



Meanings of Modernity: Britain from the Late-Victorian Era to World War II

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While conceptions of the 'modern' have been intensively and fruitfully studied from a variety of perspectives in the context of continental European history, scholars of Britain have hardly addressed the history of the first industrial nation and the world's leading colonial power in this register, despite its enormous cultural influence.

In examining British conceptions and expressions of modernity --from Victorian debates about 'national character' to breathtaking exhibitions of artefacts such as the 'moving pavement' that would revolutionize the future appearance of cities, to debates about the impact of new forms of production and consumption, mass communication and travel -- this book fills the gap.

Is it true, as Virginia Woolf observed upon seeing the first London exhibition of work by Manet and the Post-Impressionists that 'On or about December 1910 human character changed'? Do men and women experience modernity in the same way? How did contemporaries make sense of the changing social worlds they inhabited? How were conflicting visions of modernity, technology and social change expressed in: advertisements and branding; art, architecture and design; business and commerce; mysticism and mountaineering; new approaches to psychology and the self; and colonial discourse?

These wide-ranging issues are addressed by internationally acclaimed experts in the history of science, intellectual history, gender studies, consumption and empire studies. The result is a multifaceted and innovative foray into British cultural history.

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