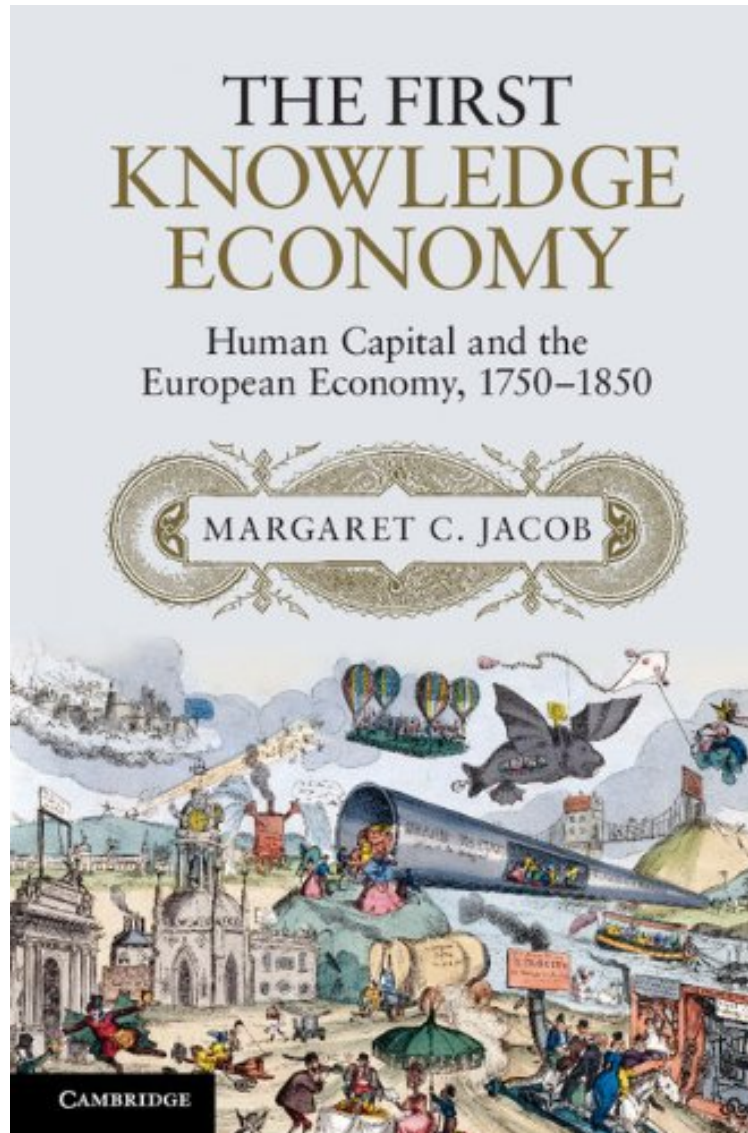


(Download) The First Knowledge Economy: Human Capital and the European Economy, 1750–1850

The First Knowledge Economy: Human Capital and the European Economy, 1750–1850

Margaret C. Jacob

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Margaret C. Jacob : The First Knowledge Economy: Human Capital and the European Economy, 1750–1850 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The First Knowledge Economy: Human Capital and the European Economy, 1750–1850:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Deirdre McCloskeyPathbreaking.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Another Good Jacob Book; 4.5 StarsBy R. AlbinThis is the latest in a series of short and very interesting monographs by this consistently interesting scholar. Following up on some prior work, Jacob argues

for the crucial role of scientific knowledge in the Industrial Revolution. This is in contrast to the work of other scholars who emphasize economic factors or fortunate geography (presence of coal) as key features and tend to minimize the role of scientific knowledge. Continuing and deepening her prior arguments, Jacob points to a crucial impact of "Newtonianism," a relatively widespread knowledge of physics and a systematic empirical approach to problems, as key features of the Industrial Revolution. This different from the concept that most industrial innovators were poorly educated tinkerers. Jacob is careful to specify that the spread of Newtonianism was necessary but not sufficient driver of the Industrial Revolution. Jacob supports her argument with careful explorations of the work of important entrepreneurs in key sectors of the emerging British industrial economy. These include Watt Boulton in Birmingham, the textile centers of Manchester Leeds, and the Newcastle coal fields. Jacob's nice analyses of the interactions of Newtonianism, educational practices, technological innovation, and Dissenting religion provide ample support for her thesis. She then extends her analysis in a very interesting way by moving to Continental Europe where she can compare an early industrializing state, Belgium, with 2 later industrializers, France and the Netherlands. She makes a very good argument that the diffusion, of lack of diffusion, of Newtonianism via educational mechanisms was at least a key variable explaining the differences in the rate of industrialization. Written well and documented well, this is a fine capstone to Jacob's work on the genesis of the Industrial Revolution.

Ever since the Industrial Revolution debate has raged about the sources of the new, sustained western prosperity. Margaret Jacob here argues persuasively for the critical importance of knowledge in Europe's economic transformation during the period from 1750 to 1850, first in Britain and then in selected parts of northern and western Europe. This is a new history of economic development in which minds, books, lectures and education become central. She shows how, armed with knowledge and know-how and inspired by the desire to get rich, entrepreneurs emerged within an industrial culture wedded to scientific knowledge and technology. She charts how, across a series of industries and nations, innovative engineers and entrepreneurs sought to make sense and a profit out of the world around them. Skilled hands matched minds steeped in the knowledge systems new to the eighteenth century to transform the economic destiny of western Europe.

'... there is every reason to recommend this book and over its Jacob predecessors and indeed to delight in the research it contains. This is undoubtedly part of the story of industrialization.' Pat Hudson, *The Journal of Modern History* 'A significant strength is the elimination of economic determinism and the inclusion of knowledge of science into the public equation. Jacob's coherent argument, premised on solid evidence ... unequivocally shows that the first knowledge economy in the world emerged in parallel with the Industrial Revolution.' Fedir V. Razumenko, *Canadian Journal of History* About the Author Margaret C. Jacob holds an honorary doctoral from the University of Utrecht and has had a session devoted to her work at the American Historical Association's annual convention in 2012. She has worked in archives in four countries and has published thirteen books. The range of her expertise begins with the meaning and impact of the Newtonian synthesis and extends to the Enlightenment more generally, to the Revolution of 1688, the Dutch Revolution of 1747-48, and most recently, the Industrial Revolution seen comparatively. She has taught in American, British and Dutch universities, received the Gottschalk Prize for her first book on the Newtonians and the English Revolution, and is a member of the American Philosophical Society.