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Sommario/riassunto	This book provides a unique empirical study of criminal trials in China. Western observers such as the media, politicians and the legal scholars alike, have rarely had the exposure to the vast majority of the ordinary criminal trials in China. A number of legal reforms have been implemented in Chinese criminal courts in recent years, but there has been little research on whether these reforms have been effective. This book fills that gap, by unveiling the day-to-day reality of criminal cases tried by the lowest level courts in China. The data used in this study include hundreds of criminal trial observations, complete criminal case dossiers, and a comprehensive questionnaire survey of criminal justice practitioners from one large province located in China's Southeast coast. These data were collected over a two-year period, with a generous research grant from the John D. and Catherine T.

MacArthur Foundation, by scholars already working in the Chinese legal system. The work opens with a historical framework of the Chinese criminal justice system, both Western and Chinese interpretations, and an overview of the current state of the system. It will provide unique analysis of how criminal trials are being carried out in China, with a useful context for scholars with varying levels of familiarity with the current system. The research framework for gathering data discussed in this book will also provide a useful basis for studying the criminal justice system in other regions.
