

**Document 12.10: “The People’s Liberation Army Captures Nanjing,” a poem by Mao Zedong, 1949**

*Mao was an accomplished poet who wrote in a traditional style that shows influences from Tang dynasty poets. In April 1949, the People’s Liberation Army captured Nanjing, the capital of China under the Guomindang government. Mao wrote the poem to mark this momentous event.*

Over Zhongshan<sup>1</sup> swept a storm, headlong,  
Our mighty army, a million strong, has crossed the Great River<sup>2</sup>.  
The City, a tiger crouching, a dragon curling, outshines its ancient glories<sup>3</sup>;  
In heroic triumph heaven and earth have been overturned.  
With power and to spare we must pursue the tottering foe  
And not ape Xiang Yu the conqueror seeking idle fame.  
Were Nature sentient, she too would pass from youth to age,  
But Man’s world is mutable, seas become mulberry fields.

Source: *Mao Zedong Poems*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1998. 49.

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<sup>1</sup> Zhongshan is in Guangdong Province.

<sup>2</sup> Yangzi River

<sup>3</sup> Nanjing served as the capital of China during the 12<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> centuries, and again for a period in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.