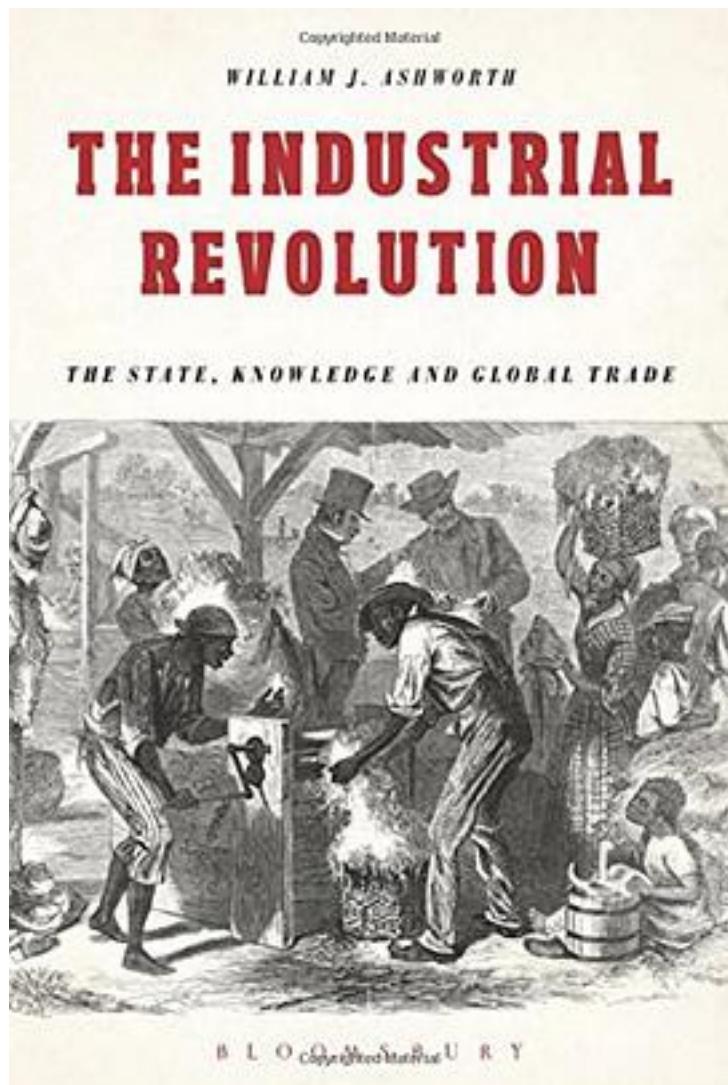


The Industrial Revolution



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The Industrial Revolution that began in Great Britain in the mid-seventeenth century transformed the British economy--and later the economies of Western Europe and the U.S.--from a rural, agricultural system into an industrial society, centered around the factory system of mass production and specialized labor. The right mix of social, political and legal conditions in Britain at the time led to the discovery of labor. The right mix of social, political and legal conditions in Britain at the time led to the discovery of fresh sources of power and energy, and to advances in agriculture, manufacturing, communication and transportation. Notable results included the steam engine, which made possible everything from textile factories to railroads, and, later in the U.S., the cotton gin, electric light, and automobiles. This comprehensive volume explores all these events and more, including the aftermath of the Revolution--its spread beyond Britain and the U.S. to Asia and throughout the world, allowing for a higher standard of living while challenging that standard with increased pollution and health problems, a widened economic and social class gap, and a weakening of traditional family structure. Biographical sketches of key figures, a chronology of events, primary document excerpts from the period, and a print and nonprint source bibliography supplement the work.

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