



Innovation and Technological Diffusion: An economic history of early steam engines (Routledge Explorations in Economic History)

By Harry Kitsikopoulos

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This book deals with two key aspects of the history of steam engines, a cornerstone of the Industrial Revolution, specifically the road that led to its discovery and the process of diffusion of the early steam engines.

The first part of the volume outlines the technological and scientific developments which took place between the 16th and 18th centuries, proving critical for the invention of this strategic technology. The most important question addressed is why did England come up with this innovation first as opposed to other countries (e.g., France, Italy), which were more advanced in terms of knowledge pertinent to it. The second part of the volume traces the process of diffusion of the early steam engines, the Newcomen model, through to 1773, the year prior to the first commercial application of the second generation of steam engines (the Watt model). The process of diffusion is quantified on the basis of a novel method before proceeding with a discussion of the main determinants of this process.

Kitsikopoulos pulls together a large amount of relevant evidence found in primary sources and more technically oriented literature which is often ignored by economic historians. This book will be of interest to economic historians and historians of technology.

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- Published on: 2015-11-12
- Original language: English
- Dimensions: 9.21" h x .50" w x 6.14" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 202 pages

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