



Partial excerpt of English translation of Ba Jin's dedication to Emma Goldman

Only you know, when I was fifteen years old, you woke me up and I escaped disaster at the last moment. Then in 1927, in Boston, when two innocent workers were taken to the electric chair by law and the voice of the working class was suffocated, I poured out my anguish as well as sincerity to you and entreated your help. You have consoled me many times with your friendship and encouragement and taught me many times from your rich experience. Your beautiful letters have been a great comfort to me, when I have an opportunity of reading them. E.G., my spiritual mother (you have permitted me to call you in this way) you are a daughter of dreams (L.P. Abbott called you before)...

Now my education, life and consciousness are talked about by those who cannot understand what I wrote, what I think, what is my life. They make me up from their subjective imagination and attack me publicly as well as secretly. Because my novels completely obscure my behaviour and ideas, and result in a lot of misunderstandings, my name is related to nihilism or humanism, although I have written a book of over three hundred pages to explain my ideas (this book is very easy to understand and without a metaphysical term). Those who talk about me never read it. They judged my ideas according to one of my short stories, then deduced a variety of strange conclusions and decided which doctrine I belong to. I have been caught in this predicament all these years and cannot get rid of it...

Today I read your autobiography in two volumes, *Living My Life*. These two books full of life, shocked me greatly. Your roaring of forty years like spring thunder, knocked at the door of my living grave throughout the whole book. At this time, silence lost its effect, the fire of my life was lit, I want to come to life and go through great anguish, immeasurable joy, dark despair and enthusiastic hope, throughout the peak and the abyss of life. I will calmly go on living with an attitude you taught me until I spend my whole life.

E.G., now I will begin to break the ice. I would like to dedicate my new collection of short stories and this letter to you. This collection is the result of my silent period. I spent a lot of care on it. You can find my painful life of recent years in it. In the article, "On the Threshold," you can see yourself. As to your recommendation, I read the

great prose poem by Turgenev so that I knew those women who fled to Paris with Provesnie's characteristics. Their impressions were engraved in my mind forever. I hope I will meet you...in the near future.