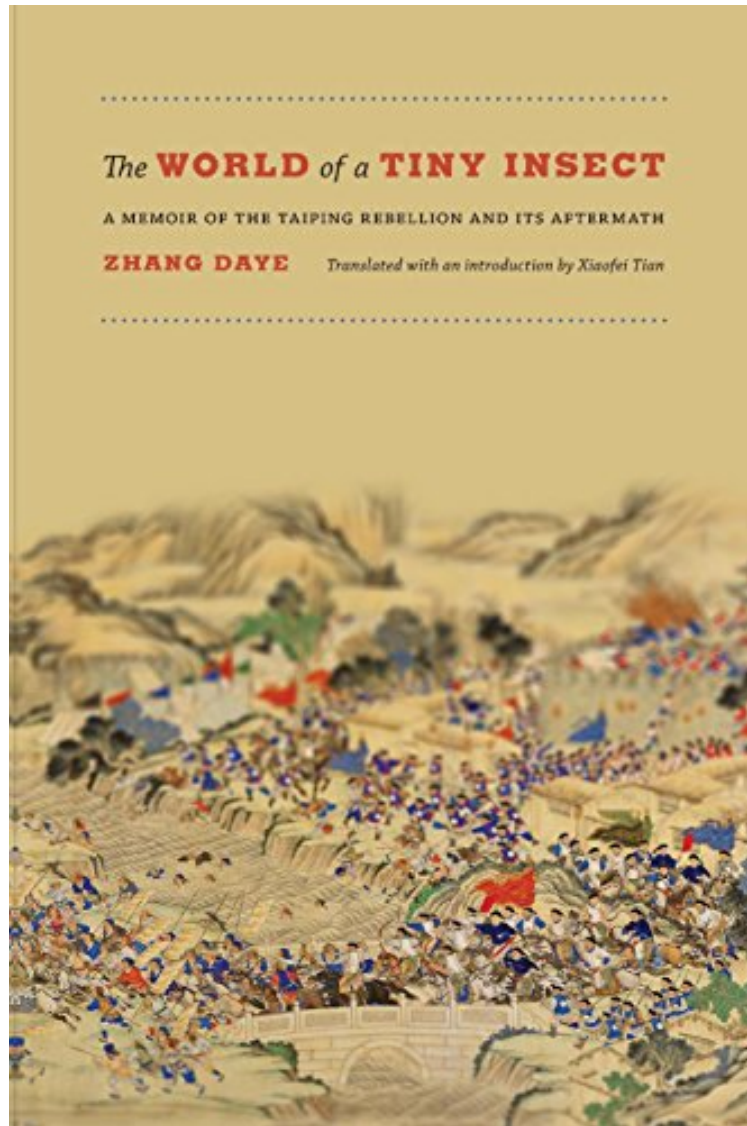


(Free) The World of a Tiny Insect: A Memoir of the Taiping Rebellion and Its Aftermath

The World of a Tiny Insect: A Memoir of the Taiping Rebellion and Its Aftermath

Zhang Daye

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Zhang Daye : The World of a Tiny Insect: A Memoir of the Taiping Rebellion and Its Aftermath before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The World of a Tiny Insect: A Memoir of the Taiping Rebellion and Its Aftermath:

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Taiping Rebellion By Mr. Leong Wai Hong
The World of a Tiny Insect is a wonderful memoir of a childhood spent in the violence of the Taiping Rebellion. The author was 7 years when the rebellion began. He wrote his memoir in 1893, 30 years later. It is now translated into English in 2013. The translator Tian Xiao Fei is professor of Chinese literature at Harvard University. She has usefully annotated the text. According to her she stumbled upon this manuscript when the title *The World of a Tiny Insect* caught her eye though it is a pity she did not give the year of her discovery. For a good history of the Taiping Rebellion I highly recommend *God's Chinese Son* by Jonathan Spence and *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom* by Stephen R Platt.

"From the cry of a tiny insect, one can hear the sound of a vast world. . . ." So begins Zhang Daye's preface to *The World of a Tiny Insect*, his haunting memoir of war and its aftermath. In 1861, when China's devastating Taiping rebellion began, Zhang was seven years old. The Taiping rebel army occupied Shaoxing, his hometown, and for the next two years, he hid from Taiping soldiers, local bandits, and imperial troops and witnessed gruesome scenes of violence and death. He lost friends and family and nearly died himself from starvation, illness, and encounters with soldiers on a rampage. Written thirty years later, *The World of a Tiny Insect* gives voice to this history. A rare premodern Chinese literary work depicting a child's perspective, Zhang's sophisticated text captures the macabre images, paranoia, and emotional excess that defined his wartime experience and echoed through his adult life. The structure, content, and imagery of *The World of a Tiny Insect* offer a carefully constructed, fragmented narrative that skips in time and probes the relationships between trauma and memory, revealing both history and its psychic impact. Xiaofei Tian's annotated translation includes an introduction that situates *The World of a Tiny Insect* in Chinese history and literature and explores the relevance of the book to the workings of traumatic memory.

As an important primary source, I highly recommend the English version of this memoir to students of the modern history of China.--Kent Dang "Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)" (01/01/2014) [L]ucid and erudite.... With Tian's translation, we now have represented in English a wide range of different primary source perspectives on the Taiping civil war. This is an important and highly readable translation and an outstanding resource for teaching.--Tobie Meyer-Fong "Monumenta Serica" (01/01/2014) [A] fascinating memoir.... "*The World of a Tiny Insect*" makes the human cost of the rebellion more concrete and comprehensible, especially for students.... Xiaofei Tian has done an excellent job as translator.... [A] unique and extremely valuable source for understanding rebellion and its impact in nineteenth-century China.... [A]ccessible and highly engaging.--Carl Kilcourse "Journal of the American Oriental Society" (01/01/2016) As an important primary source, I highly recommend the English version of this memoir to students of the modern history of China.--Kent Dang "Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)" (01/01/2014) [L]ucid and erudite.... With Tian's translation, we now have represented in English a wide range of different primary source perspectives on the Taiping civil war. This is an important and highly readable translation and an outstanding resource for teaching.--Tobie Meyer-Fong "Monumenta Serica" (01/01/2014) [A] fascinating memoir.... *The World of a Tiny Insect* makes the human cost of the rebellion more concrete and comprehensible, especially for students.... Xiaofei Tian has done an excellent job as translator.... [A] unique and extremely valuable source for understanding rebellion and its impact in nineteenth-century China.... [A]ccessible and highly engaging.--Carl Kilcourse "Journal of the American Oriental Society" (01/01/2016) [L]ucid and erudite. . . . With Tian's translation, we now have represented in English a wide range of different primary source perspectives on the Taiping civil war. This is an important and highly readable translation and an outstanding resource for teaching.--Tobie Meyer-Fong "Monumenta Serica" (01/01/2014) [A] fascinating memoir. . . . *The World of a Tiny Insect* makes the human cost of the rebellion more concrete and comprehensible, especially for students. . . . Xiaofei Tian has done an excellent job as translator. . . . [A] unique and extremely valuable source for understanding rebellion and its impact in nineteenth-century China. . . . [A]ccessible and highly engaging.--Carl Kilcourse "Journal of the American Oriental Society" (01/01/2016) "The author and narrator recounts his terrible experiences and miraculous survivals with a child's curiosity and in a vivid, straightforward way. But he also embeds what happened to him in a larger historical, philosophical, moral, and aesthetic context. No comparable primary source available in English does anything like this for the Taiping Rebellion." Judith Zeitlin, University of Chicago About the Author Zhang Daye (b. 1854) is known only as the author of *The World of a Tiny Insect*. Xiaofei Tian is professor of Chinese literature at Harvard University. Among her recent publications is *Visionary Journeys: Travel Writings from Early Medieval and Nineteenth-Century China*.