



TÍTULO: Silk thread making technology: an unrivalled mix of hand dexterity and highly labour saving machinery (13th to 19th Century)

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I shall briefly try to outline the peculiar role in the history of textile technology played by silk thread making. The ability of "masters" (all of them invariably women) in producing a super-fine thread from cocoon reeling was such that full-mechanisation of some of their functions could be obtained by highly sophisticated automated machinery in early 20th Century only. On the other side the enormous labour saving capability of huge, water powered, medieval silk throwing machines was such that the 13th Century models were still competitive with modern alternatives well into 19th Century. I shall then try to elaborate how such elements might be included in the concept of "patrimoine".