

URBAN MODERNITY

CULTURAL INNOVATION IN THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL
REVOLUTION

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PREFACE

Like all books, this one has its history. When I began to consider how to study the emergence of what I then termed a culture of control in the late nineteenth century, I was intrigued by the dynamic running through urban growth, international expositions, and museums that generated the new cultural framework for what we call industrial society. The question was how to make the topic manageable—that is, capable of being completed without a lifetime’s research. The answer emerged from discussions I had with Professor Robert Kargon: make it a collaborative and comparative study of selected key cities that could serve as exemplars for the study of other urban locales. The result is the inclusion of chapters on Paris, London, Chicago, Berlin, and Tokyo by individuals knowledgeable about the history of their chosen city.

If the project had stopped there, it might have been just another collection of essays on the common topic of urbanization in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. We consciously moved outside of this convention by using a set of conceptual and project design constraints that kept us focused on the original idea of the dynamic forces of science and technology that I had originally identified. The conceptual constraint was to set a common framework for approaching the history of each city: each of us looked at the possibility of connections between elites, urban rebuilding, expositions, and museums in our respective cities. It was my role to bring these together through editing and the extended introductory and concluding chapters. As part of our work plan, we held a series of workshops to compare and critique one another’s research and drafts over an eighteen-month period. In the end, research and writing went smoothly and rapidly.

It is not possible to list all the people and institutions to which we each owe thanks. A few need to be mentioned here for what we owe them collectively. First, our appreciation to the National Science Foundation for supporting the project. Dr. Ronald Ranger was wonderfully open to the idea of the workshops, as well as to the intellectual concept itself, when I first proposed them to him. Dr. Ranger's successor, Dr. Fredrick Kronz, continued to advise me on negotiating extensions and an application for additional funding. Thanks also to the Department of History of Science and Technology at Johns Hopkins University for hosting and helping fund the Baltimore workshop; and to Dean Cyrus Taylor, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Baker Nord Center for the Humanities, and the History Department at Case Western Reserve University for hosting and helping to fund the Cleveland workshop. My good friend and colleague Professor Catherine Lavenir deserves our gratitude for providing many helpful comments, suggestions, and insights during our discussions. She also is to be thanked for organizing our Paris workshop at the Sorbonne, University of Paris. We also appreciate the warm reception Mme. H el ene Bignon provided us in Montmartre during our Paris stay.

I personally owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Mark Eddy, Social Sciences Librarian for the Kelvin Smith Library at Case Western Reserve University, for his help in tracking down a number of images and copyrights. My graduate research assistant, James Johnson, worked cheerfully and assiduously to prepare a digitized version of the manuscript, also checking spelling and citations along the way. Michael Berk did a superb job of editing the entire manuscript, helping to strengthen arguments and bring stylistic consistency to the text. As with all publications, misspellings and other mistakes in the text are the responsibility of the authors.

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