

# **Empire of Great Brightness: Visual and Material Cultures of Ming China, 1368-1644**

By Craig Clunas



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Empire of Great Brightness is an innovative and accessible history of a high point in Chinese culture as explored through the riches of its images and objects. Emphasizing the vibrant interactions between China and the rest of Asia at this period, it challenges notions of Ming China as a culture closed off from the rest of the world. Eminent historian Craig Clunas uses a wide range of pictures and objects from Ming China to illustrate areas such as painting and ceramics. He also draws on items like weapons and textiles from public and private collections, as well as contemporary sources from government edicts to novels, to illuminate this most diverse period of Chinese art and culture. Empire of Great Brightness offers a varied and stimulating resource for scholars of China's cultural history, historians and art historians of related aspects of the early modern world, and readers who are intrigued by China's past.

"An excellent companion for the study of Ming art, as well as giving established scholars food for thought and engaging in Ming Chinese culture."—Art Newspaper

"This is an eminently readable history of the high point of Chinese cultures, seen through the riches of its images and objects."—Asian Art Survey



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#### Review

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About the Author

**Craig Clunas** is professor of History of Art at the University of Oxford. He is the author of many books, including *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* and *Elegant Debts: The Social Art of Wen Zhengming*, also published by Reaktion Books.

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