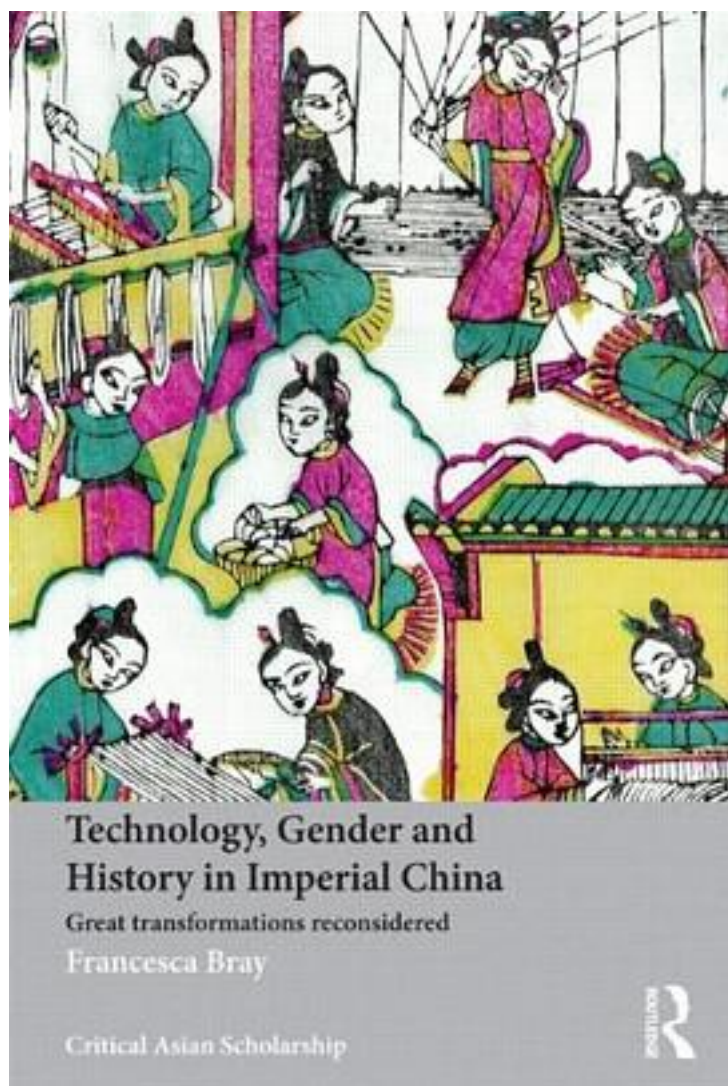


Technology, Gender and History in Imperial China



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What can the history of technology contribute to our understanding of late imperial China? Most stories about technology in pre-modern China follow a well-worn plot: in about 1400 after an early ferment of creativity that made it the most technologically sophisticated civilisation in the world, China entered an era of technical lethargy and decline. But how are we to reconcile this tale, which portrays China in the Ming and Qing dynasties as a dying giant that had outgrown its own strength, with the wealth of counterevidence affirming that the country remained rich, vigorous and powerful at least until the end of the eighteenth century? Does this seeming contradiction mean that the stagnation story is simply wrong, or perhaps that technology was irrelevant to how imperial society worked? Or does it imply that historians of technology should ask better questions about what technology was, what it did and what it meant in pre-modern societies like late imperial China?

In this book, Francesca Bray explores subjects such as technology and ethics, technology and gendered subjectivities (both female and male), and technology and statecraft to illuminate how material settings and practices shaped topographies of everyday experience and ideologies of government, techniques of the self and technologies of the subject. Examining technologies ranging from ploughing and weaving to drawing pictures, building a house, prescribing medicine or composing a text, this book offers a rich insight into the interplay between the micro- and macro-politics of everyday life and the workings of governmentality in late imperial China, showing that gender principles were woven into the very fabric of empire, from cosmology and ideologies of rule to the material foundations of the state and the everyday practices of the domestic sphere.

This authoritative text will be welcomed by students and scholars of Chinese history, as well as those working on global history and the histories of gender, technology and agriculture. Furthermore, it will be of great use to those interested in social and cultural anthropology and material culture.

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评论

中研院近史所讀書會2014年6月閱讀書目

Introduction.

看到大教授为了出书东拼西凑也蛮心疼的。

跟 technology and gender 重合不少

对于旧作的重新回顾和整理

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书评

这本书的标题很唬人，来了个《重新审视帝制中国的大转型》，从标题上看，great transformation翻译过来成大转型似乎没有什么问题，但是从全书看下来，原来讲述的只是从宋到清这一段时间内，技术的更新以及带来的社会变迁。这一变迁十分重要，但是从历史分期角度来说，应该还谈...

大部分时间里，作者在梳理自身所处的文明系统内的高级概念工具，从科学技术到性别之间的复杂关系，借用福科的动态的关于知识权力的理论来打开貌似静止不动的华夏传统。哪怕从目前来看，这本书也对观察今日中国的农业农村农民问题有所启发，农民耕种的无意识或随大流看起来是种...

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