

Farewell to the God of Plague

MARCH 21, 2020

STRUGGLESSESSIONS



Farewell to the God of Plague

Poem by Mao Zedong

Brief note by editors: Mao wrote this poem after not being able to fall asleep, excited after hearing snail fever had been wiped out in Yukiang County. Centuries of feudal exploitation and imperialist domination, compounded by the spread of epidemics and disease, were in the course of a few years wiped out by Communist revolutionaries who had been put to the test and struggled with their fear. We must not abandon the need for revolution in this time of imperialism's general crisis, to pause and act that retreating from politics is necessary "for the time being." Cast away illusions, and prepare for struggle!

I

So many green streams and blue hills, but to what avail?
This tiny creature left even Hua To powerless!
Hundreds of villages choked with weeds, men wasted away;
Thousands of homes deserted, ghosts chanted mournfully.
Motionless, by earth I travel eighty thousand li a day,
Surveying the sky I see a myriad Milky Ways from afar.
Should the Cowherd ask tidings of the God of Plague,
Say the same griefs flow down the stream of time.

II

The spring wind blows amid profuse willow wands,
Six hundred million in this land all equal Yao and Shun.
Crimson rain swirls in waves under our will,
Green mountains turn to bridges at our wish.
Gleaming mattocks fall on the Five Ridges heaven-high;
Mighty arms move to rock the earth round the Triple River.

We ask the God of Plague: “Where are you bound?”
Paper barges aflame and candle-light illuminate the sky.

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