settled Hickauhaugau they were fully armed with European guns and, after commanding Carolina’s Lord Proprietors for a sole license, they were well on their way to monopolizing the southern trade.

Bowne documents the effects of Westo aggression on the social geography throughout present-day Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina. Here Bowne not only gives an inside glimpse of the depredations and terrorizing that was part and parcel of trafficking in human commodities, but he also persuasively argues that the Westos were in large part responsible for the upheavals, dislocations, and migrations that occurred in this area in the late-17th century. For example, Bowne suggests that the fall of the famous paramount chieftdom of Cofticheque occurred because the Westos slaved them out and that the refugees, along with others, eventually coalesced to form the Catawbas. The Westos hold on the southern trade did not last long. Other Indians and ambitious Carolina slave traders, known as the Goose Creek Men, combined their efforts to break the Westo monopoly. In 1680, the Goose Creek Men contracted some Savannah Indians in a secret military campaign against the Westos, which ended in the dispersal of the Westos, the abandonment of Hickauhaugau, and the decline of their influence in the South.

Some historians no doubt will be dissatisfied with the dearth of direct documentary evidence for Bowne’s tale of the Westos. Bowne’s device of patching fragmentary documentary and archaeological evidence into the larger social history of the Southeastern Indians in order to make sense of the Westos’ presence in the Southeast is a wondrous alternative to letting the Westos and this fascinating and grisly time linger in historical obscurity. Over the past 15 years or so scholars have been sketching out the long social history of the Southeastern Indians, and they have come to recognize the fundamental transformation that Native lives underwent from the Mississippian period to the colonial era. Bowne’s is one of the first books to take advantage of the broad social history context that is now available for the Southeastern Indians, and The Westo Indians is a stunning example of what a creative and adroit scholar can do with it.

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Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China
Francesca Bray
University of California Press, Berkeley, 1997. 444 pp., illus., ref., index. $24.95 paper.

The role of women in recent Chinese history has been largely stereotyped, portraying wives and daughters as prisoners of their male relatives. Images of bound feet and titlal women abound in the literature and art pertaining to China, especially since the expansion of Europe from the 15th century onwards. Francesca Bray sets an impressive goal for herself by tracing the changing social status of women for the past millennium (specifically from A.D. 1000–1800) by drawing upon historic materials from China, ethnohistorical studies, and archaeological investigations, all of which are framed from a history of technology standpoint.

Bray’s central theme focuses on recovering an accurate history of women in China. She first draws upon Joseph Needham’s monumental study of Chinese history, Science and Civilization in China. Bray states that its success in extending the definition of the history of technology beyond that of Europe and its colonies was an important step in understanding the long history of China. She believes that Needham’s work fell short in two important respects. His work disembodies the growth of technology from its native (Chinese) position by using western classification systems and imposing a European idea of the “natural” outcome of technological progress. Needham considers technological progress as the creation of an industrial economy based on capitalist ideas and the birth of Western-style science. Bray frames her study by investigating how the Chinese relationships with technology evolved in situ.

The book is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the evolution of house forms from prehistoric times. It is important to remember that the historical period of China is a deeper one than most other countries, extending back to the time of the Qin Shihuang Di (the First Emperor) in approximately 200 B.C. Bray brings her discussion into a comfortably modern context by tracing the structural development of housing up through the Qing Dynasty (A.D. 1616 – 1911). She looks at archaeological investigations of cultures and sites throughout China, such as the Neolithic Longshan pottery culture from north/northeast China and the site of Hemudu (near modern-day Shanghai). In order to trace house development into modern times, she draws upon Chinese construction manuals from late Imperial China. Typically, the Chinese divided their homes into male/female spheres. The altar room, often used to receive important guests, was a male-dominated space and place of ancestor worship rituals. The kitchen, or stove room, was a woman’s space, where, according to Bray, women were in charge and moderated behavior and rituals associated with stove and other household deities.

The second section introduces the role of women as more intricate than previously understood. This section begins in the Song Dynasty (A.D. 960–1279) and focuses on the production of textiles. In this time period weaving was still the domain of women, often completed during the day in a woman’s chambers (for the elite) or bedroom (among the peasant class). Bray contends that as work is an expression of identity, women began to lose this self-definition as the gender role attached to weaving gradually became male. This process resulted from a combination of tax increases and technological advancement. As loom technology grew in both complexity and size, and cottage industry-style textile production increasingly failed to meet the new taxes, weaving was consolidated into large-scale operations, factories. As England discovered several centuries later, the factory system often requires a seasonal or mobile workforce. Because of social attitudes towards women, specifically that they should not loiter outside, this growing workforce consisted of men. The effect on a woman’s role that resulted from this gender redefinition of textile production was an increased importance placed on a woman’s reproductive role. This is not to suggest that
women were reduced in importance. In fact, Bray counters that this new definition ultimately provided women with a stronger influence on the course of Chinese society.

The third, and final, section of the book looks at this new reproductive role. Bray begins her argument with the recollections of several Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) authors who routinely wrote about the time spent with their mothers. As weaving ultimately became a male, factory-centered operation, woman were left with more time to spend with their children. The accounts of these male authors are used by Bray to suggest that the mother-son bond became far more important in forming the next generation of men than any between father and son. The result was a general opinion of fathers as cold, dominating figures who rarely took part in domestic operations. While the dominant (male) segment of the population did restrict the movements of women physically, women reacted in creative ways and actively formed their own networks of communication and, in part, their identity. Central to this network was the traveling herbalist or barefoot doctor. These doctors, usually women (since male doctors did not usually treat female patients), traveled from household to household and village to village and became the key players in these all-female networks of communication. Eventually, the power of women over their sons reached mythological levels, with examples of Emperors becoming little more than puppets of their mothers. While such high-level examples assist to prove the point, Bray does not dwell on such overt examples and suggests that women generally took an active role in their sons’ lives as a way to remain socially aware and active in the currents and changes of Chinese society.

Throughout the book, Bray continues to frame part of her investigation in the technologies that were influenced by and in-turn influenced the Chinese over the centuries. She treats technologies as systems, complete with embedded meanings. The use of technological metaphors as models of correct moral behavior increased through the dynasties, which came through strongest in the role of textile production. The extensive collections of texts that exist in China from these periods are expertly mobilized by Bray to help support her arguments. Examples from other Asian contexts are also used, such as the use of textiles in preliberated India as a symbol for traditional Indian society (for example, pictures of Gandhi with the spinning wheel).

Bray demonstrates how technological systems were used by specific groups of the population (the government and moralists) to maintain a sense of political security. She writes that China never really existed in a vacuum, as it was successfully invaded three times during the 800 years Bray examines. She is able to demonstrate a technological continuity throughout these time periods. The increase in production during this time period was only rarely met with technological advances. Instead, the Chinese chose an inductive strategy to answer growing demand issues, by increasing the number of workers. Returning to the earlier analysis of Needham, Bray writes that the inductive strategy was not adopted in England (where the answer was to improve technology). The increased commercialization of the two countries did in fact share commonalities, such as the switch from a taxation of goods to a taxation of currency.

This book is among the Society for the History of Technologies’ (SHOT) winners of the Dexter/Edelstein Prize list, an award presented each year to new and innovative works. Bray’s approach is innovative, and she presents her ideas in a form that allows recreational and professional readers alike to enjoy the work. She draws on a complex list of influences and sources including anthropological theory, archaeological investigations, ethnographies, and Chinese texts. Her ability to weave a narrative covering more than 800 years of history alone makes this book an enjoyable read. Technology and Gender is strongly recommended for anyone interested in examining the changing gender roles in Chinese society, technological change and its social relationships, or why the incentives for constructing a European model of industry did not evolve indigenously in China. This work has bearing on historical archaeology because it offers a glimpse into the conditions and social attitudes of the Chinese (and their history) prior to and during the time of Chinese migration across the globe in the 19th century.

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From a Watery Grave: The Discovery and Excavation of La Salle’s Shipwreck, La Belle
James E. Bruseth and Toni S. Turner
Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2005. 176 pp., 126 color & 13 b&w photos, bibl., index. $39.95 cloth.

This book conveys to the general public the archaeological excavation of La Salle’s shipwreck, La Belle, undertaken by the Texas Historical Commission (THC). For the professional archaeologist, this book is an example of presenting the results of a major archaeological project before the public. As T. R. Fehrenbach writes in the foreword “...we should be mindful that sciences need support, not just from aucionados but also from citizens and state” (p. x). To build that support, archaeologists must engage the public through their findings in a timely fashion. Here the authors and THC must be commended for preparing a well-written and illustrated document 10 years after the initial discovery of the remains of La Belle in Matagorda Bay, Texas. Major archaeological reports detailing the hull structure, artifacts, and cargo are due shortly and are geared for a more academic audience. This book is actually the second in the eventual series, the first having been written by Robert S. Weddle (The Wreck of the Belle, the Ruin of La Salle, 2001). Weddle’s book provides the historical context of La Salle’s failed venture to establish a French presence at the mouth of the Mississippi River in the 1680s.

From a Watery Grave covers the spectrum of the La Belle investigations, including a general historical synopsis, initial discovery, recovery, and current artifact analysis. In addition to the main text, several sidebars contain more details about a subject, for instance, about local Indian tribes, La Salle expedition personnel, and contemporary issues surrounding the wreck site. As can be expected for a book directed toward the general public, illustrations abound throughout, predominately color photographs of the excavation in progress, hull structure, and artifacts. An important contribution