



I Myself Am a Woman: Selected Writings of Ding Ling

By Ling Ding, Tani E. Barlow, Gary J. Bjorge

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A comprehensive collection of writings by the revolutionary writer, feminist, and literary dissident Ding Ling (1904-85), one of the most colorful and important Chinese women writers of the twentieth century.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This meticulously documented collection, introducing the feminist Chinese author Ding Ling (1904-1985), is an important addition to our store of Chinese literature in translation, although the 11 stories and two essays vary in quality. The least memorable are at heart moral tracts, paeans to Communist ideals. Early efforts, such as "Miss Sophia's Diary," telling of the obsessive love of a tubercular woman for a Chinese emigre, also owe a debt to European literature, particularly Flaubert. Later stories reaffirm the author's commitment to literature as a form of "moral instruction": "New Faith" concerns the brutal effects of Japanese occupation of China; "Du Wanxiang" describes the life of a peasant woman who is the epitome of a good Communist. Still, Ling's shrewd observations of the war between the sexes--coupled with her dramatic flair--will reward contemporary Western readers. Links between Ling's life and art are well traced in editor Barlow's lengthy biographical introduction.

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From Library Journal

The May 4th (1919) movement produced many of China's modern writers, of whom Ding Ling (1904-86) is one of the most important and influential. These 13 writings, comprised of journal entries, short stories, parts of long works, and essays, all written from 1927 to 1978, are enhanced by a long introduction, prefaces, and helpful notes. "Miss Sophia's Diary," an early work, shows the influence of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, while later works, especially "Du Wanxiang," strongly advocate the Communist line. From the beginning to the end of her long career, however, Ding Ling was always a feminist. Recommended.

- *Kitty Chen Dean, Nassau Coll., Garden City N.Y.*

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Review

I Myself Am A Woman represents the first American publication of selected writings by the noted Chinese author Ding Ling. Born in 1904, Ding Ling wrote all through her adult life until her death in 1985 at the age of eighty-one. The daughter of a once-wealthy family, she joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1932. At various times during her life, she was kidnapped and imprisoned by the Nationalists, served as a Party bureaucrat, and lived in exile during the Cultural Revolution; but she emerged to travel and meet with Western writers before her death. Ding Ling probably was the most acclaimed woman writer in China in this century. Her early pieces were notable for their emphasis on women and emotion, especially two of the works included here, "Miss Sophia's Diary" and "A Woman and a Man." Although she was considered a feminist in China, it's necessary--especially for Western readers--to view her feminism within the context of Chinese culture and politics. It is difficult to reconcile any type of feminism with Socialism, and much of Ding Ling's work illustrates her awareness of this problem, in particular, her famous essay on women and the Communist Party, "Thoughts on March 8." The importance of politics to women's liberation cannot be denied, and Ding Ling's writing addresses this issue in all its complexity. Due partly to the historical significance and esoteric nature of her work, this collection probably will be best appreciated by readers with a strong interest in women's studies or Chinese literature. -- *From Independent Publisher*

Users Review

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