Bei Dao is Zhao ZhenKai’s pen name,he was born in Beijing in 1949. He was considered one of the most important modern poets(also writer) of China. in 1969 - 1980, he was a building worker. And he began to write poem in 1970. his pen name was created by his friend Mengke. Menke thought BeiDao was from southern region of china, but lived in north;and there were many imagery of sea and island in his poem. so mengke suggest him use beidao which means ‘northern island’ in Chinese as his pen name. He was leading a movement called misty poets in 1970-1980.

From 1987, Beidao went to British and studied at university as a visiting scholar. As many other poets, Bei Dao had many unique opinion and thought, which against the Chinese government in that time. Some people thought his poem motivated a political turmoil. He was not allowed to back in his country and began his drifting life. from 1989 to 2007, he had traveled in many country, and had been teaching in several university.

He wrote this poem when he was exiled.

Black Map

BY BEI DAO

TRANSLATED BY ELIOT WEINBERGER

in the end, cold crows piece together

the night: a black map

I've come home—the way back

longer than the wrong road

long as a life

bring the heart of winter

when spring water and horse pills

become the words of night

when memory barks

a rainbow haunts the black market

my father's life-spark small as a pea

I am his echo

turning the corner of encounters

a former lover hides in a wind

swirling with letters

Beijing, let me

toast your lamplights

let my white hair lead

the way through the black map

as though a storm were taking you to fly

I wait in line until the small window

shuts: O the bright moon

I go home—reunions

are one less

fewer than goodbyes

In 2006 he was permitted to move back to China, he lived in hongkong, and got together again with his family.

寒鸦终于拼凑成  
夜：黑色地图  
我回来了——归程  
总是比迷途长  
长于一生  
  
带上冬天的心  
当泉水和蜜制药丸  
成了夜的话语  
当记忆狂吠  
彩虹在黑市出没  
  
父亲生命之火如豆  
我是他的回声  
为赴约转过街角  
旧日情人隐身风中  
和信一起旋转  
  
北京，让我  
跟你所有灯光干杯  
让我的白发领路  
穿过黑色地图  
如风暴领你起飞  
  
我排队排到那小窗  
关上：哦明月  
我回来了——重逢  
总是比告别少  
只少一次