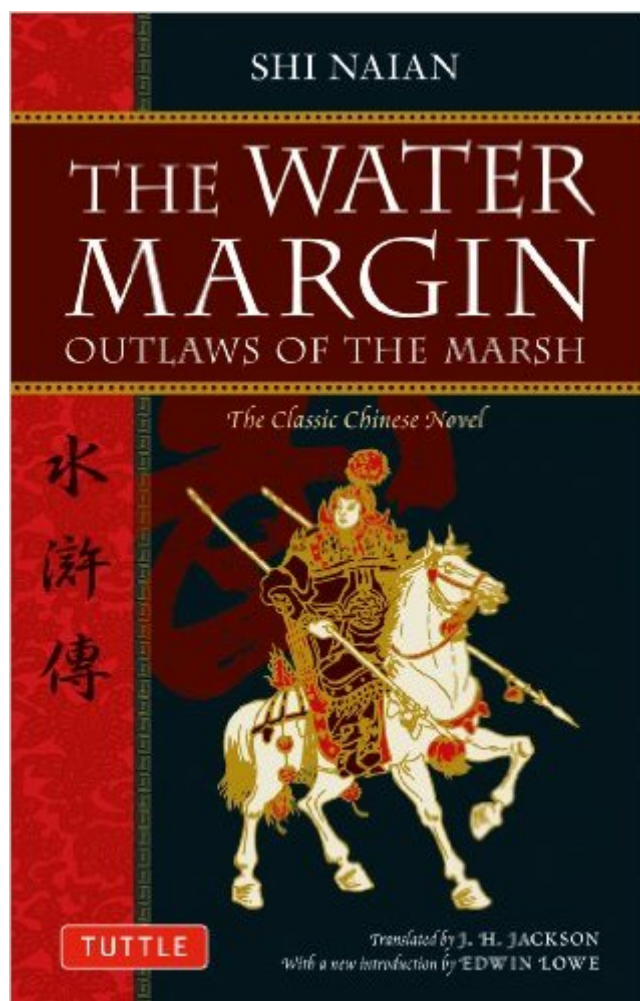


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# The Water Margin: Outlaws Of The Marsh: The Classic Chinese Novel (Tuttle Classics)



## Synopsis

Based upon the historical bandit Song Jiang and his companions, this Chinese equivalent of the English classic Robin Hood and His Merry Men is an epic tale of rebellion against tyranny and has been thrilling and inspiring readers for hundreds of years. This edition of the classic J. H. Jackson translation features a new preface and introduction by Edwin Lowe, which gives the history of the book and puts the story into perspective for modern readers. First translated into English by Pearl S. Buck in 1933 as *All Men Are Brothers*, the original edition of the J.H. Jackson translation appeared under the title *The Water Margin* in 1937. In this updated edition, Edwin Lowe addresses many of the shortcomings found in the original J.H. Jackson translation, and replaces the original grit and flavor of *Shuihui Zhuan* found in Chinese versions, including the sexual seduction, explicit descriptions of brutality and barbarity, and the profane voices of the thieving, scheming, drinking, fighting, pimping lower classes of Song Dynasty China. Similarly, the Chinese deities, Bodhisattvas, gods and demons have reclaimed their true names, as has the lecherous, over-sexed and ill-fated Ximen Qing. All of which was sanitized out when first published in 1937. While Chinese in origin, the themes of *The Water Margin* are universal enough that it has served as a source of inspiration for numerous movies, television shows and video games up to the present day.

## Book Information

Series: Tuttle Classics

Paperback: 848 pages

Publisher: Tuttle Publishing; 1 edition (June 10, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0804840954

ISBN-13: 978-0804840958

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1.9 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #557,594 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #140 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > World Literature > Asian > Chinese](#) #570 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure > Classics](#) #1090 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Cultural Heritage](#)

## Customer Reviews

This book, if translated differently, might have rated four or five stars, but I find it hard to believe that

the translator is a native English speaker. The book is rife with poor word choices typical of computerized translation or of someone using a Chinese-English dictionary without a good grasp of English. Some areas are polished, and read very well; unfortunately these are what I read while browsing in the bookstore. But many others left me puzzling over the poor word choices, and seriously detracted from both the flow of the novel and my enjoyment of it.

One of the Chinese classics, this is at times a disturbing tale of a large group of bandits that, while they themselves are corrupt (constantly bribing people, killing opponents and their families), unite to fight even more corrupt local officials while pledging loyalty to the the most corrupt figure of all -- the emperor! There are many entertaining stories, however, and colorful characters. It's interesting that the current leader in China, Xi Jinping, said he "admires" the bandit leader, Song Jiang. Perhaps it is because Song Jiang pledged unconditional loyalty to the Emperor. I agree with other criticisms that the editing leaves something to be desired, which was a surprise considering how long this book has been in print and the number of revisions done.

I have not finished it yet - 800 pages! I am not a scholar, and I do not know anything about this translation, but it is highly readable. It is not an impenetrable jungle of Chinese names like 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms' which I am finding difficult to read. 'Water Margin' is for me a 'kick back and enjoy' sort of book. It will join 'Story of the Stone' on my 'read again' shelf.

Great book. Classic and definitely worth a read to anyone who is interested in Chinese folk lore. One of the more well known tales in folklore. This book is a very large volume. It's thicker than you would imagine.

When I read this book approximately fifteen years ago, it astonished me with its beautiful story telling that caused addiction to it. An eastern variant of Robin Hood story, only different in figures. In the original Robin Hood story, Robin Hood was the central figure; but in Water Margin, there were 108 figures with different kinds of backgrounds which represented 108 ancient eastern astrological signs. It was telling a story about a band of heroes who fight against the injustice of the corrupted Song Court, under administration of prime minister Kao. The fight was so dramatic and so detailed that it made the reader's heart pound hard. Even this current version is still emanating the same light as previous reads. If one of my friends likes the Robin Hood story, I will absolutely recommend The Water Margin since they will probably have a high chance to like it too.

The further i get in the book the more i question the real intentions of the author. It gets a bit boring with all the booze and gluttony, incessant friends-making and no woman character to speak of. I relish the man eating, the slaughtering and the display of uncompromising attitudes.

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