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The Industrial Revolution and Modern Economic Growth: The Question of Origins

Two main issues remain at the heart of an understanding of modern growth: the question of why it started in the West and the question of why it started around 1800. In this lecture I will present a novel way of how to think about this issue, using a framework inspired by Max Weber and John Maynard Keynes. The argument will be that a series of ideological changes going back to Francis Bacon and the Reformation altered the basic assumptions of intellectual life in the West, and will outline how and when these changes led to the British Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century and eventually mapped into sustainable economic growth.