



# **Crimson Rain: Seven Centuries of Violence in a Chinese County**

*William T. Rowe*

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## **Crimson Rain: Seven Centuries of Violence in a Chinese County** William T. Rowe

This brilliantly crafted narrative explores the roots of violence in Chinese rural society over the past seven hundred years, based on the study of a single highland county, Macheng, Hubei province, in the Great Divide Mountains separating the Yangzi valley from the North China Plain. Between the expulsion of the Mongols in the mid-fourteenth century and the invasion of the Japanese in 1938, Macheng experienced repeated, often self-inflicted waves of mass “extermination” of segments of its population. This book argues that, beyond its strategic military centrality and ingrained social tensions, cultural factors such as popular religion, folklore, collective memory, and local historical production played key roles in the continued proclivity of the county's population for massive carnage. In the process, the history of Macheng also provides a case study in the way events and trends of national significance in the history of China have been experienced at the local level.

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