

MAO
TSETUNG
POEMS

MAO TSETUNG POEMS

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS
PEKING 1976

First Edition 1976

Printed in the People's Republic of China

CONTENTS

CHANGSHA	I
YELLOW CRANE TOWER	3
CHINGKANGSHAN	4
THE WARLORDS CLASH	5
THE DOUBLE NINTH	6
NEW YEAR'S DAY	7
ON THE KUANGCHANG ROAD	8
MARCH FROM TINGCHOW TO CHANGSHA	9
AGAINST THE FIRST "ENCIRCLEMENT" CAMPAIGN	10
AGAINST THE SECOND "ENCIRCLEMENT" CAMPAIGN	13
TAPOTI	14
HUICHANG	15
LOUSHAN PASS	16
THREE SHORT POEMS	17
THE LONG MARCH	19
KUNLUN	20
MOUNT LIUPAN	22
SNOW	23

THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY CAPTURES NANKING	25
REPLY TO MR. LIU YA-TZU	26
REPLY TO MR. LIU YA-TZU	28
PEITAIHO	30
SWIMMING	31
REPLY TO LI SHU-YI	33
FAREWELL TO THE GOD OF PLAGUE	34
SHAOSHAN REVISITED	36
ASCENT OF LUSHAN	37
MILITIA WOMEN INSCRIPTION ON A PHOTOGRAPH	38
REPLY TO A FRIEND	39
THE FAIRY CAVE INSCRIPTION ON A PICTURE TAKEN BY COMRADE LI CHIN	40
REPLY TO COMRADE KUO MO-JO	41
ODE TO THE PLUM BLOSSOM	43
WINTER CLOUDS	45
REPLY TO COMRADE KUO MO-JO	46
REASCENDING CHINGKANGSHAN	49
TWO BIRDS: A DIALOGUE	51
NOTE ON THE VERSE FORM	53

CHANGSHA

— to the tune of *Chin Yuan Chun*

1925

Alone I stand in the autumn cold
On the tip of Orange Island,
The Hsiang flowing northward;
I see a thousand hills crimsoned through
By their serried woods deep-dyed,
And a hundred barges vying
Over crystal blue waters.
Eagles cleave the air,
Fish glide in the limpid deep;
Under freezing skies a million creatures contend in
freedom.
Brooding over this immensity,
I ask, on this boundless land
Who rules over man's destiny?

I was here with a throng of companions,
Vivid yet those crowded months and years.

Young we were, schoolmates,
At life's full flowering;
Filled with student enthusiasm
Boldly we cast all restraints aside.
Pointing to our mountains and rivers,
Setting people afire with our words,
We counted the mighty no more than muck.
Remember still
How, venturing midstream, we struck the waters
And waves stayed the speeding boats?

YELLOW CRANE TOWER

—to the tune of *Pu Sa Man*

Spring 1927

Wide, wide flow the nine streams through the land,
Dark, dark threads the line from south to north.
Blurred in the thick haze of the misty rain
Tortoise and Snake hold the great river locked.

The yellow crane is gone, who knows whither?
Only this tower remains a haunt for visitors.
I pledge my wine to the surging torrent,
The tide of my heart swells with the waves.

CHINGKANGSHAN

— to the tune of *Hsi Chiang Yueh*

Autumn 1928

Below the hills fly our flags and banners,
Above the hilltops sound our bugles and drums.
The foe encircles us thousands strong,
Steadfastly we stand our ground.

Already our defence is iron-clad,
Now our wills unite like a fortress.
From Huangyangchieh roars the thunder of guns,
Word comes the enemy has fled into the night.

THE WARLORDS CLASH

— to the tune of *Ching Ping Yueh*

Autumn 1929

Sudden veer of wind and rain
Showering misery through the land,
The warlords are clashing anew —
Yet another Golden Millet Dream.

Red banners leap over the Ting River
Straight to Lungyen and Shanghang.
We have reclaimed part of the golden bowl
And land is being shared out with a will.

THE DOUBLE NINTH

— to the tune of *Tsai Sang Tzu*

October 1929

Man ages all too easily, not Nature:
Year by year the Double Ninth returns.
On this Double Ninth,
The yellow blooms on the battlefield smell sweeter.

Each year the autumn wind blows fierce,
Unlike spring's splendour,
Yet surpassing spring's splendour,
See the endless expanse of frosty sky and water.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

— to the tune of *Ju Meng Ling*

January 1930

Ninghua, Chingliu, Kueihua —

What narrow paths, deep woods and slippery moss!

Whither are we bound today?

Straight to the foot of Wuyi Mountain.

To the mountain, the foot of the mountain,

Red flags stream in the wind in a blaze of glory.

ON THE KUANGCHANG ROAD

— to the tune of *Chien Tzu Mu Lan Hua*

February 1930

The whole wide world is white,
Through the snow eagerly we press on.
Craggs loom above our heads,
We cross the great pass, red flags waving in the wind.

Where are we bound?
To the snow-swept River Kan.
Yesterday the order was given,
One hundred thousand workers and peasants march
on Kian.

MARCH FROM TINGCHOW TO CHANGSHA

— to the tune of *Tieb Lien Hua*

July 1930

In June Heaven's armies chastise the corrupt and
evil,

Seeking to bind roc and whale with a league-long
cord.

Red glows the far side of the Kan,

Thanks to our wing under Huang Kung-lueh.

A million workers and peasants rise up,

Sweeping Kiangsi straight towards Hunan and
Hupeh.

To the *Internationale's* stirring strains

A wild whirlwind swoops from the sky.

AGAINST THE FIRST "ENCIRCLEMENT" CAMPAIGN

— to the tune of *Yu Chia Ao*

Spring 1931

Forests blaze red beneath the frosty sky,
The wrath of Heaven's armies soars to the clouds.
Mist veils Lungkang, its thousand peaks blurred.
All cry out in unison:
Our van has taken Chang Hui-tsan!

The enemy returns to Kiangsi two hundred thousand
strong,
Fumes billowing in the wind in mid-sky.
Workers and peasants are awakened in their millions
To fight as one man,
Under the riot of red flags round the foot of Puchou!*

*AUTHOR'S NOTE:

The story of Kungkung butting against Mount Puchou:

The chapter "On Astronomy" in *Huai Nan Tzu* says: "In ancient times Kungkung and Chuanhsu fought each other for the throne. In a fit of rage Kungkung butted against Mount Puchou, breaking the pillars of heaven and snapping the ties of the earth. Then the sky shifted towards the north-west, tilting the sun, moon and stars; the earth sank in the southeast so that dust and water gathered there."

"The Chronicle of Chou" in *Kuo Yu* says: "In ancient times Kungkung, departing from the right way, gave himself up to pleasure and unbridled licence. He tried to stem the hundred streams, destroy hills and silt up low places, and thus brought disasters to the whole earth. Heaven did not give its blessing, nor the people their help. Calamities and troubles broke out and Kungkung perished." The ancient commentator Wei Chao quotes from the Palace Officer Chia, *i.e.*, Chia Kuei of the Later Han Dynasty: "Kungkung was a lord of the Chiang clan, a descendant of the Fiery Emperor. When Emperor Chuanhsu's power was on the decline, Kungkung attacked other vassal lords and fought Kaohsin for the throne."

In "The Annals of the Three Emperors", Szuma Chen's addenda to Szuma Chien's *Historical Records*, it is said: "Towards the end of her [Nuwa's] reign, a lord named Kungkung became powerful through his resourcefulness and the severe discipline he enforced. He did not rule like a king but like an autocrat. Representing the element of water, he wanted to succeed Nuwa who represented the element of wood. He

fought Chuyung and was defeated. In a fit of rage he knocked his head against Mount Puchou, so that the pillars of heaven were broken and the ties of the earth torn."

These are the different versions of the legend. I prefer the version in *Huai Nan Tzu*, which presents Kungkung as a victorious hero. Please note: "In a fit of rage Kungkung butted against Mount Puchou, breaking the pillars of heaven and snapping the ties of the earth. Then the sky shifted towards the northwest, tilting the sun, moon and stars; the earth sank in the southeast so that dust and water gathered there." Did Kungkung perish in the attempt? *Huai Nan Tzu* is silent on this question. We may take it that he did not, but came out victorious.