

MAO  
ZEDONG  
POEMS

Chinese-English Bilingual Edition 汉英对照

毛泽东诗词

赵甄陶 译

湖南师范大学出版社

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**Chinese-English Bilingual Edition** 汉英对照

**毛泽东诗词**

**赵甄陶 译 Translated**

**by Zhao zhentao**

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赵甄陶 译

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## FOREWORD

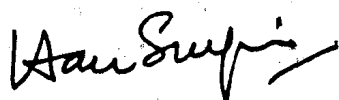
I know Professor Zhao Zhentao since 1980. He has been teaching English in China for four decades, and is also an expert in English poetry. He has taken up the task of rendering Mao Zedong's poems in English. This is a formidable task. Anyone who has attempted to render the terse, lapidary style of Mao into any other language has found himself faced with formidable difficulties. But Professor Zhao has proceeded to do so with faith that his translation in English would be both readable and accurate.

Professor Zhao is also well versed in ancient Chinese classics. His book, therefore, is of value to all those who wish to know more about Mao, one of the greatest men of the twentieth century. A man who will be remembered when the dross and tinsel of those who do not take a long term view of history falls away.

I recommend, therefore, Professor Zhao's book as one which, even if not altogether perfect, does give a good

feeling of Mao's poems, of Mao's personality as well.

I have read many translations of Mao's poems, and none of them come up to a perfect rendering of the Chinese in beauty or in meaning. This attempt by Professor Zhao is probably one of the best. It will have its place in the university libraries for those who want to know something about Mao the man, the poet, the dreamer, who changed China and launched her, with his poems and his vision, into the modern world.



May 4, 1990

## 序

韩素音

我与赵甄陶教授相识始于1980年。赵教授在中国教授英语长达40年，是一位英诗专家。他英译了毛泽东诗词，这是一项非常艰巨的任务。凡试图将毛泽东诗词精练优雅的风格译成任何别国文字的人，无不遇到难以克服的困难；但赵教授却毅然挑起这副重担，满怀信心地将书逐译得使人爱读而又准确可信。

赵教授还精通中国古典文学。因此他的译著对所有想深入了解毛泽东的人是很有裨益的。毛泽东是20世纪最伟大的人物之一。历史眼光短浅者的虚浮见解一旦消除，毛泽东是不会被遗忘的。

因此，我向读者推荐赵教授的这本书。即使有不尽完美之处，但该书确实表达了毛泽东诗词及毛泽东品格的优美情调。

我读过许多毛泽东诗词的外文译本，但按“信”与“雅”的标准来要求，还没有一种译本达到了完美的境界。赵教授的这本可能是最好的译本之一。像毛泽东这样一位改造中国，并将中国连同他的诗词和想象带进崭新世界的一个人物，在大学图书馆的读者中，如果谁要想了解他的为人、他的诗词和理想，赵教授的译本是会得到他们的垂青的。

(雷普文译)

## THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The appearance of this English translation of the late Chairman Mao Zedong's poems is due to friendly appeals from the editors of the Hunan People's Publishing House, who asked me to do the translation in English metrical forms. My heartfelt thanks to them for their kind encouragement!

The manuscript has been submitted to several colleagues of mine at Hunan Teachers' College, for whose kind help I wish to express my gratitude. Here I must mention Miss Judith Shapiro, who went over the manuscript for revision from the angle of language, and made helpful comments on it, and Professors Liu Zhongde, Zhang Wenting, and Zhou Dingzhi, all of whom read the manuscript and made some sound criticisms and valuable suggestions.

My thanks are also due to Professor Ge Chuangui of Fudan University (Shanghai) for his valuable comments on my translation. I am under a great obligation to Pro-

fessor Wu Xianglin of Nanjing University and Professor Xu Yuanchong of Luoyang Foreign Languages Institute, who gave me their respective English versions, which were of great scholarly help to me. Again, no-one familiar with the English version of Chairman Mao's poems published by the Foreign Languages Press (Beijing) in 1976 need be told of its influence upon my translation as regards a number of terms and expressions, despite my criticisms of it in my articles published in the quarterly *Foreign Languages Teaching and Research* (1st issue, 1978; 2nd issue, 1979).

However, the responsibility for the shortcomings in my translation rests upon me, but not upon the editors, colleagues or friends mentioned above.

To the potential readers I hope I may be allowed to say something about the principles I followed in translating the poems:

1. To keep the allusions to Chinese classical literature for literary association, but not at the expense of the artistic flavour and emotional power we expect of poetry. The method of free translation is resorted to when a literal translation of some literary allusions might sound unintelligible or unnatural to the English-speaking world.

2. To add notes to the poems to help the readers better



understand and appreciate the content connected with the historical, geographical, social or revolutionary background. In the notes there are also mentioned the various styles in which the original poems are written.

3. To confine the number of feet in each line to not more than six so as to keep in the translation the concentration and forcefulness of the original. The meter is basically iambic except for the ~~tristich~~ *Reply to Mr. Liu Yazi*, which is made trochaic. Iambic tetrameter, pentameter or hexameter seems to be better suited to the pithy and forceful style of most of Chairman Mao's poems than other metrical patterns.

4. To use the language of common speech to retain the rich flavour of modern life in the translation. Written as they are in Chinese classical forms, the original poems reflect the modern revolutionary trend with the Chinese revolution as the social and historical background. The poems would sound archaic or unnatural if the poetic diction of the Victorians was indiscriminately used in the English version. Georg Morris Brandes, Danish Jewish critic of literature (1842—1927) rightly said, "Language is like an instrument that requires to be tuned occasionally. A few times in the course of a century the literary language of a country needs to be tuned afresh; for as no generation can

be satisfied to think the thoughts of the preceding one, so no group of men in the world of letters can use the language of the school that went before them." That is why I have done the translation in "a style like speech", as advocated by the Irish poet William B. Yeats, though I insist on translating Chinese metrical poems in English metrical style.

5. To base my translation on my comprehension of the original after some years of my collateral study of the poet's literary language and the artistic connotations of some literary allusions in his poems. As the poet wrote in Chinese classical forms, which are noted for succinctness in wording, different people may have a different understanding of various words, phrases or classical allusions in the original. And this inevitably results in the difference of my translation from the other English versions in many respects. However, I must hasten to add that my translation has been done, not to compete with the other versions (that would be a presumptuous attempt) ~~but~~, in a way, to supplement them.

Translation is, so to speak, re-creation, ~~and this~~ is especially true of the translation of poetry. ~~But in presenting,~~ my translation to the reading public, I lay no claim to its being a perfect re-creation. The seventeenth-century Eng-

lish poet Sir John Denham said, "Poesy is of so subtle a spirit, that in the pouring out of one language into another it will evaporate." I have taken the remark as a warning, if not as a general rule. But the proof of how much poetic flavour of Chairman mao's Chinese poems is preserved from evaporation in my English translation lies in the tasting of the readers, to whom I appeal not to withhold the comments and criticisms which they are expected to make.

**Zhao Zhentao**

## **THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE TO THE BILINGUAL EDITION**

The English rendition of this book was first published by the Hunan People's Publishing House in 1980. Since then its readers in China and abroad have kindly offered many constructive comments. Now after quite a few alterations it has been reprinted in a bilingual edition by the Hunan Normal University Press.

My sincere thanks are due to the world-famous writer Ms. Han Suyin, who has kindly added a foreword to the bilingual edition, and to Professor Lei Puwen, who has rendered it into Chinese at my request. I am also very grateful to professor Yan Xiong, editor-in-chief of the Hunan Normal University Press, for making possible the appearance of this edition.

**Zhao Zhentao**  
**Hunan Normal University**  
**Changsha, China**  
**April 1991**

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## 贺新郎

1923 年

挥手从兹去。  
更那堪凄然相向，  
苦情重诉。  
眼角眉梢都似恨，  
热泪欲零还住。  
知误会前番书语。  
过眼滔滔云共雾，  
算人间知己吾和汝。  
人有病，  
天知否？

今朝霜重东门路，  
照横塘半天残月，  
凄清如许。  
汽笛一声肠已断，  
从此天涯孤旅。  
凭割断愁丝恨缕。