artistic refinement.

When he was giving you the accounts of historical facts about the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, the leader told you not to write his own biography or depict himself, but to write a novel dealing with a revolutionary as the principal character. We must think this matter over prudently.

At present we have no work of literature and art that can be a textbook of revolutionary struggle for our people. Our leader's revolutionary history alone can serve as a textbook for our people. So, you writers must study all his revolutionary history in depth and put it into works of a revolutionary literature.

We must produce works of a new revolutionary literature not as you did in the past, writing a few short poems or short stories dealing with some fragmentary aspects of the leader, but in bold and large-scale operations so as to produce many revolutionary masterpieces that depict the leader in profound depth as a great thinker and theoretician, as the ever-victorious, iron-willed, brilliant commander and as a great man so that they will show the full aspects of his revolutionary history. Putting the leader's great image into literary works is not only a mature requirement of our times and the unanimous desire of our people but a mission and duty of the new type of revolutionary literature. Writers must have a clear understanding of this mission and duty. Only then can they perform with credit their responsible and yet honourable task.

We cannot allow ourselves to delay the development of a new revolutionary literature that depicts the leader nor can we hand down the task to the next generation. From now on the Writers Union must plan the job to create the leader's image down to every detail, make it the first and foremost task for the Union and continue with this job in a determined way.

The production of works of a revolutionary literature that depict the leader is an undertaking that requires great prudence and a high sense of responsibility. A mere desire is not equal to the task. The production of revolutionary masterpieces that portray the leader requires a preparatory stage. You cannot tell all the writers to produce masterpieces right from the first try. It seems preferable for them to write poems and short stories for two to three years while accumulating experience and knowledge needed for the creation of the leader's image. During this time a proper work system from which you can create the leader's image must be established, the writers' ranks built up, and various other conditions for creative work prepared. On the basis of these preparations, you must launch a large-scale campaign to describe the leader's personality and his achievements in a grand epic and develop the campaign in real earnest and in an offensive manner. However, you must not try to write a biography or a chronicle or a life history because you have to write masterpieces on a large scale. It would be impossible to describe the leader's great revolutionary history, his imperishable achievements and his noble virtues in a few novels.

We must study further appropriate forms and methods of portraying all the revolutionary history of the great leader by means of literary works. I will study this matter further, and you, Comrade Chairman of the Writers Union, should discuss it seriously with writers and critics.

The work of developing a new type of revolutionary literature that depicts the leader requires a well-regulated system of guidance. The work of creating the leader's image must be undertaken as a purposeful, organized effort under the Party's monolithic guidance. Only under the Party's monolithic guidance can this task be performed dynamically as a purposeful, organized undertaking and with a distinct goal and with clear prospects. The Writers Union must establish strict discipline by which it reports all the major matters relating to the creation of the leader's image to the Party and deals with them in accordance with the Party's monolithic directions and decisions.

In order to develop a new type of revolutionary literature, it is necessary to strengthen the ranks of writers.

The depiction of the leader is a difficult creative activity which requires a high level of world outlook and ability. Writers who are well qualified politically and ideologically and possessed of real creative ability are needed for success in the work of creating the leader's image. From now on, the Writers Union should make strenuous efforts to train writers to be able to write works that depict the leader and select them correctly.

The writers who are highly qualified and renowned for their creative works should become the core of the creative force and play the principal role in writing works that depict the leader. These veteran writers must lead the work of developing a revolutionary literature that creates the leader's image. You, Chairman of the Writers Union, have so far produced novels dealing mainly with rural life, but

from now on you should do your bit in writing novels about the leader. You must control the work of the Writers Union and press ahead with it while at the same time writing novels yourself. The task of creating the leader's image should be given not only to veteran writers but also to young writers without hesitation so that the younger ones are trained on a planned basis. It seems that it is necessary to form a group of writers to develop a new type of revolutionary literature. This creative group will enable you to eliminate the shortcomings resulting from scattered, small-scale artistic endeavours, raise by collective efforts the level of ideological and artistic qualities of works and establish a well-knit system of Party guidance over the work of creating the leader's image. The Writers Union should study the matter of forming the group for the creation of the leader's image. I would like to take this opportunity of meeting you, Comrade Chairman of the Writers Union, to emphasize once more that you should effect a revolutionary change in the development of a new type of revolutionary literature for the depiction of the leader since you have received his historic instructions this time. It is a very good thing that the Writers Union has a plan to adopt measures to implement the great leader's instructions. Now it has a great deal of work to do. You will find yourself under pressure because you will have to deal with the Union work and write books. So you must take care of your health. I believe that there will be a great advance in the work of the Writers Union in the future.

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