

Zeitschrift: Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie
Herausgeber: Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft
Band: 31 (1977)
Heft: 2

Artikel: The changing self-image of Mao Tse-tung : a study of selected poems
Autor: Chan, Wing-ming
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-146485>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 09.07.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

THE CHANGING SELF-IMAGE OF MAO TSE-TUNG :

A Study of Selected Poems

WING-MING CHAN

Many commentators of the poetry of Mao Tse-tung hold the opinion that all or most of his poems express nothing but the political ideology of a militant communist revolutionary. If there is any passion in his poems, it is always about the communist cause¹. The images of Mao one gets from these commentators are invariably one-dimensional: that of a revolutionary frenetic. This is a view that I cannot share. In this paper I shall examine some poems of Mao and try to trace through them the changing course of Mao's ambition, dreams, and self-images and to obtain some otherwise unavailable information about him as a human being.

I shall begin with his earliest published poem *Ch'angsha*². Mao writes at the conclusion of the first half of the poem:

"Bewildered at the vastness and openness of the Universe
I ask the great black earth
Who masters the rise and fall?"³

The answer comes in the optimistic conclusion of the poem⁴:

"Do you remember still?
We struck water in mid-stream
The waves we created stopped even the fastest boat."

Striking water in mid-stream is a symbol of patriotism to the Chinese people. It alludes to the story of Tsu Ti (d. 321 A.D.). Tsu Ti, a general in the Chin

¹ For an example of this opinion see: Hua-ling Nieh Engle and Paul Engle, *Poems of Mao Tse-tung* (New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., 1972), pp. 11-12. And also see: Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 315.

² *Ch'angsha* to the tune of *Chin yüan ch'un*, 1925.

³ All translations in this paper, unless otherwise specified, are mine.

⁴ Jerome Ch'en states that the poem expresses a melancholy rare in Mao's verses and is touched with a tinge of sorrow (Ch'en, p. 321). His belief is based on what I consider a misinterpretation of the last lines of the poem. Ch'en translates those lines as follows: "Do you remember / How in mid-stream / Our boat struck currents / And were slowed down by torrents?" (*Ibid.*). If one reads the poem carefully and understands the meaning of the allusion "striking water in mid-stream", one will see that "the boat slowed down" was not theirs and the mood of the poem is not sorrowful.

Dynasty (265–420 A.D.), led his troops across the Yangtze river to recapture the lost territory in the north. He struck the water with his oar in mid-stream and vowed: "If I fail to regain the lost territory, let my trip be like this river, i.e. a river of no return."⁵ Since then, striking water in mid-stream has taken on a new meaning as a symbol of patriotism to the Chinese people. Understanding the meaning of this allusion, we are now able to understand better the meaning of these concluding lines of *Ch'angsha*. Mao is appealing to his friends, saying that with youthful ideal and patriotism (striking water), they, together as comrades, could stop foreign aggression and could accomplish for China total freedom and self-determination. To win self-determination and the ability to control internally the rise and fall of China is clearly Mao's dream in *Ch'angsha*.

As early as in this poem, Mao has already thought of himself as a leader, though he has yet to hold any substantial leading position in the party. In the first line of the second half of *Ch'angsha* Mao writes: "I used to bring (*hsi lai*) hundreds of friends here." The hundreds of friends are brought there by him. He thinks of himself as a *primus inter pares*. But he is keenly aware that the fulfillment of his dream to win self-determination for China requires the help of others as comrades and cannot possibly be accomplished all alone by himself.

In a later poem, *K'unlun*⁶, Mao's dream becomes greater and his ambition is of a higher order compared to that in *Ch'angsha*. *K'unlun* closes with these lines:

"A peaceful world
Sharing together this same heat and cold."

This is a dream of a peaceful world, a world in which all nations exist peacefully and equally, sharing the problems of each other.

However there is a striking difference between this poem and *Ch'angsha*. Unlike in the earlier poem, the other and comradeship are not mentioned in *K'unlun*. Instead the poet expresses a belief that he alone would accomplish the task. He says:

"Now I say to K'unlun
don't rise too high
don't have that much snow.
I wish to lean against the sky,
and to draw a sword
and have you cut into three pieces."

⁵ See *Chin shu*, Biography of Tsu Ti.

⁶ *K'unlun* to the tune of *Nien nu chiao*, 1935.

It is the poet himself who would solve the problems for China and would bring about a peaceful world. The poet is not merely a *primus inter pares*, he now becomes the sole hero and saviour. The hundred friends whom the poet appeals to in *Ch'angsha* are no longer mentioned here, let alone invoked as comrades. There is a sort of cockiness prevailing in the poem; only the fairy tale atmosphere created in the poem manages to mask it and to give it a charm of childlike innocence.

In his best known and according to many also his best written poem, *Snow*⁷, written not much later than *K'unlun*, Mao expresses his ideal of a leader through his criticism of five of China's past emperors: the first emperor of Ch'in, Emperor Wu of Han, T'ai-tsung of T'ang, T'ai-tsu of Sung and Genghis Khan of Yüan. The ideal expressed is very different from the youthful ideal in *Ch'angsha* and from a communistic point of view the ideal is dangerously atavistic.

Mao finds the five emperors of the past fell short of his ideal and he expresses his belief that the leaders of to-day, undoubtedly he himself included, will come closer to that ideal. He ends the poem with these lines:

"All are past and gone
Among ideal heroes⁸
Look for the best to-day."⁹

⁷ *Hsüeh* to the tune of *Chin yüan ch'un*, 1936. Jerome Ch'en argues that the poem's "tenor and images do not seem to support such a dating" (Ch'en, p. 341) and puts the date of the poem at the winter of 1944–45. I do not see why Mao or the editors of his poems have to lie about the date and I accept the official date as correct.

For an example of the opinion that this is the best known and best written of Mao's poems see: Ch'en, p. 341. And also see: N. G. D. Malmqvist, *The poetry of Chairman Mao*, in: *Saturday Review*, 27 November 1971, pp. 29–30.

⁸ "Ideal hero" is the translation of the Chinese term *feng liu jen wu*. The term has no equivalent in English. Even in Chinese there are diverse opinions among scholars on its exact meaning. For a more detailed discussion of this term in English read Fung, Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1966), Chapter 20, pp. 231–240.

⁹ There are two different opinions on the interpretation of the very last line of the poem: *shu feng liu jen wu huan k'an chin chao*. Those who hold a strong view believe that it refers only to Mao himself and he is *the feng liu jen wu* of to-day. Others take a weaker position and they maintain it refers to a group of individuals possibly the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. It is, however, beyond the shadow of a doubt to either group, that Mao includes himself among the *feng liu jen wu* of to-day. The point of contention between these two interpretations is whether he believes that he is the only one or one among many. I incline towards the strong interpretation. In this paper, I however would adopt the weaker position for it is less controversial and it does not affect my major argument.

What is Mao's ideal of a leader that the five emperors fell short of? What particular qualities his ideal leader will possess that set him apart from the past leaders? Mao has not said this directly in the poem. But one can have a good guess from his criticism of the five less than ideal leaders.

Some commentators have the following to say on this issue:

"Mao expresses . . . his belief that, great as some of the earlier leaders of China may have been, they lacked a final triumphant quality which would make China great. They were powerful, but they did not bring fulfillment to Chinese life. Snow alters the landscape, the communist way will turn it red."¹⁰

In this quotation, Mr. and Mrs. Engle put forth two points: first, that Mao's criticism of the past leaders is that they did not have the quality and willingness to make China great and to bring fulfillment to Chinese life; second, that the ideal heroes of to-day have the quality and willingness to make China better by turning China red, turning China communistic.

This interpretation, however, is unfounded. First of all, the interpretation that Mao in this poem claims that China would be made better by being turned communistic rests entirely on the last line of the first half of the poem: *hsü ch'ing jih, k'an hung chuang su kuo fen wai yao jao*. The lines are translated by the Engles as follows:

"Some fine day you will see the land dressed in red, wrapped with white, flirting, enchanting."¹¹

This is interpreted by the translators as Mao's wish to dress China in red — to bring the communist way of life to China.

The English word "red" is a translation of the Chinese word *hung* in the term *hung chuang*. While the word *hung* does mean red, the term *hung chuang* in its ordinary connotation does not refer to the colour red at all nor does it refer to any particular red object. The term literally means red dress or toilet and it is usually used to refer to make-up worn by girls or simply to refer to a beautiful girl. In either of its common usages the meaning of the word *hung*, red, is inoperative and the term is not used in association with anything red.¹²

¹⁰ Engles, p. 77.

¹¹ Engles, p. 78.

¹² There are virtually countless examples of how this term *hung chuang* is used in poetry that would support what I say. In what follows I shall cite a few of them.

In the ballad *Mu-lan tzu* written probably in the sixth century, the term appears in the line *tang hu li hung chuang* (putting on make-up by the window) and it clearly means make-up used by girls.

In the ballad *Yüan-yüan ch'u* written by Wang Shih-ching (1634–1711 A.D.), the term means a beautiful woman in the line *i tai hung chuang chao han ch'ing* (This most beautiful woman of her generation will shine through history).

Of course we cannot rule out the possibility that a poet might stress the unusual meaning of a term. But should this be the case, there must be strong evidence within the poem itself to show that the poet intends the term to be thus used and should be thus interpreted. A more detailed study of the poem will show that no such evidence could be found. To interpret these lines as Mao's wish to make China better by bringing communism to China, on the basis of just this one word *hung* which is part of a two character term *hung chuang* that usually means make-up or a beautiful girl, is reading, to say the least, much too much into the lines.¹³ The lines are politically innocent. They simply mean:

"Viewed on a fine day,
this beauty (*hung chuang*) dressed in white
is extraordinarily enchanting."

Interpreted this way, these lines naturally lead to the opening line of the second half of the poem:

"Such is the beauty of the country
that countless heroes have tried to woo."

Further there is no evidence in the poem to support the interpretation that Mao finds the five leaders fell short of the ideal because they lacked the quality and willingness to bring fulfillment to China and her people. There is not one word in the poem about a plan for China and the Chinese people and there is nothing in his criticism of the five leaders that concerns their inability to make China great or their lack of compassion towards the people they ruled. Mao's criticism is that none of them is sufficiently refined and cultured.

A traditional Chinese concept of an ideal leader is one that has both *wen ts'ai* and *wu lueh* — a person who is both culturally refined and militarily brilliant. Mao's criticism of the five is that they were not well cultured. The first emperor of Ch'in and Emperor Wu of Han were, according to Mao, a little short in erudition, *lueh shu wen ts'ai*. The founding emperors of T'ang

The only other occurrence of the term in Mao's poems can be found in the last line of his poem *Militia Woman: Inscriptions On A Photograph: Wei nü min ping ti chao*. The line reads: *pu ai hung chuang ai wu chuang* and the term clearly means make-up. The line means: "They care only for military equipments and not make-up."

¹³ The Engles are not the only persons that make such a misinterpretation. For example: Malmqvist (*Saturday Review*, p. 30) and Eugene Eoyang (Wu-chi Liu and Irving Yucheng Lo, *Sunflower Splendor*, [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975], p. 520) both give undue stress to the word *hung* in their translations of this poem.

and Sung were inferior in refinement, *shao hsün feng sao*¹⁴. Genghis Khan knew almost nothing except martial art. To sum up the criticism: all five had only *wu lüeh* but lacked *wen ts'ai*. By implication Mao's ideal heroes have both *wen ts'ai* and *wu lüeh*. They are both refined gentlemen and brilliant soldiers.

With the stress on the natural beauty of the Chinese landscape in the first half of the poem and without a word about the service to the country and its people, the line of reasoning in *Snow* is clear. Lacking *wen ts'ai*, these five emperors of the past did not quite deserve this beauty, China. Only an ideal hero with both *wen ts'ai* and *wu lüeh* deserves her. China and the Chinese people are thus viewed by Mao in this poem as the spoils for the strong and a prize for the excellent. They are like gold medals that rightfully belong to the best athletes. They belong to the ideal hero as a reward for his excellence. Such a concept of a leader and of his relationship to the country he leads, is neither communistic nor "people oriented". It is a traditional Chinese concept of a leader and from a communistic point of view the concept smacks of the backward thinking of a feudal lord.

In *Snow*, Mao has unwittingly revealed his concept of an ideal leader which is not communistic, progressive, revolutionary or "people oriented". It is rather a very traditional Chinese concept of a ruler that the country and the people are properties which belong to the person who excels in both *wen ts'ai* and *wu lüeh*. This concept places its emphasis on the excellency of some personal traits of the leader rather than on his dedication and service to the country and the people. Such an ideal of a leader is quite remote from the poet's youthful ideal and dreams.

But somehow Mao changes and mellows. In *Ode To The Plum Blossom: To Use Lu Yu's Idea*¹⁵ in a Reversed Manner¹⁶, he reveals his mellowed view of himself and his ideal which is very different from that of *Snow*. The difference is as interesting and revealing as that between *Snow* and his earlier works.

Most commentators agree that the plum blossom in the poem is a metaphor used to refer to the poet himself. Some maintain, however, that it refers to China¹⁷.

¹⁴ The term *feng sao* literally means poetry or poetic skill. Mao was quite proud of his poetic skill. It seems that in his comment on the past rulers and in his discussion of ideal heroes, consciously or not he thought of himself and compared himself to them. This is one of the reasons why I incline toward the stronger position in the interpretation of the last line of the poem *Snow*. (See also note 9).

¹⁵ Lu Yu, a Sung poet (1125–1210 A.D.)

¹⁶ *Yung mei: tu Lu Yu tzu fan ch'i yi er yung chih* to the tune of *Pu suan tzu*, 1961. For an English translation of Lu's poem see Engles, p. 118.

¹⁷ For this opinion see Engles, p. 118.

The subtitle of the poem gives us a clue to settle this disagreement in favour of the majority view. By his own admission, Mao's poem is an imitation of the poem of the same tune and title by Lu Yu. However, Mao says that he uses Lu's idea in a reversed manner. What is the idea borrowed from Lu and in what way is it used reversely?

Lu in his poem clearly uses the metaphor of the plum blossom to refer to himself and this is the idea that Mao borrows. Should Mao use the metaphor to refer to China, he cannot claim to have used the idea of Lu at all, not even to have used it reversely. To use the plum blossom to refer to a nation is not the reverse of using it to refer to a person. They are *different* usages of the metaphor: neither can be said to be the reverse of the other.

What then has been reversed by Mao? In the poem by Lu, the poet stresses the sad elements of the plum blossom and dwells on the negative side of things — the loneliness of the flower and its being neglected, etc. Mao however dwells on the bright side of things in his poem — that the flower is the first to bloom and the good times that spring will bring, etc. Lu's poem is pessimistic and filled with self-pity and the bitterness of not gaining any attention. Reversely, Mao's poem is sunny and full of joy.

In *Ode To The Plum Blossom* Mao no longer pictures himself as a saviour of China, nor does he express the wish to be a traditional ideal leader. He views himself as merely the first messenger who pronounces to the Chinese people the coming of spring after a long and bitter winter that has covered the cliff with a thousand feet of snow. Considering himself a messenger, Mao is not claiming any credit for bringing in the good time to China. He is but one who announces or predicts its arrival. He encourages and gives hope to the people and is one of the many who enjoy the good time when it finally arrives.

In this poem, he no longer expresses the ambition of becoming a traditional ruler who excels in personal traits rather than in his service to the country as revealed in *Snow*. The cockiness that he would solve all the problems for China and the world alone as expressed in *K'unlun* is not found in this poem either. Instead once again, as in *Ch'angsha* the well-being of China is his concern and other people are not ignored. Unlike Lu he does not wish to be forgotten and ground into fragrant dust¹⁸. He wants to enjoy the good time as any other — a good time that he has eagerly, confidently awaited and a good time that has finally arrived. This poem is one written when Mao could see that his adolescent dreams had become a reality.

Mao has mellowed in the years between *Snow* and the *Ode*. What happened in those years that precipitated such a change in Mao's attitude

¹⁸ Lu's poem ends with these lines: "Withered, fallen, turned into mud, ground into dust / The fragrance still remains."

towards himself and his ambition? We do not know for sure. I would suggest that the long civil war and the human suffering that accompanied it changed him. The experience changed his view of himself and his ambition for personal glory and success. The following poem lends support to my theory.

*The Capture of Nanking By The People's Liberation Army*¹⁹ was written in 1949 on the occasion of the capture of Nanking, the then capital of the Nationalist government. The occasion signaled the victory of the Chinese Communist Party and the defeat of the Nationalist government. The last four lines (line 5 through 8) of the poem are as follows:

"All bravery left should be used to drive the enemy.
Do not sell out for fame as *pa wang*.²⁰
Should Heaven have feelings, Heaven would have grown old.
But the true course of human affairs is for constant and drastic changes.

The 5th and 6th lines of the poem consist of a warning not to sell out for fame (*ku ming*) as Hsiang Yü. The very last line reiterates the Marxist-Leninist doctrine that history continuously moves forward and nothing can or will remain unchanged.

There are two questions that need to be answered. Firstly, what is the warning against? What kind of fame is he talking about? Secondly, for whom is the warning intended?

Kuo Mo-jo believes that the warning is against softheartedness towards the enemy²¹. He argues that Hsiang Yü spared the life of Liu Pang when he could have taken it, so he could obtain the fame of being merciful and kind. A little later Hsiang Yü met his downfall at the hands of Liu. Kuo's interpretation has been widely accepted²². I am however, skeptical that the warning of selling out for fame is merely against obtaining fame for being merciful and kind.

Hsiang Yü never obtained such a fame even after he spared the life of Liu Pang at Hung-men. And one does not get the impression from reading his biography in the *Shih chi*²³ that his sparing the life of Liu Pang was motivated by a desire to obtain fame for being compassionate. There are

¹⁹ *Jen min chieh fang chün chan ling Nan-ching*, 1949.

²⁰ Hsiang Yü (232–202 B.C.), a leader of a force rebelling against the Ch'in Dynasty and the arch rival of Liu Pang, the first emperor of Han. Hsiang Yü appointed himself as *Hsi-Ch'u pa wang*, the king of western Ch'u.

²¹ Kuo Mo-jo, *Pai wan hsiung shih kuo ta Chiang: Tu Mao chu-hsi hsin fa piao ti shih tzu chih i*, *People's Daily*, 4 January 1964.

²² Kuo's interpretation is accepted by Joachim Schickel in his German translation of Mao's poem and also by the Engles. See Engles, pp. 80–83.

²³ Cf. Burton Watson, *Records of the Grand Historian*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961). Vol. 1, pp. 37–74.

other episodes in the life of Hsian Yü recorded in the *Shih chi* which are more pertinent to his becoming frantic for fame. Through those episodes we can see what kind of fame Hsiang Yü sold himself out for.

After Hsian Yü entered Hsien-yang and wiped out the force of Ch'in, he moved back east against the better judgment of his advisers that for political and military reasons he should remain in the Hsien-yang area. His reason for moving back east was that he wished to show off his newly earned glory to the people back home. He said: "Not to return to one's home territory after achieving wealth and glory is like putting on one's best clothes and walking in the dark." He put displaying his personal fame and glory above pursuing his political career.

Shortly after entering Hsien-yang, he appointed himself *Hsi-Ch'u pa wang*, king of western Ch'u. He also bestowed kingship upon many of his officers and established a feudal society resembling that of the Chou Dynasty. He was so eager to bathe in the glory of kingship that he forgot that he had not finished his job and some of his enemies were still at large.

Both episodes occurred after an occasion similar to the capture of Nanking — the capture of the enemy's capital. I believe that the warning in the poem is more a warning against selling out the revolutionary cause for personal success and glory as Hsiang Yü did after he entered Hsien-yang. The poem might well contain, as argued by Kuo, a warning against softheartedness towards the enemy for the fame of being compassionate. I would argue, however, that the warning is predominantly one against becoming frantic for personal fame and glory.

For whom is the warning intended? The warning might well be a self-warning, at least in part. Hsiang Yü was a leader. To warn not to be like him should be a warning to a leader and Mao was a leader then. As discussed above, in his earlier poems Mao had expressed his desire to be a traditional hero who excels in personal traits and gains personal glory. It is possible that he becomes aware of this unworthy desire and warns himself against it. He has to remind himself, in the last line of the poem, of the doctrine that things in this world, personal gain and glory included, do not really last. The seventh line of the poem gives us the possible reason for his change of attitude.

The seventh line of the poem is not written by Mao. He borrows and transports it intact into this poem from *The Farewell Song To Han From The Golden Brass Fairy*²⁴, a poem written by the T'ang poet Li Ho (791–817 A.D.). Li's poem has a short introduction:

²⁴ *Chin tung hsien jen tzu Han ko.*

"In the eighth month of the first year of the Ch'ing-lung period during the reign of Wei Ming-ti, the emperor ordered officers from his palace to take a cart westward to remove the statue of a fairy holding a dew-receiving dish (*ch'eng-lu-pan*)²⁵ erected by emperor Hsiao-wu of Han. It was to be relocated in the front court of his own palace. Upon removal and before being loaded into the cart, the statue shed tears. Li Ho, a T'ang prince, wrote this poem as a farewell song to Han from this golden brass fairy."

The line in question is the third to the last line of the poem. In the poem Li Ho compares, from the point of view of the statue, the present desolation with the past splendor of the Han palace. Looking back for the last time, the statue saw a deserted palace. Remembering all the glory that it had witnessed, the statue found the grief unbearable. Such a grief would be too great even for Heaven to bear. The poet laments: "Should Heaven have feelings Heaven would have aged [by such a sight]." The line is extremely powerful and effective in capturing the pathos and human tragedy that accompany the downfall of a dynasty and the change of political power.

Mao's poem is written on a similar occasion. It is written on the collapse of a dynasty and the change of government. It is likely that Mao, upon entering Nanking, was deeply touched by the pathos brought about by the long civil war and was moved by deep grief and sorrow. He showed pity towards his enemy and had to remind himself that there could be no place for mercy in the forward movement of history. But the experience might move him to rethink and to reorder his priority for personal gain and fame. While all these human sufferings were a fair price for progress and the well-being of a nation, they were much too high a price for mere personal glory.

This is my interpretation. I do not have any better explanation why Mao would transport such a line to this poem written for such an occasion.

As shown in this paper, through the study of his poems, we can see Mao not merely as a militant communist. Instead we can see him as a real person with many human concerns and emotions. We see him as a man with dreams for his country and himself; a man who shows a youthful cockiness as many other young persons who are confident with their ability; a man, revealed unwittingly in *Snow*, of atavistic ideals; a man who pities his enemy at victory; a man so deeply stirred by the pathos of civil war that he finds the grief too great to bear; and a man, in his old age, exhibiting a mellowness in his view of himself and his accomplishment that is non-militant, humble and humane. Despite the cold and militant rhetoric in his other writings and speeches and his reputation as a ruthless revolutionary leader, he emerges

²⁵ *Ch'eng-lu-pan*, a decorative plate or dish resembling a birdbath placed in a garden.

from his poetry a real person, who is sometimes brash, sometimes detestable and sometimes lovable, not an unloving, unlovable, ruthless and one-dimensional political frenetic.

Chinese Glossary

Ch'angsha	長沙
ch'eng-lu-pan	承露盤
Chin shu	晉書
Chin tung hsien jen tzu Han ko	金銅仙人解漢歌
Chin yüan ch'un	沁園春
Ching-lung	青龍
feng liu jen wu	風流人物
Hsi-Ch'u pa wang	西楚霸王
hsi lai	攜來
Hsiang Yü	項羽
Hsiao-wu	孝武
Hsien-yang	咸陽
hsü ch'ing jih,	須晴日,
k'an hung chuang su kuo	看紅妝素裹
fen wai yao jao	分外妖嬈
Hsüeh	雪
Hung-men	鴻門
i tai hung chuang chao han ch'ing	一代紅妝照汗青
Jen min chieh fang chün	人民解放軍
chan ling Nan-ching	佔領南京
ku ming	沽名
K'unlun	崑崙
Kuo Mo-jo	郭沫若
Li Ho	李賀
Liu Pang	劉邦
Lu Yu	陸游
lüeh shu wen ts'ai	略輸文采
Mu-lan tzu	木蘭詞
Nien nu chiao	念奴嬌
Pai wan hsiung shih kuo ta Chiang:	百萬雄師過大江:
Tu Mao chu-hsi hsin fa piao	讀毛主席新發表
ti shih tzu chih i	的詩詞之一
pu ai hung chuang ai wu chuang	不受紅妝愛武裝

Pu suan tzu
 shao hsün feng sao
Shih-chi
 shu feng liu jen wu
 huan k'an chin chao
 tang hu li hung chuang
 T'ai tsung
 T'ai tsu
 Tsu Ti
 Wang Shih-ching
 Wei Ming-ti
 Wei nü min ping ti chao
 Wen ts'ai wu lüeh
 Yung mei: Tu Lu Yu tzu
 fan ch'i yi er yung chih
 Yüan-yüan ch'u

卜算子
 稍避風騷
 史記
 數風流人物
 還看今朝
 當戶理紅妝
 太宗
 太祖
 祖逖
 王士禎
 魏明帝
 為女民兵題照
 文才武略
 詠梅：讀陸游詞
 反其意而用之
 圓圓曲

Appendix

The following are my own translations of Mao's poems discussed in the paper. The purpose of these translations is to provide for those readers who are not familiar with the original poems, English translations that are close to the original meaning. The translations are by no means poetic and are not meant to be.

1. *Ch'angsha*

Alone I stand in the autumn cold,
 watching the Hsiang River flow northward.
 On the tip of Orange Isle
 I see thousand hills, all red,
 forest after forest completely tinted.
 The entire river is transparently green.
 Hundred boats, each competes for the right of way.
 Eagles dart in the long sky;
 Fish glide in the shallow water.
 All creatures fight to be free under the frosty sky.
 Bewildered at the vastness and openness of the Universe
 I ask the great black earth:
 Who masters the rise and fall?
 I used to bring hundreds of friends here,

in those ambitious and exciting days.
We were then young students,
blooming and high spirited.
With the ideal and daring of intellectuals
we were quick to censure and condemn.
Pointing at the rivers and mountains,
Writing stirring articles,
Cowdunging the lords of thousand houses.
Do you remember still?
We struck water in mid-stream,
the waves we created stopped even the fastest boat.

2. *K'unlun*

Jutting into the sky, out of the earth,
rugged and unruly K'unlun.
You have witnessed all happenings of the human world.
Stirring up three million jade dragons,
you put the entire firmament into deep freeze.
Then melting in summer,
all rivers and creeks are flooded,
people are turned into fish and turtles.
All these thousands of years,
Has anyone ever commented on your good and evil?
Now, I tell K'unlun:
Don't rise too high.
Don't have that much snow.
I wish to lean against the sky
and to draw a sword
and have you cut into three pieces.
Have one for Europe,
One for America
and reserve one for the East.
A peaceful world
Sharing together this same heat and cold.

3. *Snow*

Landscape of the north.
Thousand miles sealed with ice.
Ten thousand miles of whirling snow.
The Great Wall, within and without,
Only the vastness remains.
The great river, upstream and down-stream,
suddenly loses its pouring.
Mountains like dancing silver snakes
Plateaus resemble galloping wax elephants,

reaching out to match the height of Heaven.
Viewed on a fine day
this beauty, dressed in white
is extraordinarily enchanting.

Such is the beauty of the country
that countless heroes have tried to woo.
Pity Ch'in Wang and Han Wu,
they were a little short on erudition;
Pity T'ang Tsung and Sung Tsu
They lacked elegance and charm.
That famous spoiled child of Heaven – Genghis Khan,
only knew to stretch a bow shooting eagles.
All are past and gone.
Among ideal heroes
Look for the best to-day.

4. *The Capture of Nanking by the People's Liberation Army*

Over Mount Chung comes rain, comes wind.
A mighty army of a million has crossed the great river.
The crouching tiger and the curling dragon are better now than ever.
With heroic deed and courage, Heaven and Earth have been turned around.
All bravery left should be used to drive the enemy.
Do not sell out for fame as *pa wang*.
Should Heaven have feelings, Heaven would have grown old.
But the true course of human affairs is for constant and drastic changes.

5. *Ode To The Plum Blossom: To Use Lu Yu's Idea in a Reversed Manner*

Wind and rain sent spring home.
Whirling snow welcomes it back.
The thousand foot cliffs are ice-covered,
Still there is one pretty flowering twig.

Pretty, but no intention to compete for spring.
It merely announces spring's coming.
When all mountain flowers are in full glory,
Amid them she will be smiling.