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For "Custom-Made Machines in the Era of Mass Production"

The paper is an exemplary study of a machine, and how it adapts to different local contexts, framed in the textile mass-production industry. The author consulted a variety of primary sources. The argument and the historiography are really well supported. One of the main features it addresses is how materials, in this case cotton yarns from China, which were not standardized play a crucial role in the standardization process of textile mass production. Designing the machines required a certain type of quality, so the ways in which materials shaped technology is very well elaborated along the paper. The chain production of this technology is a transnational history: the textile machine manufacturers were in the United States, for example, they were transported by a Japanese steam ship while the workforce and the industry was in China. The author brings to light the way in which practical knowledge was acquired through printed material, many of which were translations with its implications that sometimes information was deleted or added, but as is clearly stated in the conclusions "what made their knowledge truly practical was hands-on experience." The manuscript is a beautiful example, very well thread, of the ways in which peoples, materiality, contingencies, and knowledge mobility play a crucial role in shaping technologies and its uses.