

Poems of  
Mao Tse-tung  
Utilized by the Labor Camp Orchestra  
(Selection assembled in September 2006)

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New Year's day

Where are we going?  
The road is narrow. Deep in the forest the moss is slippery  
as we leave Ninghua, Ching, and Kweihua behind.  
We head for the foot of the tea slope of Wuyi.  
Below the mountain below the mountain,  
wind blows our banners like a painting.

January 1930

- - -

Reply To Comrade Guo Moruo

On this tiny globe  
A few flies dash themselves against the wall,  
Humming without cease,  
Sometimes shrilling,  
Sometimes moaning.  
Ants on the locust tree assume of great-nation swagger  
And mayflies lightly plot to topple the giant tree.  
The west wind scatters leaves over Chang'an,  
And the arrows are flying, twanging.

So many deeds cry out to be done,  
And always urgently;  
The world rolls on,  
Time presses.  
Ten thousand years are too long,  
Seize the day, seize the hour!  
The Four Seas are rising, clouds and waters raging,  
The Five Continents are rocking, wind and thunder roaring.  
Our force is irresistible,  
Away with all pests!

November 1961

- - -

Three Songs

1  
Mountain.  
I whip my quick horse and don't dismount  
And look back in wonder.  
The sky is three feet away.

2  
Mountain.  
The sea collapses and the river boils.  
Innumerable horses race  
Insanely into the peak of battle.

3

Mountain.  
Peaks pierce the green sky, unblunted.  
The sky would fall  
But for the columns of mountains.

1934-1935

- - -

Militia Women

Early rays of sun illuminate the parade grounds  
and these handsome girls heroic in the wind,  
with rifles five feet long.  
Daughters of China with a marvelous will,  
you prefer hardy uniforms to colorful silk.

February 1961

- - -

Winter Clouds

Winter clouds snow-laden, cotton fluff flying,  
None or few the unfallen flowers.  
Chill waves sweep through steep skies,  
Yet earth's gentle breath grows warm.  
Only heroes can quell tigers and leopards  
And wild bears never daunt the brave.  
Plum blossoms welcome the whirling snow;  
Small wonder flies freeze and perish.

December 1962

- - -

The Fairy Cave  
(Inscription on a picture taken by Comrade Li Jin)

Amid the growing shades of dusk stand sturdy pines,  
Riotous clouds sweep past, swift and tranquil.  
Nature has excelled herself in the Fairy Cave,  
On perilous peaks dwells beauty in her infinite variety.

September 1961

- - -

Jinggangshan

Low on the mountain our flags and banners  
and on the peak an echo of bugles and drums.  
Around us a thousand circles of enemy armies  
yet we are rock.

No one cracks through our forest of walls,  
through our fortress of wills joined as one.

From the front lines at Huangyang the big guns roar  
saying the enemy army fled in the night.

Fall 1928

- - -

Mount Liupan

The sky is high, the clouds are pale,  
We watch the wild geese vanish southward.  
If we fail to reach the Great Wall we are not men,  
We who have already measured twenty thousand li.

High on the crest of Mount Liupan  
red banners wave freely in the west wind.  
Today we hold the long cord in our hands,  
When shall we bind fast the Grey Dragon?

October 1935