

FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF OUR JUCHE ART

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Speech to the Officials of the Propaganda and Agitation Department
of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and
Workers in the Sphere of Art and Culture
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Our Juche art is now winning fame throughout the world.

All countries regard the visit of a Korean art troupe as good fortune. The people of some countries probably feel ashamed if our art troupe does not visit their countries, having gone to other places in the world. So they invite our art troupe, acceding to all our demands. Australia has invited our Mansudae Art Troupe. If it goes there the troupe will have visited all the five continents.

Our art troupes are not only demonstrating our Juche art in all parts of the world but also achieving great success in art diplomacy. Through art diplomacy we are widely propagating the Juche idea of the great leader to the whole world and proudly gaining honour for our nation. They are also acting to extend the stage of diplomacy and exerting an influence on foreigners, thereby making a great contribution to increasing the numbers of those supporting and sympathizing with our revolution.

It is the great glory of our nation that our art is displaying its pride as 'art at the zenith of the world'. It is no easy matter to make those who have been putting on airs in art drop their heads. This clearly shows how high the level of our Juche art is.

But, we should not rest on our laurels. It will not be easy for us to maintain the foremost position as 'art at the zenith of the world'. We should produce more, excellent works of art and train larger numbers of talented artistes. Currently there are only a few good pieces that our art troupes can present on the world stage. If our art troupes wish to pay a visit to a country which they have visited before, the programme becomes a problem. In particular, in the field of music and dance there are only a few programmes worthy of being performed on the world stage.

We should make a fresh turn in creating works of art.

The Mansudae Art Troupe has more good pieces than other art troupes. This does not mean, however, that all art troupes should perform the works of the Mansudae Art Troupe only. Art organizations should have their own pieces and preserve their own specific character. If the same programmes are presented by art troupes on the stage, it will be difficult for troupes to travel abroad frequently and obstacles will even be laid in the way of the

development of the arts themselves.

While it is true that one or two masterpieces from among the pieces of music and dance can be performed by various art troupes, the majority of programmes should not be the same.

If they are to make the best of their specific features, all art troupes must create greater numbers of good pieces. Yet, our work to create the arts is currently at a standstill. In the field of dance in particular, no new piece worthy of pride has been produced.

It is important to preserve a nation's character in dance.

The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung has said that the Triad Dance is a good work, it is a folk dance. The dance is popular not only among our people but also among people from other countries. But it was produced as early as in 1964. Although over a decade has passed since then there have been no particularly good new dance pieces produced, nor any other folk dances discovered.

There are no well-produced pieces of popular dance, either. The popular dances which are now being performed were created a long time ago and are not very good.

The dances our choreographers have produced are not varied in their theme and many are similar. Most dance pieces are designed in such a way that dancers in various costumes merely appear, move to and fro alternately and revolve rapidly.

A dance should have its peculiar rhythm. But our choreographers are not studying new dance rhythms and movements; they bother first about such things as the costumes, props and stage settings. When portraying the life of fishermen, for example, the creators do not think about the dance but of putting a net on the stage.

Although props and a stage setting are needed in a dance, they are not essential. In a dance a peculiar dance rhythm is more important than props and the stage setting. You can discover all the dance movements you want if you study. In the case of fan dances, for example, why do they contain only such movements as folding and unfolding the fans and patting the knees?

Some dance pieces try to gain public favour through the swift movement of the dancers or other means, not through the dance rhythm. Korean dance is characterized by a rhythm which is delicate and soft. Ceaselessly revolving alone is, ultimately, rhythmic gymnastics. A dance should not become rhythmic or mass gymnastics.

We should bring about a radical change in the creation of dance by creating more, diverse themes, and discovering more dance rhythms and actions.

Currently creative work is at a standstill in the field of music, too. Our nation's melodies are very beautiful, and every foreigner who hears them also likes them. However, there are few excellent pieces of music which fully preserve the beautiful basis of our nation's melodies. Before good songs can be produced prettily-worded texts are necessary. The words should be poetic. But many of them are turned into prose when they are joined in a line. Because this is the case with the texts, no good songs can be produced.

But the composition, as well as the words, is unsatisfactory. Composers are not trying to create new melodies but are assembling existing melodies in one way or another. As a result, songs are all very similar to one another.

Our creators of music do not accept Party policy with sensitivity. I gave them the task of composing powerful songs capable of inspiring the masses when I was arranging grand socialist construction. More than a year has passed, however, since grand socialist construction was started. But as yet they have failed to produce a good song about grand construction.

Our music creators are unable to compose even a good march. In former days the composition of a lyric song was said to be more difficult than that of a march. In the course of the creation of several revolutionary operas, however, the composition of lyric songs has been improved.

We need not only lyric songs, but also many militant songs. We are making a revolution, and we should inspire the people to the revolutionary struggle by means of songs. Marches have a very important influence on the people in the revolutionary struggle. But if our creators are told to compose a march, the words are stiff and the music is pitched too high. There is no masterpiece as great as The Guerrilla March among the marches composed by our creators.

The words should not be written like slogans, simply because it is a militant song. The words should be plain, in keeping with the line of Party policy, and yet descriptive. In addition, the music should be solemn and full of vigour, and the melody beautiful.

I said a long time ago that a Party Song should be composed, but still there is none. Although our Party is now enjoying great admiration and respect as the most revolutionary party in the world, we have no particular song to praise it.

We should compose many masterpieces celebrating the era of our Workers' Party, revolutionary songs for the present time that is seething with a struggle.

It is no easy task to produce a masterpiece. A song which seems good at first but which, after being heard a few times, is no longer attractive, is not a masterpiece. A masterpiece is a song that the more one hears it, the better one feels and that remains in the memory for a long time.

Every song should have its own melody and peculiarity. As I have constantly emphasized, creation should never be repetitive. In creation similarity and repetition mean death. We cannot call that which plagiarizes melodies from other songs and assembles them creative work.

Because our composers produce songs without doing any foundation work for creating melodies with specific features, there appear only complicated songs, and no masterpieces.

Our people are fond of gentle songs. The characteristics of our national music are elegance, clarity, beauty and mild inflection.

Composers must produce melodies which Koreans-like and produce songs based on them.

The present slump in artistic creation can be ascribed to the fact that creators do not have a proper attitude towards our nation's cultural heritage.

Critically inheriting and developing the nation's cultural heritage in conformity with the socialist reality is the consistent policy of the Party, and we must adopt neither nihilistic nor restorationist attitudes towards our heritage. Since art and culture reflect a certain historical period and social system, the politico-economic life and the customs of the people, we must view our cultural heritage critically from the class standpoint. For all that, we must not indiscriminately ignore and deny it. Socialist culture is not created out of nothing but on the basis of inheriting progressive and popular culture from the past and of developing it in keeping with the socialist reality.

We should preserve the forms of the arts that are suited to the inherent psychological peculiarities of our nation and the nation's sentiments and tastes. Socialist art is art which is national in form and socialist in content. We must embody a revolutionary and socialist content in artistic forms which are liked by Koreans and are congenial to their tastes.

Although the territory of our country is not large and our people form a homogeneous nation, they have many songs and dances that are peculiar to each region, including the west, east and south coasts. In order to develop our art further we should discover these works of folk art and inherit and develop them properly. It is our duty to unearth and develop fine works of folk art in the era of the Workers' Party when art and culture are developing and blossoming. We should either discover good works of folk art or create new ones and introduce them as, for example, a dance of the east coast region and a folk song of the north-western region of Korea.

But we must not reproduce things of the past as they were on the pretext of unearthing works of folk art. We must distinguish between what is progressive and popular and what is obsolete and reactionary in our cultural legacy of the past and discard that which is obsolete and reactionary and retain that which is progressive and popular.

Even progressive and popular works should be adapted to suit the aesthetic tastes of the times and class requirements. If we revive Tondollari, sung in the eastern region, we should adapt it to suit the reality. If we restore it exactly as it is, our people will not like it.

There are many works which will become great ones among those we have inherited from the past, if they are properly adapted. I think that the dance Kumgang Fairy, for instance, from the legend The Eight Fairies of the Kumgang Mountains, if recreated, will become a great piece. So, we must perform this work in critically adapting and restoring what is worthy from our nation's cultural heritage.

The main cause of the slump in the creation of works of art lies in the failure to carry out the Party's policy on drawing the masses actively into the work of creating art.

As matters stand at present, some of our officials are tending towards professionalism in the creation of the arts. In creative work we must not hold to the professionals-first policy. We cannot develop the arts

rapidly only through the efforts of a few specialists. Of course, works produced by non-specialists may contain some defects in aspects of the skill and artistic depiction. But, what is important is the bud. A good bud can be developed and perfected to become a fine work.

Therefore, in accordance with the consistent policy of the Party, we must draw the broad masses into the work of creating art.

New works, not established ones, will have to be performed at the art festival to be held in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the Party.

A more extensive prize contest of literary works should be organized. The specialized art organizations should not depend only on writers, composers and choreographers, but enlist the wisdom of the masses of artists in the creation of works. Dancers, as well as choreographers, should create dances. There are many instances of dancers with a long stage life creating good works.

We should ensure that amateur art activities are conducted more vigorously and that the creative intelligence of the masses of artists, too, is brought into play, so as to develop our art more briskly on a popular basis.

Creators should explore the reality in order to write works. Without exploring the pulsating reality, they cannot produce works that are suited to the feelings of the workers and farmers. A few days ago I saw an object of art depicting the Kumgang Mountains. I was told that the painter produced the picture in Pyongyang, without going to the mountains. If artists only paint pictures from their imagination in this way, they will become abstract painters who are divorced from the reality.

The same is the case with other arts. Creation, if removed from the reality, will result in the production of works which have nothing to do with the requirements of our socialist reality. We can never tolerate creators adopting a taste-centred attitude, divorced from the reality. It is the revisionist creative method to produce works with an individual taste-centred attitude, divorced from Party policy and alien to the reality.

We must hold fast to the creative method of socialist realism in the creation of the arts.

Our works of art should be based on realism in form, to say nothing of content. I am opposed to describing our socialist reality in the form of a feuilleton or cartoon because it deforms the reality. Exaggerating the reality and deforming it with a taste-centred attitude has nothing to do with realism.

Our works of art and literature should not only reflect the reality vividly in content but also be based on life and be close to life in their form.

Our creators must always base themselves firmly on the Party's policies and on the reality. In the future when works are judged, assessment must be made chiefly of how many times the creators have explored the reality and how vividly they have reflected it. Party organizations must wage a fierce ideological struggle against the tendency of creators not to explore the reality.

We must not adhere to the principle of producing only great works in creating works of art. Needless to say, we should continue to make great efforts to produce a lot of revolutionary masterpieces. But we should create many short pieces along with revolutionary masterpieces.

At present, our creators, while saying that they are producing masterpieces, are in fact failing to produce both major pieces and small pieces. Masterpieces are not easy to produce. You would rather produce many small pieces than trying in vain to create major works. In producing a masterpiece, you must not think first of its scale. As far as a masterpiece is concerned, its content should be great; a masterpiece is not produced simply by having thousands of people appear in it. I opposed the proposal that the People's Army House be opened with a music and dance epic. It was good to have proposed that it would be about the great leader's honourable and resplendent revolutionary history, beginning with the foundation of the 'Down-with-Imperialism Union'. There is no rule, however, that this kind of work must without fail be produced in an epic style. Performing a music and dance epic would mean copying slavishly the performance by 3,000 artists in the past. Without doing this you will be perfectly able to portray the idea even with individual pieces of music and dance.

You must not conceive only of a grand style in the production of art, simply because you are professional organizations; you should also create lots of small, popular pieces which will be liked by the masses. Yet professional art organizations should not perform just as art propaganda squads or amateur art circles do.

Specialized art organizations must create small pieces at a higher ideological and artistic level than non-specialized bodies and, when performing popular pieces, depict those which suit their social standing. Urging these organizations to produce a lot of small pieces does not mean diminishing the quality. They must not be produced randomly just because they are small pieces.

The production of works of art requires efforts. No work of art can be a success without some effort. We must make stronger demands on our creators and thus encourage them to produce a larger number of works with high ideological content and artistic value.

Strenuous efforts must be put into art dissemination, too.

Revolutionary songs must be spread still further, especially among the broad masses.

The most important aspect of producing songs is that the broad masses sing them and, in the course of this, are educated.

Our working people are fond of singing songs from the revolutionary operas. In order to disseminate the songs from the revolutionary operas more widely among the masses, it is necessary to perfect them so that they can be circulated independently.

The songs from our operas are all stanzaic; the number of stanzas, if small, should be increased a little, and an intermezzo added; then, they can be spread more successfully among the masses. The Mansudae Art Troupe produced in that way the song Where Are You,

Dear General? from the revolutionary opera A True Daughter of the Party, and this song is now being spread widely among the masses. The creators of music must complete revolutionary opera songs in this manner so that they can be disseminated.

The further development of our arts requires that a large number of able artists be trained.

As matters stand at present, we have only a few artists who enjoy a worldwide reputation. It is difficult for us to find soloists who can sing particularly well, and we have few musicians who are capable of winning fame for the country in international contests.

We should not merely have our famous works of art performed on the world stage; we should also excite the admiration of the world with extraordinary soloists and musicians. Only then can we increase our worldwide reputation as the country of Juche art.

Frankly speaking, the fame of our art has been won chiefly by ensembles. The ensemble plays a very important role in artistic portrayal. The grand ensemble in particular is a major superiority of socialist art. Socialism requires the application of the collectivist principle in the creative work effort and because of this, it is superior to capitalism. In capitalist society, where the arts are a means for capitalists to earn money, the creation of a grand ensemble participated in by many artists is not even conceivable.

We must continue to maintain the high level of our ensembles and, through them, overwhelm capitalist art, revisionist art. The ensemble never denies the role of distinguished artists. A fine ensemble presupposes the great skill of all the artists in it, and only when it is combined with outstanding solos and recitals can it portray a work broadly and deeply.

If we are to produce more revolutionary operas, we must have many artists with distinguished talent. Currently our situation is so difficult that we can hardly choose actors to play the leading roles in revolutionary operas. Even if the Pangchang, dances and orchestra are good and the stage art is fine, an opera is unlikely to be successful if the leading role is not played well.

We should enter world championships not only in the field of opera but also in all spheres of the arts. Our artists should win first place in international contests for piano and violin.

Of course, in the future, too, we should give prime consideration to the development of national art, in line with the consistent policy of the Party. National art should not be neglected simply because we enter the world arena. We should make strict precautions so that our traditional national art is not adulterated and should enter the world arena with art that contains stronger national colour. At the same time, when we sing songs and play musical instruments from other countries we should do better than the people of those countries.

Because our Party is directing such great efforts to the arts many excellent artists can appear in our country. In fact, there is no other country where such great effort is put into the arts as ours. We provide our artists with all the conditions they need to improve and display their ability to the utmost.

Our Party is directing great efforts to the development of the arts. Yet not so many artists with excellent skill have appeared. The main reason for this is the failure to give good guidance to the work of training artists.

In order to train many excellent artists, we should give more efficient guidance to the training of artists.

Not anyone can easily become an extraordinary artist. In order to become a remarkable singer, dancer or musician, it is necessary to possess artistic talent and to receive systematic artistic guidance.

Training extraordinary artists does not preclude the development of the arts on a mass scale. An extraordinary artist emerges from the masses. In the course of developing the arts on a mass scale individual talents are discovered, and the more artists with great skill, the faster the general level of mass art and culture rises.

By continuing to implement the policy of making the arts popular we should discover still more talented people from among the masses and train them into the artists with extraordinary skill.

We should work hard to discover people with extraordinary ability among the masses not only in the field of art but also in other fields. How good it was that a player from our country won the world table tennis championship! That such an excellent player came from our country resulted from physical culture being popularized and future sportsmen being produced from among the masses.

We should train many world champions in all fields, not just one or two.

Our country should have many geniuses who are capable of winning worldwide fame. We are opposed to the ‘°theory of the genius‘±, but we do not object to training geniuses. As the great leader has taught us, people cannot be classified as geniuses or idiots. It is a bourgeois point of view to make the natural ability of the people absolute. We communists believe that it is possible to train all the working people into able builders of socialism and communism and fight to realize this purpose. In socialist society everyone should be encouraged to give full play to his genius.

This does not mean that those who have extraordinary ability are not needed in socialist society. Socialist society should have more people with excellent talent in art and sport than other societies, and we should be closely concerned that these people bring their talents into full play. How happy we are if many geniuses are produced in the fields of art, sport and science! In fact, if all our artists, sportsmen and scientists become geniuses, that will be ideal.

In the future we should spare no effort in fostering the ability of people in all fields, including the arts.

Actors‘̄ parade and contest should be organized frequently and, in art performances, not only a collective programme should be presented but a combination of solos, solo dances and individual performances.

In order to train more, able artists the quality of education at schools should be improved.

In educating artists we should give priority to political and ideological

education and emphasize the education and training of artists to be revolutionary artists who are boundlessly loyal to the Party and leader. We should never make artists mere performers with no knowledge of politics and the revolution.

Therefore, schools in the arts sector should not neglect professional education while stressing political and ideological education. These schools are bases for training professional creators of revolutionary arts. Unless they provide a professional education in the arts there is no need for such schools.

They should make every effort to train more, able artists who are fully armed politically and ideologically and have great artistic skill. Not only the schools in the arts sector but also all educational institutions should continuously improve their ideological education and, at the same time, professional education and theoretical education according to a scientific content.

To improve the quality of school education teachers should radically improve their qualifications.

Teachers are revolutionaries who educate the younger generation to become the precious revolutionaries of the motherland. Only when they become revolutionaries first can teachers train revolutionaries, and only when they have attained a high standard of professional knowledge and theory can they cultivate men of talent. Teachers should be fully aware of their mission and duty and transform themselves into revolutionaries, at the same time as making every effort to raise the level of their scientific theory and technology.

In the future we should improve the training of art teachers and so build up strong ranks of teachers at central and provincial schools of art and send them to other schools.

Schools should be provided with good conditions for improving the professional education. Schools should be provided with sufficient educational facilities and materials and with everything they need to educate the younger generation to become talents. Positive measures should be adopted for selecting people with excellent artistic talents to give them special tuition.

In order to improve the skills of artists, it is necessary to make strong demands.

Our artists are currently not striving to improve their skills. Artistic skills are what keep them alive. If they are lazy in skill training they lose their qualifications as artists. They should do their best in skill training.

A proper system of skill training should be established and skill training should be intensified. Skills cannot be taught only in training rooms. Artists should always think of and work at improving their skills when resting and working, in and out of their office and when eating, and improve their skills, even when standing before a mirror.

I am always saying to sportsmen that when they sweat a lot in training they can develop their talents. The artists, too, must concentrate their energies and sweat to gain a good ability.

We should wage a strong ideological struggle against any practice of laziness in skill training among artists, and all artists should

endeavour to improve their skills as soon as possible to the level that our Juche art demands.
All art troupes and officials in the field of art should bring about a fresh upsurge in the creation of art.

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