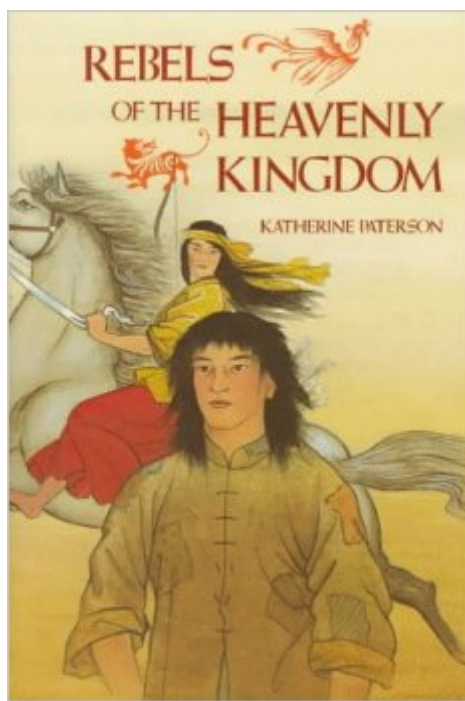


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# Rebels Of The Heavenly Kingdom



## Synopsis

Abducted from his home by bandits, fifteen-year-old Wang Lee is rescued from slavery by a mysterious girl who introduces him to the Taiping Tienkuo, a secret society partly based on Christian principles and dedicated to the overthrow of the Manchu government.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I really enjoyed the book, *Rebels of the Heavenly Kingdom* by Katherine Paterson, but someone who isn't really interested in history might not like it as much. The book tells the story of Wang Lee, a young man who is involved in the Taiping Rebellion in China in the 1850s. It seemed to me to be historically accurate and there were a lot of interesting facts about China during this period. I learned about what people ate, what weapons they used, what their religious beliefs were and how the government worked. The parts of the book that I liked the least were when the book focused on Christianity in China and makes Christianity look like complete perfection and represents the Chinese religious beliefs as almost like demon worship. The author, who was born in China and lived there a long time, was the daughter of a missionary to China and studied Christian education in college. The author's views on Christianity are very clear in the book. However, because she had first-hand Chinese experience from when she lived there as a child, I also think her descriptions of China and its history are accurate. The author did a great job making Wang Lee an interesting character and I cared about what happened to him in the book and kept reading to find out the ending. The reason I stayed interested in the book was that there wasn't just one high point to the story, but there were several different climaxes in several different exciting parts to the story. I think anyone who has interest in Chinese history, even if they don't care about the religious beliefs in the

book, would like this book.

This story begins with Wang Lee a teenaged boy who while tending his field is greeted by a not so friendly bandit named Red Eye and his two companions. Luckily no harm is done to Wang Lee or his family but he was forced to accompany the bandits. Wang Lee travels with the bandits for awhile until Mei Lin a young woman buys him off of Red Eye. She takes him to a dinner hall where he is well fed. He soon learns from her about the Mandate of Heaven and of god. Against his will he is forced into their religious society. As it turns out their group is protected by the government or should be but imperial soldiers had been seen marching towards their holy city. Wang Lee, Mei Lin and Chu an elderly companion must do what it takes to protect each other and the Mandate of Heaven. This book has plenty of action and is based on very true and real morales. Anyone young or old can get something out of this book. This novel isn't too lengthy and has a very well thought out plot aside from a predictable ending. Predictable but not bad.

The beginning of the book is great but towards the end it begins to drag a little. However, it does reveal facts about Chinese culture during the 1850s. Overall, it's better than average and is a good book to read. Fifteen year old Wang Lee is kidnapped at the beginning of the novel by bandits. He travels with them for awhile but is sold to a girl named Mei Lin. She is unlike the other women in China during the time because her feet are not bound and she is a high ranking officer in the rebel group so he falls in love with her. Wang Lee joins the rebels and they fight in the holy war against the oppressive Manchu overlords. The ending is expected so this book does not deserve 5 stars.

I remember finding this in my middle school library and it there that I first read it. Not for any assignment but I just read it. It really captured me. After that, I just sorta forgot about it until recently when I remembered this book I read in middle school about the Taiping Rebellion. I could not remember the title of the book so I had to do some research. For some reason, the part where the main character was almost raped by a soldier when he disguised himself as a girl stayed on my mind. Another reason this book so captivated me was that it was about my people. I am Chinese but also Hakka. The minority that made up most of the Taiping rebels in the book. The Taiping Rebellion did happen but it was relatively unknown compared to the events afterward (dissolution of the Qing dynasty and end of the Emperor's rule, Sino-Japanese War, Chinese Civil War, WWII, etc.). It was interesting to read about my people, the Hakka, who are mostly farmers in the south eastern region of China now, rise up and try to overthrow the Manchu government.

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