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Sommario/riassunto

Industry 4.0 explores the emergence of disruptive digital technologies such as robotics, blockchain, nanotechnology and 3D printing and their impact on human lives and jobs in globalized 21st century societies. Incorporating a cutting edge area studies perspective, it considers the challenges and long term implications of the rise of 'Tech Giants' such as Alibaba, Google and Baidu through the lens of past industrial revolutions, looking back at the transformative technologies and industrial developments - the steam engine, electrification, telegraph, mass production, and the rise of digital technology - upon which the modern world was built. It investigates the mirror profiles of the world' s largest tech companies in the US and China (Baidu and Google, Alibaba and Amazon, Wechat and Facebook) and provides a unique comparison of Tech Giants with 19th century colonial empires and monopolistic trading companies in terms of political-economic dominance. A key tool for instructors and students focused on courses on Technological History, Digital Technology and Cultures, New Media, Digital Ethics and China studies, this book provides practical guidance on how readers can equip themselves to face key workplace and societal challenges in a virtually interconnected world shaped by Tech Giant monopoly.