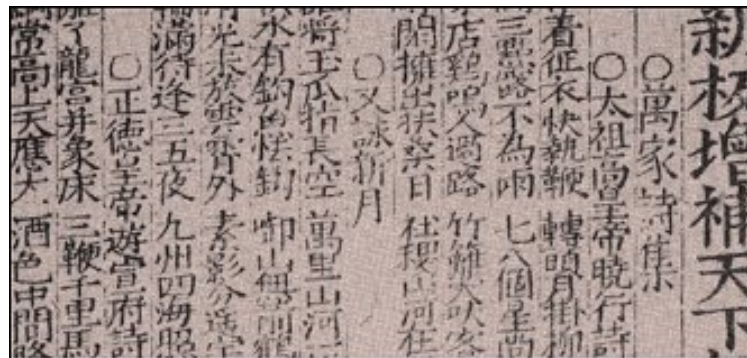




Yuming He

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HOME AND THE WORLD

Editing the "Glorious Ming" in Woodblock-Printed Books
of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries Yuming He



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Home and the World: Editing the "Glorious Ming" in Woodblock-Printed Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series)

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Woodblock-Printed Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series):

China's sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw an unprecedented explosion in the production and circulation of woodblock-printed books. What can surviving traces of that era's print culture reveal about the makers and consumers of these books? *Home and the World* addresses this question by carefully examining a wide range of late Ming books, considering them not merely as texts, but as material objects and economic commodities designed, produced, and marketed to stand out in the distinctive book marketplace of the time, and promising high enjoyment and usefulness to readers. Although many of the mass-market commercial imprints studied here might have struck scholars from the eighteenth century on as too trivial, lowbrow, or slipshod to merit serious study, they prove to be an invaluable resource, providing insight into their readers' orientations toward the increasingly complex global stage of early modernity and toward traditional Chinese conceptions of textual, political, and moral authority. On a more intimate scale, they tell us about readers' ideals of a fashionable and pleasurable private life. Through studying these works, we come closer to recapturing the trend-conscious, sophisticated, and often subversive ways readers at this important moment in China's history imagined their world and their place within it.

Home and the World brilliantly fills a large gap in the existing literature on Ming book culture. It builds on the insights of earlier works and proposes a finer analysis of what texts, in both their materiality and their contents, can reveal about reading tastes and practices in the late Ming. In its focus on a range of different texts and its close analysis of these texts and their illustrations (and their imagined readership), this exciting and beautifully researched work signals the growing sophistication of the study of Chinese book culture. (Cynthia Brokaw, Brown University) *Home and the World* makes a tremendous contribution to current scholarly understandings of the rise of print culture and its rapid spread during the Ming period... It complements and brings to completion previous work in literature, art history (particularly book illustrations), the history of the book, theater history, and studies of popular culture by asking new and startlingly objective questions... By choosing a number of ostensibly dissimilar texts and by relentlessly combing contemporary texts for references to them, He reveals new sources of information, new avenues of interpretation, and truly new insights. (Robert E. Hegel, Washington University in St. Louis) About the Author Yuming He is Assistant Professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Davis.