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Edited by Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich

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The 'Scientific Revolution' of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries continues to command attention in historical debate. What was its nature? How did it develop? Controversy still rages about the extent to which it was essentially a 'revolution of the mind', or how far it must also be explained by wider considerations, social, economic, political and cultural.

In this volume, leading scholars of early modern science argue the importance of specifically national contexts for understanding the transformation in natural philosophy between Copernicus and Newton. Distinct social, political, religious, cultural and linguistic formations shaped scientific interests and concerns differently in Italy, France, Britain, the Germanies, Spain, and so on, and throw light on different levels of scientific intensity. Questions of economic and institutional development, and of the transmission of scientific ideas, are also addressed. The emphasis upon national determinants makes this volume an entirely original contribution to the study of the Scientific Revolution.

Contributors: MARIO BIAGIOLI, L. W. B. BROCKLISS, WILLIAM CLARK,  
HAROLD J. COOK, JERZY DOBRZYCKI, DAVID GOODMAN, JOHN HENRY,  
JOSEF SMOLKA, SVEN WIDMALM, PAUL WOOD

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GRASPING the relations between the particular and the universal, the interplay of part and whole, is one of the historian's perennial challenges. This book forms part of a series focusing upon major constellations of ideas, culture, and action, and attempting to ascertain their general features, their more local aspects, and the links between them – links which are often complicated and difficult to unravel. The volumes which have already appeared in this series – about the Enlightenment, Romanticism, the *fin de siècle* and the Renaissance – have shown how each of those key moments in European culture possessed certain unifying characteristics, a programme jointly held by, or spreading amongst, thinkers and activists from many lands; but they have also shown that their manifestations and meanings were different in (say) Spain and Sweden, Bohemia and Britain, determined by local circumstances and distinctive ideological needs. This account of the Scientific Revolution constitutes a further exploration of this viewpoint. The editors are most grateful to William Davies at the Cambridge University Press for his lasting support for this series – a support which now dates back more than a decade – and to the contributors for sharing our faith in this historical perspective. Thanks too to Frieda Houser for the administrative backup which has made editing this volume a pleasure and to Dorothy Dosanjh for her splendid index.