

**KIM JONG IL**

**LIFE AND DESCRIPTION**

**Foreign Languages Publishing House  
DPR Korea  
Juche 110 (2021)**

WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

In his work *On Juche Literature* published on January 20, 1992 Chairman Kim Jong Il gave comprehensive theoretical and practical answers to the mission and tasks literature has assumed for the times and the people.

The work consists of seven chapters—*The Times and the Outlook on Art and Literature, Heritage and Tradition, The Outlook on the World and the Method of Creative Work, Socio-political Organism and Literature, Life and Description, Forms of Literature and Creative Practice*, and *The Party's Leadership and Literary Creation*.

The editorial board publishes the fifth chapter, *Life and Description*.

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## **1) A CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THE SEED OF THE WORK IS ESSENTIAL**

We advanced the theory on the seed of the work of art and literature long ago. Since then, this theory has fully demonstrated its truthfulness and vitality through the practice of creative work. The theory played an important role in bringing about a revolution in the field of art and literature and in ushering in the historic heyday of this field. We should thoroughly apply this theory to creative activities in the future, too. For this purpose, we ought to have a correct understanding of the essence of the seed.

The seed means the core of a work. It is the ideological life-essence which contains both the writer's main subject and the soil in which the elements of the image can strike root.

Some writers, still steeped in conventional concepts, misunderstand that the seed is something identical with the theme or the idea; they do not see it as a category that was newly discovered. The theme and idea have been discussed in literary theory for many years, in the course of which the view that the theme and idea are the most essential elements in the literary work has become solid. Those who entertain this conventional view mistake the seed for something like the theme or the idea.

The misunderstanding of the seed is ascribable partly to

the fact that they did not have a correct understanding of the essence of theme and idea in the past. In a literary work such individual elements as the theme, idea and characterization are inseparably related to each other, and their concept can be defined properly only in the context of the overall system of artistic portrayal. In particular, proper clarification of the categories, which constitute the core of literature, must precede the clarification of the individual elements. The core of the work is the most essential element that can germinate and make all the individual elements of the work grow.

In the past, some people justly viewed the theme as the social problem reflected in the work, but most of them regarded it as the writer's assertion in the work or the idea that gave impetus to the creation. This is the view that the theme is almost the same as the idea or is the core of the work.

Since the core of the work was not clarified and the concept of the theme was not defined properly in the past, people did not have a correct understanding of the idea of the work. With a view that the basic idea of the work is the theme, some people defined the idea of secondary importance as the idea; others dealt with the theme and idea as being identical, not separate.

Of course, there were quite a few people who regarded the theme as a social problem and the idea as the writer's ideological and aesthetic assertion. But, beclouded by this or that fallacy, their view did not receive recognition. The establishment of the theory of the seed, the kernel of the work, produced a proper solution to the problem of the

constituent elements of representation of the work.

The seed differs both from the theme and from the idea.

In order to have a correct understanding of the essence of the seed, it is important first of all to comprehend what the ideological essence of life is.

Man transforms society and conquers nature purposefully and consciously, proceeding from his aspirations and demands. So this or that phenomenon in life has, without exception, a certain ideological meaning, and this is inevitable. Certain ideological meanings are embodied not only in historical incidents or events of great social importance, but also in man's daily life. The natural phenomena which are associated with man's activities, to say nothing of the social phenomena, all have certain ideological meanings. Enjoying themselves in a beautiful flower garden, people not only feel keenly the gardener's devotion but also understand his view on beauty and ennobling tastes.

What sort of ideological meaning is contained and to what degree are different according to the phenomena of life. In reality, some have a simple ideological meaning and others have various ideological meanings. Generally speaking, life phenomena are not simple; they are complicatedly entwined, embodying various ideological meanings. Among these ideological meanings, there is a most essential and regulatory one that governs the phenomena and restricts other ideological meanings. It is the basic factor, the core that guarantees its own existence. The core is the very ideological essence of life.

However, it is not true that the ideological essence of all

types of life becomes the seed of literature. Some can be dealt with in literature and some cannot; and some that cannot be handled in literature can be dealt with in other fields of humanism. Though literature is the encyclopedia of life, it cannot contain the ideological essence of all types of life. This is because there is a law that governs artistic representation unique to literature, the law that life should be reflected realistically in an emotional form.

Some of our writers wrestle for several years with the ideological essence that cannot be handled in literature. The main reason for this is that they mix up the idea with the seed, thinking in a one-sided way that the seed is only the ideological essence.

The seed is the ideological essence of life, but it is distinguishable from the idea expressed in general. The seed is understood both by reason and sense and sympathized with by emotion. And it inspires not only logical thinking but also artistic thinking.

The idea is subjective and it manifests itself, in general, in an abstract form. But what is ideological and embodied in life is objective and finds expression in a vivid form in a concrete object. It is embodied in the nature of man, in the events and in the phenomena of life. It finds itself in a concrete and vivid object. The seed, which is also the ideological life-essence, is embodied vividly in a concrete object. This object is the life that contains both the writer's main subject and the soil in which the elements of the image can strike root.

As such, the seed enjoys ideological and emotional sympathy. The ideological life-essence that motivates the



writer's brain, agitates his heart, gives him the idea and inspires emotion in him is the true seed of a literary work.

The ideological life-essence that has neither the main subject for the writer nor the soil in which elements of the image can strike root and, accordingly, cannot captivate the writer's heart and arouse his emotion, cannot be the seed of a work, no matter how great its social significance is. To be forgetful of this leads the writer to be engrossed in what is purely ideological from the thought that the seed is the ideological essence. Only the ideological life-essence that ignites passion for creation in the writer's heart, fans that passion, leads him to the world of emotional experience and offers him creative vision can be the seed of a literary work.

It is also necessary to have a correct understanding of the relations between the seed and idea of the literary work.

That the seed is the ideological essence of life does not mean that it is identical with the idea of the work. The idea of the work is formed on a wide scale. It consists of the integral whole of the seed, the ideological contents that such various elements of image as characterization, events and conflict defined by the seed have intrinsically in life, and the writer's view of them. In short, the idea of the work is the assertion the writer wants to make in the course of nurturing the seed, his appraisal of life depicted in the work and his conclusion of the characters' fates. This shows that the seed cannot replace the idea of the work though it is the ideological essence. The idea of the work is derived from the seed and is determined by the seed.

The seed of a literary work is the ideological essence of

life that contains the writer's main subject.

The main subject contained in life is deepened to be the theme of a work to be created. The theme is the main subject the writer wants to develop in the work. The main subject, as the social question and human question, comes into being in life that embodies the seed.

The theme of the classic masterpiece *The Fate of a Self-defence Corps Man* is the question of the destiny of the ruined nation, the vital question of the nation in distress that is at a crossroads whether to obey the oppressors or resist them. This was a fundamental question raised by the actual situation of our country in the 1930s that embodied the ideological essence that one could not avoid being killed whether he joined the "self-defence corps" or not, and to be concrete, by the life related to the "self-defence corps," a puppet organization of the Japanese imperialist aggressors. The poor Korean people could not find a place for living in the land ruled by the Japanese aggressors with the bayonet. Nor had they any place where they could be buried after death. Those who were drafted into the "self-defence corps" had to serve as cannon fodder for the Japanese imperialists, only to be killed like dogs. And those who did not join it had to die from grinding toil and hunger. This dark and tragic situation gave rise to the question of the fate of the Korean nation.

The seed and theme are inseparably related to each other from within life. Whether the ideological essence of life can become the seed of a literary work or not is determined by whether the life contains a human question or not. The ideological life-essence that does not bear on

the human problem cannot be the seed of a literary work. Notwithstanding this, the theme by no means determines the seed. That which governs life that contains the writer's main subject is the ideological essence embodied in it. Since the main subject has struck root in none other than the ideological essence of life, the theme is restricted by the seed.

The seed to be dealt with in a literary work is the ideological essence of life that contains the soil in which the elements of image can strike root.

The seed enables the writer to discern the outline of the image he is going to create. The seed gives him the outline of the preliminary picture of the personalities of the hero and other major characters, the relations between the characters, and the main elements of the image like events, conflicts and storyline.

This presents the question of how to consider the relations between the seed and the material. The material is about life that serves as the basis of the artistic image of the literary work, whereas the seed is the ideological essence of life. Both the material and the seed are based on life, so they are closely related to each other. Frankly speaking, the writer can discover by chance the ideological substance of life in the course of gathering the materials about life in reality and take it as the seed of the work he is going to write. For this reason, he often thinks that the material and the seed are similar or identical, and in the worst case he mistakes the material for the seed. If the ideological essence he discovers by delving into the materials about life which he gathers in reality can be contained in the

literary work, then he can of course say that he has discovered the seed. But if there is no ideological substance that can be dealt with in the literary work or if the writer fails to discover it beforehand, the data of life is no more than the material.

The material is the data of facts in life. It is always concrete. In case of material about a man, it must be such a one that can give answers to the question of when and where he did what and how, and in the case of the material about an event, to the question of when, where, and how it happened and for what reason. Therefore, when he has chosen the material, the writer can have a concrete and vivid picture of the individual figures or events. Nevertheless, the material cannot give the overall picture of the image of the work and, moreover, it can neither determine such elements of image as the personalities of characters, the relations between them, events and conflicts, nor indicate how and in which direction they should be depicted.

Unlike the material, the seed does not give a concrete picture of the elements of portrayal. The seed only makes people imagine the elements through association. But the seed, unlike the material, determines the selection of the individual elements, gives a hint to how to make use of them and in which direction, and gives an integrated picture of the image of the work to be written. The material itself is also determined by the seed. This is because the seed is the ideological essence of life that contains the soil in which the elements of image can strike root.

In order to have a correct understanding of the essence

of the seed of the literary work, it is necessary to understand that the seed is the core of the system of image of the work.

To clarify the core of the work is an important matter in the course of creative activities and the theory of art and literature. Successful creative activities and the ideological and artistic qualities of a work depend on what is seen as the core.

In the past some writers took the theme, the idea or the characterization as the core of the work, and some playwrights regarded the conflicts as the life of the play. This misunderstanding of the core of the work led to the production of works with a bare idea but without the characterization of real people, works with characterization but without a significant idea, and works full of useless tension but devoid of sustained idea and characterization. It is true that the theme, idea, characterization and conflicts have important places in the system of portrayal. But none of them can occupy the same place as the seed.

The seed which was selected from life and cultivated artistically constitutes the core of a work. This means that the seed is the main substance that forms the centre of all aspects of the image.

In order to have a correct understanding of the fact that the seed is the core of the work, it is important to grasp the factor of the core. The essence of the seed cannot be clarified if the seed is defined as the core of the work on the basis of its function in the system of portrayal. Of course, the function is an important reason why the seed becomes the core of the work, but there is also the main factor that

guarantees even the function. Writers must know this. Only then can they grasp the essence of the seed.

The main factor that the seed is the core of the work is that it is the ideological substance that embodies the most profound essence of life reflected in the work. Without this substance, the life reflected in the work will become dry, and its artistic image will be deprived of its colour. The ideological substance is the soul and core of the life reflected in a work. As such, the seed constitutes the one and only centre that determines, unifies and leads all the constituent elements of image of that work.

Practical experience proves how great a role the seed plays in the creative activities of a writer and in the artistic system of a work. All the constituent elements of the image of the work form a unified picture as they come into gear to cultivate the seed. The content and form of the work are unified on the basis of the seed and its ideological and artistic qualities are combined with the seed as the foundation. The seed is the very core of the work.

The course in which the seed becomes the core of the work from the ideological substance of life is the course of the writer's creative work and of a new artistic world coming into being. Only the seed and none other can unify the course of creative work and artistic portrayal and serve as the standard in solving the demands raised in this course. For this reason, the seed is associated with only one work, and it becomes dead apart from the work. The main reason why literary works differ from each other is that they have sprouted from the seeds peculiar to them.

Choosing the right seed and cultivating it properly in a

creative work is the fundamental problem that decides the fate of the work. Choosing the right seed and creating an artistic image on the basis of this must be the physiology and iron rule of literary creation.

The writer feels an urge to create on various occasions in life. The discovery of a significant idea or characters, an interesting event or details may motivate him to write. Regardless of what he has discovered first or what captivated him first, the writer must plan his work and write it only after he has grasped the seed. When he has chosen the seed, he must review all the characters and events in the light of the demands of the seed, and discard what does not conform to the seed, even though he discovered them first.

Where there is life there is a seed that can be realized in a work. In our worthwhile life seething with creation and innovation, there are countless valuable seeds that excite the writer and give him creative inspiration. But the seed to be contained in a literary work is not grasped easily at any time and at any place. The course of discovering the seed in life is accompanied by the course of delving into the essence of life. The writer studies life anatomically, racking his brains to find out its essence and the human problems in it, so he can grasp the essence of life better than anybody else. But some essences are difficult for the writer to depict accurately, and others, even though their exact meanings are expounded, do not cross his mind again at any time. The essence of life, which he has already discovered, flashes across his mind the moment he witnesses again a meaningful phenomenon of life. It is because the

phenomenon of life acts as a stimulus for depicting the essence of life he has in his mind. Just at this moment he can grasp the seed. It is not that the writer can take the seed only by remembering at a certain moment the essence of life he has already found; he can find out newly the essence of life he is not aware of in the course of witnessing a phenomenon and studying it deeply. This essence can become the seed of the work.

The seed is not on the surface of life; it is hidden in the deepest part of life. It is not revealed easily in a normal life devoid of excitement and change. It makes its vivid appearance when the regular mode of life is broken owing to the upheavals in life caused by a certain shocking impulse or when a serious change takes place in the destiny of man. The fundamental factor that changes the current of life or brings about a dramatic change in man's destiny incorporates the seed, the ideological substance of life. The writer should not be enthralled by the upheavals taking place on the surface of life; he must explore further and study the fundamental factor of the upheaval. By so doing, he will pick out the seed of his work.

The course of exploring the ideological essence of life is the course of delving into the essence from the phenomena. The writer should not confine himself to examining the phenomena of life, but have the ability of philosophical thinking and studying with which to delve into the essence of life from the phenomena to the last by going deeply into it. Only the writer who thinks about life philosophically can discover a meaningful and profound seed. All the valuable artistic discoveries registered in the human history of



literature are precious fruitions of profound philosophical thinking by famous writers who delved deeply into the life of their era.

Having chosen a good seed, the writer should concentrate all the artistic elements on it and develop its narrative potential in depth.

The proper choosing of the seed does not mean the completion of a good work. The discovery of the seed only serves as the prerequisite condition and basis of literary creation. A good seed is apt to lead to the production of a good work. But poor works are sometimes produced with the seeds discovered after a painstaking effort.

The seed should be cultivated in an artistic way so that it can sprout naturally through a realistic and vivid depiction. A literary work can become valuable when it is clear in its ideological intention and profound in philosophy, and exerts a lingering effect on life.

The ideological essence of life should not be expressed crudely in disregard of the logic of life under the pretext of developing the seed, nor should the seed be shown as it is in a direct way through speeches or narrative as some novels and plays do. Of course, words or narrative can emphasize the seed. Some of the works produced recently stress the ideological substance through the hero's words, thus making their ideological contents clear. If the seed has been fully developed through the process of artistic presentation of the work, its ideological substance can be expressed in words or in narrative in the sense of stressing it once again. Writers should not think that it is an effective method of developing the seed to add it later after investing

less effort on concentrating the depictive elements and cultivating them in keeping with its requirements or to stress the ideological essence at an important part. The seed must be revealed unaffectedly through the main line of depiction.

The writer must not attempt to create an artistic image with an abstract idea that does not give an artistic picture. If he falls into subjectivism, the seed dies. For the writer, the seed should be a discovery of discoveries. Meanwhile, the characterization, events, details and episodes that are depicted on the basis of the seed should also be new and original.

Writers must find valuable seeds capable of meeting the aspirations of the times and the requirements of the masses, thereby creating truly realistic and revolutionary works in which high ideological and ennobling artistic qualities are combined.

## **2) WHAT IS DECISIVE IN LITERATURE—CHARACTER OR EVENT?**

How man is observed and described is the starting point of literary creation.

In literature man should firmly stand at the centre of portrayal, leading positively the complicated and various currents of life. It is man who creates life and enjoys it. All

social phenomena occur by his action, and change and develop due to his positive role. Literature that observes and describes reality from the viewpoint of Juche should place man at the centre of portrayal and depict him in strong relief.

Man cannot exist separated from life, but man and life are not in the same position. Man holds the position of master of life. There can be life only where there is a human being. In literature all the phenomena of life should take place with man at the centre and be subordinated to portraying man.

That literature depicts man means it depicts his character. That literature should place man at the centre of the portrayal means portrayal should be created by putting the main stress on his character. Literature should create representation by laying the main stress on the character, not on the event.

Dealing with man as part of the material world, literature in the past did not draw a principled line between man and other objects. As for the character and the event, it put the main stress on their unified relationship and dealt with them in the framework of the portrayal of man. As a result of emphasizing this relationship between the character and the event without drawing a line between them, it failed to set it as the principle of creative work to especially emphasize the character.

If the main stress is not put on the character, the literary work will not suit the true nature of humanics. Even though the work depicts the character, the event does not become subordinated to it in all cases, nor does it follow it

smoothly. If the work resolves the relationship between the character and the event improperly, the event might overwhelm the character.

The character and event are related to each other organically and at the same time they have different characteristics. That the event takes place and develops due to the action of the character and the character is revealed and developed through the event means that there is an organic relationship between them. But sharp distinctions exist between them. The character is more internal and essential, whereas the event is more external and phenomenal. The character is more active, whereas the event is more passive. Whether one regards as the basic problem the character or the event is the result of what one considers and stresses as the main thing—the essential or the phenomenal, the active or the passive. To view the character as the main thing in the relationship between the character and the event is to view man as the main being among objective beings, and to give priority to the essential over the phenomenal.

To attach fundamental significance to the character over the event in literature is the just requirement of the development of literature and the development of the masses' aesthetic consciousness.

At the low stage of the development of human being, whose abstract thinking ability was yet to be developed, man perceived the world surrounding him only visually, and the artistic works that mirrored the consciousness of those days were simple imitations of the things and phenomena of the surrounding world. The more the times

developed, the higher man's ability of understanding the things and phenomena grew. But it grew very slowly and gradually. So the traces of the art that reflected the surrounding world as it was remained in human culture for a long time.

The people of our era, who have sound consciousness, try to study the essence of everything; they do not see it visually. They read literary works as they are attracted to the characters' personalities, not to read the story which is woven with incidents in an amusing way. Literature can satisfy the modern sense of beauty only when it puts the main stress on the characters.

In order to give priority to character over event, it is essential to decisively enhance the level of characterization of literary works.

The problem of putting emphasis on characterization is not solved even though character is relatively more conspicuous than event in a literary work. Slighting event on the plea of emphasizing character is the way to make a mess of the work itself. A great effort should be channelled into improving the portrayal of character so as to make people attracted to the characters rather than to the events.

In order to give the first consideration to character rather than to event, it is imperative to concentrate the requirements of the seed on characterization.

Since the seed leads the main line of portrayal of a work, the character can be depicted on the main line of the work only in close relationship with the seed. The seed, by its nature, develops through the portrayal of the characters of the hero and other figures. Therefore, it cannot develop

properly if the characters of the figures are not sustained, in spite of an interesting story and closely blended drama. For all that, characterization is not the means of developing only the seed. As the centre of the image, it has its own share and acts positively on all other aspects of the image, attaining its unique informative and educational purpose. It must embody the demand of the seed in a concentrated way to stand at the centre of the picture and play the leading role in clarifying the theme and idea of the work.

The immortal masterpiece *The Sea of Blood* describes the “punitive” operations the Japanese imperialists committed in Jiandao, an operation the anti-Japanese guerrillas unfolded to attack a walled city, an uprising organized by the underground revolutionary organization and various other events. Of course, these events are depicted sincerely and meaningfully on the basis of the historical events which took place in those days. But its characterization gives a deeper impression than the events, largely because it embodies in a concentrated way the demand of the seed that the “sea of blood” of trials should be turned into the “sea of blood” of struggle. This work clearly shows that when characterization embodies the demand of the seed in a concentrated way, not only the seed but also the characterization can be sustained.

In order to put the main stress on character rather than on event, the plot of the work should be composed so that it becomes the history of the development of character.

Now some people think that the storyline is the same as the line of events, but they are wrong. The story of a work consists of the events, episodes, details of life and

psychology and careers of the characters. In other words it can include all the contents forming the flow of life. The process of the initiation of the events, their development and conclusion is no more than an aspect of the storyline. The storyline is not a simple grouping of this and that events, but the inevitable course of the development of the characters' personalities and life. The storyline is woven along with the formation and development of the human relationships in the course of the start and development of the story. So the plot should be worked out so that the relationships between the characters and the course of the development of their personalities are woven into a storyline. The storyline of a work should be woven according to the process of the development of the personalities of the characters with the hero at the centre, and its plot designed so that the events, conflicts and episodes arise and develop through the relationships between the personalities.

That the organization of emotions should be the main thing in the plot is derived from the demand that the plot should be designed by putting the main stress on characterization. The organization of emotions is a method of description to reveal the essence of a character emotionally. Since the emotion forms the innermost world of man, together with idea, it is impossible to properly clarify the innermost world apart from the emotion and accordingly, to create a lifelike portrayal of his character. Well-organized emotions can sustain the personalities of all characters and render them as truthfully as in reality. Event-centred literature hangs on to events, considering the

organization of events to be the main element of the plot. This being the case, it fails to depict in depth man's idea and feelings, and in most cases weaves the story with events mainly for amusement. The organization of events only lays the foundation of life that forms human relationships and conditions characters' actions. Only when it becomes the basis of the organization of emotions, can the organization of events contribute to characterization and move the people.

The hero is the first character that needs effort in depicting figures. Since the hero represents the group of the characters portrayed in the literary work, the overall quality of characterization depends on how his or her character is described. However hard it is tried to compose the plot according to the course of the development of human character, characterization as a whole can be obscured by the course of events unless the hero is brought into relief.

The hero must stand at the centre of the plot, linking and leading the characters. In order for the hero to be sustained, he must play the leading role in solving the main problem of the work and stand at the centre in human relationships so that other characters follow him as he moves.

The problem of composing the plot by giving first consideration to the character is raised all the more urgently in the novel and other works that have a great number of epic elements. Historically speaking, the problem of what is decisive in literature—the character or the event—was raised seriously in the genres of novel literature and drama literature. It is necessary to pay greater attention to solving



the relationship between the character and the event in novels and plays that deal with many more incidents than other genres of literature do.

It is also important to handle the events efficiently in literature while laying the main stress on characterization.

Literary works deal with the events of first and secondary importance, large-scale events like historical ones, and events related to slices of life. That the first consideration should be placed on the character never means that events can be neglected. Events are an element of life in which the character is manifested. Ignorance of events may give rise to the loss of the foundation of life for the character. Events can show the essence and law of life and give knowledge and education of various kinds to the people. In particular, when a certain historical event or historical incident is dealt with, it is of great importance to depict the event properly in order to give a deep knowledge of the given history. The novels of the cycle *The Immortal History* that record the revolutionary career of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung with historical events as their storyline produce a realistic and profound portrayal of each event while putting the main stress on the portrayal of the characters. In this way they enable the people to deeply understand his revolutionary career.

In a literary work the events assume great significance, but they are of no value unless they are connected with characterization. They are a means for the portrayal of character. They must be socially meaningful and also be described so as to contribute to characterization. The character should be depicted as growing and developing

along with the current of the significant events and life. The tendency to jumble together the great historical events is owing to the fact that the main stress is put only on the organization of events at the expense of characterization. Man is the master of life, and at the same time the master of events. Since the events take place through the relationships between people and by their activities, the personalities of characters must always be placed at the centre of the depiction of events.

### **3) THE POWER OF INTERPRETATION CONSISTS IN ITS TRUTHFULNESS AND PHILOSOPHY**

Truthfulness is an intrinsic requirement of literature. Only when a literary work reflects human life truthfully can it survive forever in the cultural history of mankind, retaining its eternal vitality. A work without truthful representation of life, though refined in its description and tight in its plot, is of no use. A most important problem in producing literary works is truthful representation. Even a work in which the political principle is embodied and its writer's ideological intention is well manifested will be unable to enjoy people's love if its interpretation is not lifelike.

Truthfulness of a literary work is a criterion with which to measure whether or not and how far its representation of

life is true to reality. When lifelike, it is truthful, and when different, it is not.

If a literary work is to sustain its truthfulness, it should reflect the essence of life in its interpretation. If the presentation of the work is contrary to the essence of life, though identical with it superficially, it cannot ensure truthfulness of the work. It is only when the interpretation fully accords with the essence of life and overflows with its essential details that a work can become truthful.

In order to ensure accordance between the interpretation of work and the essence of life, it is important to acquire a correct understanding of the interrelations between essence and phenomenon. Of course, it cannot be said that our writers do not know them, as well as the way to ensure the truthful interpretation of the work. They know them quite well theoretically and yet fail to create a lifelike interpretation of life in their actual work, the fact of which can be explained by both their attitude to their work and their qualifications.

Whether or not a truthful picture of life can be created is a problem of greater importance bearing directly upon the writer's conscience, before it is a problem of practical creative work.

Just as only a true man can speak the truth, so can only a true writer write a truthful work. The writer must take a conscientious attitude to society and influence the masses by representing the conscience of the times. A writer who has soiled his conscience cannot sympathize with reality sincerely, and consequently will adorn his work with mere hypocrisy and falsehood. The writer must become a model

true person, representative of pure conscience, unaffected and unchangeable, so as to create a true picture of reality with a correct viewpoint on it.

The writer's conscience with regard to his work finds expression in his attitude of taking responsibility for his work before the people. He should think deeply of the effect his work may produce on the people. If his work is not true to reality, it may have a negative influence on the people. He should bear deep in mind that ensuring the truthfulness of a literary work is not a problem of merely improving its ideological and artistic qualities but a problem related to his revolutionary transformation and the education of the masses.

Truthful representation of life depends largely on how much experience the writer has gained in life.

What is important here is to eliminate the practice of doing literary work only in the study or like a reporter. The interpretation in a work made in ignorance or defiance of reality cannot accord with actual life. He who is reluctant to mix himself in the thick of things and only collects materials at the very most just like a news writer, instead of experiencing reality firsthand, would just sit at his desk, working out his writing plan as to which character should be dealt with in what way and through which channel, and which event should be settled through what sort of ups and downs, before fitting it with the materials about the reality. Any reader may easily know, as far as this kind of work is concerned, what would become of which character and event, even without reading it through to the end. The writer may foresee how his figures and events would end

up, but must not determine it concretely beforehand. After deciding on the figures and events, he should persistently delve into the process of their development according to the logic of life and characterization, so that they reach their destination of their own accord.

Literary work should be not only truthful in its representation but also profound in its philosophical quality.

Today the ideological and spiritual world of our people is at a very high level, and their sentiments of life are also rich and noble. The people demand excellent works in which they can emotionally visualize the profound world of beautiful and noble human life and think continuously about the true meaning of life. In order to cater to the people's aesthetic demands and lead them to acquire correct viewpoints on the revolution and life, works of philosophical profundity should be created.

Ensuring the philosophical quality of interpretation is originally an essential requirement emanating from the nature of literature. Literature is a philosophy of life giving an answer to the question of human destiny through artistic portrayal. The question of human destiny is what should be dealt with by literature and at the same time by philosophy. Any question of human destiny cannot be dealt with apart from the philosophical viewpoint and attitude towards man. For this reason, literature that gives an answer to the question of human destiny assumes a philosophical character.

In order for literature to become a philosophy of life that finds a solution to the problem of human destiny, it should

be naturally profound in its philosophical quality.

The philosophical quality of a literary work is the profundity of the truth of life newly discovered and developed in depth through its interpretation by the writer.

The term philosophical quality can be used in literary work either for a certain work as a whole or in such a way as “philosophical detail” or “philosophical word” for a certain detail and word. Philosophical quality of either a whole work or a certain detail or word, is indicative of both the meaning that either of them contains a new discovery of the writer and the meaning that the truth of life discovered by the writer is profound. Only a work in which the question of human destiny it raises is serious, the idea that gives an answer to it is profound, and the interpretation makes it possible to understand ten or one hundred things through one, can be said to have philosophical quality.

The philosophical quality of a work does not come into being just because the work has a philosophical content or a philosophical mood. In previous days many writers and theoreticians in the field of art and literature called works that either dealt with philosophical problems or contained philosophical contents “philosophical works” and “works of philosophical quality”; hence, there appeared at one time in Europe even a form of novel called the “philosophical novel.” Of the works they called “philosophical works,” however, there are few that give truly great artistic emotions to the readers and draw them deep into the world of philosophical speculation.

The screenplay *The Family of Choe Hak Sin* is a work that neither deals with philosophical logic nor assumes a

philosophical mood. However, it gives a clear philosophical elucidation of the profound truth of life that we cannot breathe the same air with the US imperialists, through its description of the tragic destiny of the family of a priest, who believed in US imperialism like God throughout his life only to end up in ruin. Philosophical quality is the profundity of philosophy of life explained in a work.

The philosophical quality of a literary work is closely related to the quality of truthful interpretation. In literary work, the more truthfully life is described the more profoundly the philosophical quality is represented, and the more the important and profound idea is embodied in the representation, the more thoroughly the truthful quality is ensured.

To embody philosophical quality in literature, the seed of profound philosophical quality should be selected and cultivated well. Selecting the seed of philosophical profundity is a precondition for ensuring the philosophical quality of a work, which depends on the depth of the idea and interpretation that elucidate the essence of life and its law-governed process. The philosophical depth of a work is ensured only when it raises the keen and serious question as to what is the true life of man, wherein lies genuine happiness, and how man should live and struggle to hew out his destiny, and gives a profound answer to it at a high artistic level. The seed is precisely the ideological kernel of life the writer has discovered and implanted in his work. Therefore, what kind of seed the writer has selected determines the philosophical depth of his work.

The profundity of human question is a major factor for ensuring the philosophical depth of a work, which depends largely on how important and profound is the human question dealt with by the work concerned.

All the elements of interpretation ranging from plot and details to speeches should be developed profoundly and idiomatically. Only then is it possible to ensure philosophical depth throughout the whole course from the selection of the seed to its flowering and fruition.

The writer should become a philosopher, energetic researcher of life, and specialist in art vocabulary. Only a writer who is possessed of profound political knowledge and philosophical insight can produce excellent works full of lifelike representation and philosophical profundity bringing the readers to deep thought about the genuine life and the way for hewing out their destiny.

#### **4) THE INTELLECTUAL WORLD OF LITERATURE SHOULD BE ENRICHED**

Literary work is intellectual creation by a writer. It does not merely reproduce the objective world passively but reflects the writer's viewpoint and attitude towards it. The qualities of works dealing with the same phenomena are determined by the level on which the writers judge and represent them. A work in which the writer has analysed



and interpreted reality well at a high degree of his intellectual qualification can reach a high level in terms of its ideological and artistic qualities, and inspire the people more positively.

The degree of intellectual quality of literature is an important criterion for expressing the level of civilization of the country and nation it is produced in. It is indicative of the cultural level of a certain era and of the level of civilization of a certain country and nation. Literature not only expresses the level of man's cultural attainment and civilization, it also plays the vanguard role of improving them continuously. When the intellectual level of literature is elevated it can develop man into a civilized and noble being possessed of high intellectual faculties.

Enriching the intellectual world of literature is an urgent aesthetic demand of the people in the present era. Man's ideological consciousness and cultural attainments develop continuously along with the times. The development of man's ideological consciousness of independence and creative ability means the equal development of man's intellectual level. In our reality where the three revolutions—ideological, technological, and cultural—and the intellectualization of the whole society are making vigorous progress, and science and technology are developing rapidly, man's intellectual level is improving unprecedentedly. Man's interest in art and literature is also increasing remarkably. Now that literary and artistic activities are popularized and works of art and literature are disseminated widely through TV, not only young people but also the old and children are able to enjoy these works

every day. As is witnessed by all, even the ordinary children and old people can now appreciate films shown on TV, pointing out which is good or bad. By their old, conventional methods of interpretation and with low level of their intellectual faculty, writers are unable to interpret the intellectual world of our contemporaries suitably and satisfy their high demand for intellectuality. Improving the intellectual level of literature is, in the long run, a law-governed requirement of the developing times.

The intellectual level of literature means, in short, a reasonably high level of interpretation. In general, what is intellectual is inconceivable apart from what is reasonable. Literary interpretation is made up of unity between something reasonable and sensible. Needless to say, literature, for aesthetic nature in itself, sets extreme importance on sensuous elements, which, however, cannot make any contribution to improving the ideological and artistic quality of a work without the principal action of the reasonable elements. The height of what is reasonable that performs an important function in ensuring the ideological and artistic quality of a work is precisely the intellectual level of a work.

The high or low intellectual level of a work is determined by how much deeper and richer the knowledge it contains is than the knowledge of ordinary people, whether or not it opens up a world of elegant beauty that can evoke great admiration from the people, and how high is the level of its interpretational skill and cultural attainment, that is, by whether or not the world of the work is rich.

The intellectual world of a work is expressed comprehensively through all the elements of its content and form.

As a basic feature of an intellectual is his noble aim, a literary work, too, can ensure its rich intellectual world only when its ideological content is deep and noble. Enriching the intellectual world of works is the trend of modern literature, but the modes for the purpose are very different from one another according to the class attitude and outlook on beauty. The bourgeois reactionary writers strain every nerve to weave their works in an artificially complicated and obscure manner, on the pretence of elevating the intellectuality of their works, trying to derive intellectuality from their interpretation, which is separated from the content and hard to understand. They claim that only the complicated and obscure contents of the works can cater to the tastes of highly “intelligent” people and such works alone can become intellectual works that are understandable only by the “intellectuals.” Works which are incomprehensible to the masses are worth nothing and an intellectual world of such works is out of the question. They deliberately make up the contents in a complicated and equivocal manner just because the idea they intend to show through their representation is vulgar and reactionary. Whatever artifice one may use with formal beauty, the intellectual world of the works as a whole is naturally poor when the contents are cheap. When the form of a literary work is poor it is impossible to properly transmit the noble idea contained in the work or ensure even the intellectuality of the work. A literary work should at least surpass

common sense in terms of its level of representation of life, and be sound ideologically and elegant artistically.

To enrich the intellectual world of literature, a new world of philosophy and beauty should be opened up.

Whether or not a literary work is pregnant with the new philosophy of life discovered by the writer is a question bearing upon its philosophical quality and at the same time an important criterion of its intellectuality. Philosophical discovery is the crystallization of the reasoning activities of man. It is only when the work deals with a profound and original theme on the valuable truth of life that the people can feel its high intellectuality. A work full of profound and new philosophy of life draws readers into speculation. Every work should contain a serious question capable of drawing all the people into the world of deep meditation. That the work contains a philosophy of life means that it carries the reflection of the writer's thought, the depth of which precisely decides the intellectuality of the work.

A world of elegant and sublime beauty should be unfolded in a literary work. Literature is a form of social consciousness that discovers and interprets the beauty of human life. Which thing the writer thinks beautiful out of reality and how high is the level at which he interprets it is a major criterion of the intellectuality of his work. The Juche-oriented outlook on beauty advocates that man, possessed of high sense of consciousness of independence and creative ability, should be regarded as the most beautiful being in the world and his independent and creative life should be considered to be the most beautiful. Our literature should take independent man and his life for

the object for its aesthetic study, and interpret it as an ideal of high aesthetic quality. The writer's aesthetic ideal reflected in a literary work should be lofty and noble enough to evoke a positive response from all the readers, and so high as to satisfy the aesthetic demand of our era.

In order to enrich the intellectual world of literature, profound and rich educative contents should be contained in literary works.

Literary works should be packed with knowledge which is fresh and acceptable to man. While reading literary works, man not only receives ideological and emotional education, he also acquires a fresh understanding of what he had been ignorant of with regard to human beings, society and nature, and furthers the accumulation of his knowledge in depth. The higher level a work has reached in its intellectuality the more fresh knowledge one can gain from it. Only when man comes to know the intellectual world in a work, a world whose level is higher than his, can he be attracted to it.

The writer should not commit such deviations as transcribing pieces of information he has gleaned here and there about the ancient history of the world or scientific information in his work on the excuse that he intends to infuse rich knowledge in his work. Parading one's knowledge has nothing in common with improving intellectuality. Boasting of one's scholarly attainments itself is evidence of one's ignorance; it only impairs the intellectual quality of one's work. The knowledge about the world which is dealt with in a work should be revealed unaffectedly as an integral element of the content.

In order to enrich the intellectual world of literature, the intellectual personalities of the characters should be sustained properly. This is a requirement more essential for portraying contemporaries.

Improving the intellectuality of literary works and what type of man is taken for the object of interpretation do not correspond in all cases. Literary works may portray either a character of high intellectual quality or a character of poor intellect. What is important is the writer's standard of appraisal and ideal in relation to whatever type of character he portrays. Even though a character of low intellect is portrayed, it is possible to ensure the intellectual quality of the work to the full if the character is represented at a high level of the intellectual world of the work.

However, it cannot be said that selection of character and the level of intellect are quite irrelevant to each other. Realism requires that a typical man of the times be portrayed in literary works. Highlighting in works characters that cannot show the characteristics of the times and the essential features of society means, strictly speaking, the writer's low-key attitude and ignorance, resulting in causing fatal damage to the intellectual quality of the works.

When making typical examples of contemporaries, the writer must naturally emphasize their intellectual aspect. In the period of democratic reform after liberation such a man as Kwak Pa Wi, a character in the full-length novel *Land* was considered to be a typical peasant of those days, and during the period of socialist transformation a man like Kim Chang Hyok, a character in the novel *A New Spring in*

*Sokkaeul* was regarded as the image of a typical peasant of the times. However, the typical peasant of the 1980s or 1990s, scores of years later, should be an intellectual person whose level of ideological consciousness and technological and cultural attainments is far higher than that of either Kwak Pa Wi or Kim Chang Hyok. It is the same case with the negative characters that may appear in our society. As for the negative characters appearing in the interpretation of modern life, the aspect of their intelligence should be highlighted, and the process of their transformation through education should be described more seriously and characteristically.

In order to enrich the intellectual world of literary works, the writer should also think deeply in elaborating and developing interpretation.

Making use of the means, methods and skills for interpretation at a high level is an important condition for improving the intellectuality of the works. Works retaining clumsiness, works written by commonplace methods, and works betraying no extraordinary talent of the writer are, without exception, judged by the people as works of low quality in terms of intellectuality.

The intellectual world of a literary work cannot go beyond the writer's intellectual qualifications. It is determined by the writer's intellectual attainments.

The writer teaches the audience. Therefore, he should know more than the people. He should know one hundred things to teach one thing and should not attempt to teach one thing when he knows only that and nothing more. Superficial knowledge shows its shallowness immediately.

A wealth of knowledge alone is not enough. It is not true that well-informed people are all high in their intellectual quality. Rich knowledge should be combined with high ideological and cultural attainments. The writer with great knowledge and a high standard of cultivation produces only good works of intellectual quality.

The writer should become a man of rich knowledge about life and a man of culture with great will and cultivation, and acquire a philosophical insight into the essence of life, a faculty of intellectual thought and a great ability for interpretation, so as to render powerful contributions to further improving the intellectual level of our literature.

## **5) A WELL-KNIT PLOT SUSTAINS A WORK**

People form close relations with one another in the thick of things and live on in the flow of constantly changing and developing life. In a literary work that is to present life as concretely and vividly as in reality, close attention should be paid to planning the plot that shows the interrelations of men and the process of their change and development.

A writer's ideas about his work are integrated and developed into a framework in the process of composing the plot. Sometimes the writer commits a deviation of rewriting his work from the beginning, as his previous



work has turned topsy-turvy; this is because he has not planned the plot properly, the plot which forms the backbone of the work in the main. A house on leaning pillars will fall down. However good the seed of a work is and however excellent the interpretation is, if its plot is not composed well the work will crumble just like a tower built with painstaking efforts sometimes crumbles.

It is extremely important in literature not only to compose the plot correctly to meet the requirement of the seed, but also to develop the plot in accordance with the physiology of the artistic interpretation.

Suppose a literary work is a living organism; the seed that makes the descriptive elements sprout as well as the characterization that constitutes the centre of the artistic image have their own inherent physiological qualities of living and breathing as if in reality. The inherent physiology of artistic interpretation is applied not only to the seed and characterization but also to the plot.

Developing the plot as suited to the physiology of artistic interpretation means working out human relations, conflicts and storyline to accord with the flow of life inherent in the artistic interpretation, a living organism.

One should not attempt to compose the plot subjectively, in disregard of the concrete physiological quality of a work required by the seed. Inquiring into solid logic alone, arrested by subjectivism, will result in disaccord of the plot with the physiology of artistic interpretation and in poor interpretation of work as a whole.

The physiology of artistic interpretation has a certain logical support. Physiology is inconceivable apart from

logic. The only difference is whether the logic is abstract or inherent in lifelike interpretation that can be likened to an organism.

The logic of the composition of the plot of a literary work depends on its formal characteristics. Each work is based on its own principle inherent in composing its plot governed by the characteristics of its form. The plot of a novel is different from that of a poem, and even in the same literary style of novel, the short, medium-length, and full-length novels are different from one another in terms of plot.

Logic in constructing the plot is also related to the characteristics of the seed of a work and its content—human life. The seed is the basis on which to work out the content of the work and coordinate the formal elements in keeping with the content. There is only one optimum form of plot as required by the seed. Even in the case of constructing the relationship of a single character and an episode, the writer should study in detail whether or not they are in accord with the requirement of the seed. Works are different from one another in terms of the logic basic to them, according to the different human lives they deal with. Each and every personality or life of various forms in reality has its own peculiar quality as well as the general law common to society and the collective.

Because of all these requirements, the logic of plot cannot be decided by the writer's subjective viewpoint.

The writer should compose the plot so that he can achieve harmony between his own ideological and aesthetic intentions, the characterization in the work and the

requirement of life, and resolve these problems in an integral way. In working out the plot in the course of creation there can arise a case in which the writer wants to portray his principal character as dying according to his own ideological and aesthetic intentions but can never do it in view of the logic of the character's personality. In this case the character should not be portrayed in this way, unless an alteration is made in the establishment of the principal character. The requirements for composing a plot are rigorous and objective. However great the writer's ambition is, it will be useless unless it accords with the physiology of the artistic interpretation.

Plots can be different from work to work only when they correspond with the physiology of the artistic interpretation. The physiology is different from work to work. However talented the writer may be, he is unable to move even a step forward in composing the plot unless he has acquired knowledge of the physiology of the artistic interpretation inherent to the work concerned. The human relations, conflicts and storyline woven to meet the physiology peculiar to the work are what make the plot original.

Plots can be lifelike only when they correspond with the physiology of the artistic interpretation. Bringing the plot into harmony with the interpretational physiology is, in the long run, making the plot fully meet the requirements of concrete life contained in the work. Only when he works out the plot to suit the physiology of interpretation, free from his subjective viewpoint, can the writer present life authentically.

A well-knit plot as suited to the physiology of interpretation is characterized by a tight organic link so that even one element of it cannot be removed or replaced. Whatever reasonable opinion there may be out of examination of the works, it cannot be forced arbitrarily just because each work has its own peculiar physiology. The writer must bring his work into tight gear organically so that even a single element and part can never be replaced or removed.

The plot of a literary work should not only accord with the physiology of interpretation, it should also be properly knitted.

It is only when the plot is profound that the content of the work can also become profound. Some writers compose the plots of their works along a thin line of misunderstanding. Most of these works lack truthfulness and depth. The method of presenting misunderstanding can be effective, provided it is used suitably. However, when the whole work is run through with a series of misunderstandings its content will usually become flimsy, making the readers displeased. The first few pages of some literary works give away their ends. This means that the depth of their plots is shallow. The philosophical depth of a literary work is also related to the depth of its plot. A profound plot presents just as much profound ideological content.

It is important in ensuring the depth of the plot to make a deep study of the relations between the characters as relations of their outlooks on life.

The relations between characters in a literary work

should not be relations out of their routine business but relations formed by their ideology and destiny. To this end, their relations should be established deeply on the basis of their outlook on life. In actuality all people have their own outlooks on life, which manifest themselves spontaneously in the course of their mutual relations. It is only when the relations between the characters are shown profoundly so that their individual outlook on life can be brought to light that it is possible to make a profound elucidation of the problem of their destiny.

Our people are now living and striving on the basis of a single ideology and ideal, solidly united behind the Party and the leader. Be that as it may, the works of the themes treating reality should not fail to make a deep inquiry into the essence of personality distinguishable from one another, considering people's outlooks on life to be identical. Even people who are getting education in the same idea are different from one another in the depth of their outlooks on life, depending on their preparedness.

Works that deal with hostile conflicts between friend and foe should also delve deep into the political opinions and attitudes of the enemy. Needless to say, caricatural interpretation can be made of the enemy in the creation of works. However, it should not be made to underestimate the enemy nor be formalized as a stereotype. In portraying the hostile negative characters, there is a tendency to caricature their interpretation as indecent or as animals. Our people did not win victories in the fight against weak and indecent beings or animals. Underestimation of the enemy will do nothing for the interpretation of the victors. The

enemies our people encountered historically were not weak. Even the enemies have their own outlook on life and philosophy of life. They also love their own parents and wives and children, and are ready to fight at the risk of their lives for their class. The two wars our people fought were unprecedentedly grim and the road our revolution followed was rugged, because the enemies we confronted were all strong. Literary works should necessarily reproduce such historical facts as truthfully as they were. Not only should the meanness and vulnerability of the enemy be emphasized, deep inquiries should also be made into the process of confrontation between us and the enemy in their outlook on life and philosophy of life.

It is important in ensuring the depth of the plot to plan it in such a three-dimensional way as to present its formative beauty.

The composition of a one-way, flat plot is devoid of formative and three-dimensional beauty, and therefore unable to ensure its depth. The plot of a literary work must be constructed so that it follows a taut and distinct main line, and at the same time the secondary lines overlapping visually and spatially should be closely linked to the main line.

The deviation of failing to devise a three-dimensional plot finds expression in simplifying the relations of the characters. Such a tendency as dividing characters into positive and negative from the beginning, or giving the positive ones good names appealing to the ear and the negative ones queer names should be avoided. As positive and negative characters are revealed in the works, what will

be their end is clear from the beginning. In actuality, however, human relations between the positive and the negative are by no means as simple as that. Strictly speaking, even the positive ones betray negative aspects, while quite a few of the negative ones have more than one positive aspect. In our socialist society, in which social relations are characterized mainly by comradely unity and cooperation, a man is not fixed as being positive or negative from birth, and even defective persons are not predetermined as negative elements. If the writer is blind to this actual situation of society and defines the relations between the positive and the negative as a fait accompli within a certain framework or simplifies the relations, his work will become drab and end up distorting reality.

The greater efforts the writer makes for his composition of the plot, the more excellent result his work will achieve.

## **6) LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION IS A KEY TO LITERARY SUCCESS**

Literature is an art of language. Only through language does literature describe man and his life, and transmit his ideological and emotional feelings. For this reason, literary work should be written in such a way as to drive the people to read it sentence by sentence and keep the sentences in memory, attracted by the writer's art of words. However great idea a work is implanted with, it will still be unable to

grip the readers if its sentences are not worth reading.

Not a single writer who is poor in language interpretation has ever written a successful work in terms of ideological and artistic qualities. The noted writers of all ages were all experts in words and pioneers of the development of their national languages. In our country, too, are found many writers who have left behind brilliant wealth of treasure as artists of language.

The immortal masterpieces and other works created in the period of the anti-Japanese revolution constitute a shining model that embodies the Juche character and national identity of our language, and has developed the function of language originally in keeping with the demands of the masses for independence. The speeches and verses of the immortal classics are the precious linguistic heritage our literature should carry forward and develop down through generations. The writers must carry on the brilliant traditions of our literary words to effect a decisive turn in improving the level of the linguistic interpretation of literature.

Holding fast to the Juche-oriented attitude is of paramount importance in the inquiry into and interpretation of language.

Language is a powerful means of human life. As human activity is impossible apart from language, so are the interrelations of mankind as social beings inconceivable separately from the role played by language. Language serves as a powerful weapon in the struggle to achieve the independence of the masses. Only with spoken and written language is it possible to efficiently educate the people as



Juche-type men and women and transform nature, society and man as required by Juche through the development of the economy and culture, science and technology. Language plays a very important role in maintaining and developing the national character. A people can be said to be one and the same nation only when their language as well as their blood are the same; only the nation that carries on the purity of its own language can develop independently. National language is vital to a nation. For this reason, the imperialists' aggression against other countries is always followed by their pursuit of a policy of obliterating the native language of the latter. We must launch an active struggle to smash the US imperialists' attempt at national heterogeneity between the north and the south, and keep up the purity and community of our national language.

Bearing deep in mind that linguistic problem is not merely a problem of the artistic interpretation of their works but an important problem related to the independence of their nation and their people, writers must choose words and polish sentences always from the Juche-oriented attitude.

In order to maintain the Juche-oriented attitude towards language interpretation, it is important to study and sustain words that accord with the will and demand of the masses.

Speaking and writing to cater to our people's emotions and aesthetic tastes means establishing the Juche orientation in language. Literary interpretation of language is different from the individual people's manner of speaking. Since the words of literary works are intended for

the masses, writers should always study language with an attitude of speaking to the people.

Literary language should be easy to understand. Literary works should be written in plain and easy words understandable to the broad masses of the people with different cultural attainments. Simplicity of language is a major criterion of the people-oriented character of literary works. The people love and admire a writer who can express the truth of life in easy terms.

Literary language should be cultured. If a literary work is to cater to the tastes of the masses, it should be highly cultured as well as easy to understand. The cultural quality of literary language is manifested in various respects.

The language used in literary works should be exact in its expression. In literary works the most appropriate expression for a particular object is one alone. Finding it among many other similar ones is exactly the writer's skill. The writer's efforts to dig out the appropriate vocabulary item that pinpoints the essence of a certain object are sometimes likened to the work of finding a grain of gold among heaps of refuse in a gold mine. Only the writer who works heart and soul to polish his sentences can find the correct words and expressions that shine like gems. Our literature should set an example in observing the rules of cultured language. The rules of our language define the principles to be adhered to by all the people in common in the use of words, by generalizing the characteristics and requirements of the national language. Incorrect words that are in discord with the rules of language render a harmful

effect on establishing the standardization of language throughout the society.

Literary language should be correct, concise and clear. To this end, the practice of adding unnecessary explanations to sentences should be avoided. Both the verse in the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* that one moon shines in the sky but different people gaze upon it, and the speech in the scenario *The County Party Chief Secretary* that both loyalists and knaves are around us are succinct in expression and yet meaningful. Literary language should be carried through with condensed and clear expressions, each of which can hardly be replaced by ten or one hundred words.

In order to enhance the cultural quality of language, it is important to discard uncultured words left over from bygone days. As a heritage handed down through generations from the remote past, language retains quite a few old vestiges. Old linguistic customs die hard. Sweeping away the old refuse remaining in language and building a new culture in this field is a revolution. Writers should be standard-bearers of the revolution in language, taking the lead in removing all manner of vulgar and uncultured words.

What is important in embodying the demands of the masses in language interpretation is to make wide use of the spoken language used by the people every day. Making wide use of the good aspects of the spoken language of the people in writing so as to narrow the gap between written and spoken language is an important task for developing our language in a Juche-oriented way. National languages

originated in spoken languages. Written languages developed on the basis of spoken languages. In the past, writing was the exclusive property of the exploiting class. As a result, the written language in the hands of the ruling class became different by far from what the people at large spoke. Now that the masses have become the masters of letters and writing, the great difference between the spoken and written language, a vestige of the old society, is no longer tolerable. The men of letters must actively accept the rich and excellent elements of the popular words to further the development of the written language, and induce the written language to play the vanguard role in improving the cultural level of the spoken language. Colloquialisms created and polished by our people throughout their long history are an inexhaustible source of enrichment for our literary language. Writers must mix with the people and continually learn from their language with all sincerity and seriousness. Only when noble and beautiful expressions are found in the popular language is it possible to create excellent language interpretation comprehensible and acceptable to the masses.

In order to maintain the Juche-oriented attitude to language interpretation, efforts should be channelled into sustaining and using our native words as much as possible.

A nation's native words are a language retaining its most distinctive national quality that characterizes its creation and development by the nation concerned down through generations, without getting affected by any exotic language. Native words constitute the core of a national language. As linguistic elements that mirror the peculiar

psychology and emotions of a nation, they are effective in sustaining the national shade of words and the emotional feelings of the nation. Our native words are the optimum linguistic means of sustaining the interpretational and lyrical qualities of a literary work because their euphony retains rich and delicate emotional tones, their expressions are varied, and their sounds are beautiful. Most of the literary works written on the basis of our native words are all rich in lyricism, giving a refreshing flavour of portrayal. *Nostalgia*, an immortal masterpiece, is a model musical work that has raised the rich interpretational beauty and highlighted the beautiful lyrical feelings about one's native place by making use of our native words. Both its first stanza, *When I was leaving my home, my mother told me in tears in front of the house to make a good journey, and her voice is still ringing in my ears*, and the second stanza, *Not far away from my home runs a small stream and my younger brothers and sisters were playing there, and their images are still fresh in my memory*, arouse the people's cherished feelings of attachment to their dear hometowns and the landscape of their motherland, because they are based on our native words. Our literary works should all be genuine Korean-style ones sustaining the real flavour of our native words.

At the same time as sustaining our native words, it is important to change and polish loan words.

Few countries in the world have been unaffected by the influx of foreign words. In particular, the former colonies of the imperialists and the small countries sandwiched between the big countries are more exposed to the

influence of foreign words. In such countries it is impossible to preserve the purity of their national languages unless they remove the remnants of foreign words from their spoken and written languages.

Our country is now making a positive effort to sustain our native words on the one hand, and on the other to revise exotic words, including Chinese ones, that have found their way into our language. This is an important way not only for maintaining the national characteristics of our language but also for preventing our language from becoming heterogeneous in the north and the south. Now that the development of our national language is being handicapped extremely in the south and fellow nationals in the north and the south cannot make linguistic exchanges easily due to their long separation from each other, there arises the danger of our language losing its community. In this situation, if both the north and the south leave the people to their own devices in their linguistic practice, even the uniformity of language, a basic criterion of a nation, might be lost. Even without linguistic exchanges, it is still possible to prevent such an occurrence, provided both the north and the south adopt a single standard and a single principle, and develop their language on this basis. When both parts of the country develop the language by establishing the basic principle with unique Korean words as the standard and on the principle of revising the loan words to replace them with the Korean words, it will be possible to prevent linguistic heterogeneity from occurring, and maintain linguistic purity. In the past, native Korean words were extensively used in both the north and south of

Korea, but the situation has changed since the division of the national territory by the US imperialists. Today our language in the south is losing its purity gradually; it is changing into a hotchpotch language. Even the Seoul dialect that had been regarded as the “standard language” till the liberation of the country, has degenerated into a hotchpotch of words borrowed from English, Japanese and Chinese, and its manner of speaking and intonation have become alien to the traditional aesthetic taste of our nation. Only in the northern half of Korea do the native Korean words that have been used from the remote past remain in their pure form, developing to meet the requirements of the times, thanks to our Party’s correct policy on language. Pyongyang, the capital of the revolution, is the centre of cultured language that has ensured the preservation and development of the national characteristics of our spoken and written language in their purest form. If the present Pyongyang dialect, a new development, is taken as the standard, it will be possible to sustain the purity and Juche character of our language and develop it in a sound way. The cultured language of Pyongyang is the crystallization of the excellent linguistic elements of our national language that have been created and polished by the concerted efforts of the entire people in the northern half of Korea, a development that has also absorbed the good elements of the traditional national language, including the Seoul dialect, which have been used throughout south Korea. It is not fortuitous that our fellow countrymen in south Korea and abroad, on their visits to Pyongyang, sing the praises of the excellent cultured language of Pyongyang. The writers

must understand the validity of our Party's policy on language more deeply than anyone else, and sustain the cultured language of Pyongyang actively in their works.

The tendency of making wide use of loan words in creative work is due to the writers' old conception of language. In the past, the high-ranking officials of the successive feudal governments of our country undervalued our Korean language and gave prominence to words from Chinese, regarding only those conversant with Chinese words as educated persons. Such an outdated conception has hampered the development of our national language considerably since liberation, and its remnants are still persistent.

In order to use fewer loan words, it is important to acquire a full knowledge of their Korean counterparts. The words of foreign origin are now being revised systematically and replaced with Korean words. The writers' position is important in disseminating the revised words among the masses. The writers must lay up a store of revised words for wide use in creating works. As soon as a new revision is adopted, writers must use it first in their works.

In order to hold fast to the Juche-oriented attitude towards linguistic study and interpretation, it is imperative to learn from the revolutionary writing style of Comrade Kim Il Sung.

The great leader created the most revolutionary and popular writing style of our era in the course of his incessant ideo-theoretical and writing activities. His style is the epitome of the revolutionary and popular writing



style that has satisfied at the noblest level the principled requirements for developing our spoken and written language independently to meet the demands of the masses.

If they are to learn from his writing style, the writers must equip themselves with his original idea and theory on language, and read his instructions and works, acquiring a deep theoretical understanding of the nicety of every sentence, every word and every expression. While studying his instructions and works, the writers must actively embody in their works the aspects in which the national characteristics of our language are brought into fullest play, aspects in which problems have been raised and resolved profoundly from the point of view of the Party and working class, the aspects of profound meanings expressed in easy terms understandable to the people, and the brilliant example he set in the free use of words through his study of original and new vocabulary.

It is important in linguistic study and interpretation to embody the principle of realism to the full.

Language constitutes a major demarcation line between realism and anti-realism, progressive literature and reactionary literature. The advocates of art for art's sake and formalism of all ages set the linguistic problem as the major issue and advanced sophistry, asserting "pure form" separated from content. Even today they are persisting in their metaphysical claim about content and form, thought and language. Our writers must pay special attention to maintaining the principle of realism to cope with the mounting offensive of the bourgeois reactionary writers

against realistic literature with regard to the problem of language.

The main aspect of the principle of realism in the use of words is to ensure organic unity between content and form.

Euphemistic work of poor content is merely formalistic. The writers who have scanty ideological feeling and content of life with which to write their works, a situation resulting from their lack of deep inquiry into life, tend to cling to their poor skill in words. Covering up the scanty content with skilful use of words and embellishing it, is just mockery of the masses. Conversely, the writer who is unable to express what he wants to say for lack of words, though he may have many things to narrate and may try to relate a significant idea, is not qualified to be an artist of words. A work that is written without painstaking linguistic efforts is insipid also in terms of its content. Good dishes stimulate appetite for the food they contain. Both a work of poor content written in bombastic words and a work written with poor vocabulary are equal in their lowering the ideological and artistic qualities of literature.

Deep study and speculation of life are requisite for ensuring organic unity between content and form in the skilful use of words. Life offers the writer the content, which requires a corresponding form. Excellent linguistic expressions are not gained from nothing, but discovered in the course of deep study and speculation about life. Meaningful and tactful expressions can never cross the minds of writers who have poor knowledge of life, dry ideological feelings and indistinct assertions. The writers, instead of thinking about playing with their skill in words,

should be able to see through the objects about which they intend to narrate, and acquire extraordinarily deep knowledge about their essence and significance. Man can express only as much as he knows. There is a saying that the total amount of vocabulary a man possesses is tantamount to the total amount he understands and thinks. An object a writer has not seen and an essence he has not understood cannot be transmitted to the people, whatever flowery words are used to express them. Therefore, the first process of his study to create excellent language interpretation should always begin with gaining rich experience and understanding of the object he is going to describe.

Profound meaning should be contained in language interpretation. Making the language interpretation meaningful means in itself combining the content and form at a high level. The basic feature of excellent passages, expressions and speeches consists in the profound meaning they carry. For this reason, it is said that written words and speeches have connotations beyond their obvious meanings. Literary language should be composed of excellent sentences, expressions and speeches, all with profound meanings. The talent of making sentences and expressions carry profound meanings can be found only in a writer who is capable of acquiring a profound and extensive knowledge of the significance of life, and expressing it succinctly.

Writers must direct special attention to the interpretation of speech. There appears such a tendency as making excessive use of speeches in filmscripts and novels, which

is due partly to an incorrect attitude of the writers to the basic means of cinematic and fictional interpretation, but mainly to their attempts to show their ideological intentions not through the line of events in the film or through the description in the novel, but in a direct and easy way just through speeches. Such a practice results in too many unnecessary speeches and few meaningful words of philosophical depth. Random and excessive use of speeches should be avoided.

Study should be made of the expressions congruent with the circumstances and objects concerned to ensure organic combination of the content and form in the free use of words. The principal characters of our literature represent the people who possess both political principles and humanity. Speech should mirror the character's political ideas and individuality in a concentrated way, and at the same time fully agree with the atmosphere and circumstances in which the conversation takes place. This is the same case even with the writer's descriptive words, narration of his emotions and explanation. Each and every expression of the writer should all accord with the object and its circumstances as well as the writer's ideological feelings and the mood of his writing. If the writer enumerates words as he pleases out of subjectivism, on the ground that it is his own speech, it may exaggerate or dwarf the object and its circumstances, and, in the long run, lead to discord between the content and form.

In order to present a clear and truthful picture of the life and phase of a given era, the linguistic practice of that era should be reflected accurately. In the case of the writer's

words in a work devoted to historical facts, the words of the particular era cannot be used entirely the same as they were. As far as works about history are concerned, the writer's words should be written mostly in the present Korean cultured language, while the conventional vocabulary and manner of speech of the corresponding historical times are used only to the extent of creating an image of the times. What needs special concern for reflecting the manner of speech as suited to the times is to select and use appropriate expressions that represent the corresponding socio-political system, economic relations and cultural and moral standards. It is true that previous life should be understood and described significantly from the viewpoint of the present times, but creating something new or presenting what was available in the past by arbitrarily rewriting it apart from the principle of fidelity to historical facts should never be allowed.

Next in importance in embodying the principle of realism in the free use of words is to study fresh, idiosyncratic expressions.

Just as man's ideological feelings, cultural and moral standards, occupation, intellectual attainments, interests and hobbies are expressed mostly in words in everyday life, so are the writer's outlook on the world and creative idiosyncrasy revealed through language. Language can be likened to a "window" through which man's innermost thoughts can be seen or presented to the outside. Unlike the formal language used in office work, news coverage and scientific and technological fields, literary words assume the interpretational characteristics of vividness,

emotionality and idiosyncrasy. Of these characteristics, idiosyncrasy is the main thing. Only idiosyncratic words can make the interpretation lifelike and emotional. Idiosyncratic linguistic interpretation is made not by one's intention to speak or express more distinctly than others, but in the course of making efforts to express one's firsthand experiences, and ideological feelings as truthfully as they are, as well as more accurately and clearly. The more idiosyncratic literary words become, the more vividly and truthfully they can interpret life. How idiosyncratic the linguistic interpretation is decides the originality and freshness of a literary work to a great extent. If the words of a literary work are not fresh, the content cannot be new either.

In principle, writers should not use again expressions they have used in their previous works. However artistically polished it may be, an excellent sentence or speech can have value no more than once; it is not the absolute standard to which all writers should adhere. The writers should, to the best of their ability, conceive something novel, and select fresh expressions and vocabulary. A good example of idiosyncratic speeches can be found in the scene of the three ministers bickering with one another in a scramble for a high position in the immortal classic *Three Pretenders*. Pak insists that integration of the armed forces belonging to three factions is the one and only way to withstand aggression from the country Paengma and to save the country. In the meantime, Mun asserts that the weak and the strong are predestined and, therefore, asking a big country for reinforcements is a

wise measure, while Choe persists in his opinion that in case of emergency they should take a step backward to cope with the situation and foster their strength. Their speeches all contain idiosyncratic words that express their individual personalities, thus presenting a vivid picture of their treacherous images—scrambling with one another fiercely for the royal seat, each clinging to appeasement and trickery, deception and fraud, perfidy and treachery to the nation. Upon reading their speeches alone, people can vividly visualize, even without directly seeing the scene on the stage, the personalities of the three ministers—Pak, a large-built and officer-looking man, always flying off the handle and drawing out his sword at a moment's provocation; Mun, a crooked man, though superficially putting on airs, always flaunting his position as a member of the royal family; and Choe, a cunning and extremely ferocious man.

For writers to develop their own unique writing style is the decisive way for fully ensuring the idiosyncrasy of language interpretation in our literature. Few of our writers have their own idiomatic writing style at present. He who does not have his own characteristic writing style is not a real writer. He who claims to be a writer should have his own distinct linguistic idiosyncrasy and always create for each of his works peculiar linguistic interpretation different from all others'. Jo Ki Chon, who wrote the epic *Mt Paektu*, can be said to be a talented poet who had his own writing style. His poetic expressions are too idiomatic and extraordinary to be imitated. Even small alterations, though not plagiarized, soon betray that his original poetic

expressions have been imitated. The writer should win literary fame with his own face, his own peculiar linguistic soil, that defies imitation.

Whether or not writers work with their own unique writing style and fresh linguistic interpretation depends on their qualifications and skill.

The secret of the skilful use of words is conditioned entirely by the writer's talent. The strength of the linguistic vehicle that has the possibility of sufficient expression and generalization is determined by how and at what level a writer makes use of words. Only when they are conversant with the interpretational means and methods can the writers make the best use of them as they intend, and develop their own peculiar writing style. It is none other than the writers who should be the owners of a colossal wealth of vocabulary and experts in the use of words.



**KIM JONG IL**  
**LIFE AND DESCRIPTION**

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