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The rise and fall of industrialization and changing labor intensity:  
the case of an export-oriented silk weaving district in modern Japan

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The production of *habutae*, a simple silk fabric, expanded rapidly between 1890 and 1918 in Japan's Fukui Prefecture, with large exports to Europe and the United States. The production of *habutae*, initially woven by hand, was labor intensive, but it gradually became capital-intensive after the introduction of power looms. Production and export of this fabric declined precipitously from 1918. In this paper, we attribute the rise and then fall of Japan's production and export of *habutae* to its changing comparative advantage, which is associated with shifts from labor-using to capital-using production technology initiated in the United States.