

the “Gutenberg Galaxy’s Dark Matter.” It draws attention to the inherent dangers, as well as rewards, in exploring this area—tackling issues such as: bibliographical ghosts, fragments of works which may or may not indicate books now lost, and how manuscript copies of printed books or paratexts might point to now-lost works. Bibliographical dark matter, as with its cosmological equivalent, can only be studied by observing the behavior of visible objects surrounding it. Eisermann concludes by emphasizing the value of the search but dismisses the wisdom of any attempt to employ statistical modeling techniques to estimate numbers. In contrast, the merit of such attempts is in fact demonstrated elsewhere in the volume; such analyses are handled well—and usefully—by other contributors, not least Jonathan Green and Frank McIntyre. Statistical work need not necessarily offer bald estimates of everything which has been lost but may draw attention to different patterns of survival for different types of work.

Whether or not we are cynical of statistical modeling, or however frustrated we might become at not being able to develop a clearer impression of bibliographical dark matter, one thing is certain. Talking about these issues—confronting the legion of the lost—is better than ignoring it. This volume demonstrates a panoply of techniques and approaches to do just that. Together, the contributions demonstrate that lost books—albeit properly flagged—should be included rather than omitted from bibliographical catalogues (something which does not routinely happen at present). As Pettegree observes in the introductory essay, the gain in recovering these works far outweighs the inherent dangers in including them (25). However, beyond reconstructing individual titles, having some appreciation of the broader context of loss should be an important consideration for all scholars of Renaissance Europe.

This is a rich, intellectually sparkling, and genuinely important collection of essays; it will—or certainly should—inform debate on this issue for many years to come.

Alexander S. Wilkinson, *University College Dublin*

History and Its Objects: Antiquarianism and Material Culture since 1500.

Peter N. Miller.

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Of the past, of the great civilizations that at some point dominated the world just as of those whose names have forever been lost, of all the men who ever lived and loved and dreamed, ultimately, only things remain, or to be precise, only the vestiges of the things that once were theirs. Insofar as we understand history to be an attempt to know the past, these things are the stuff of all history. They are, one could say, the very reality of a past that continues to be with us—as ruins, as works, or simply as things—here in the all-enveloping present. Its materiality is composed of layers of the past, of all those amalgamated pasts that remain with us as a presence. The past is at once present and

gone. It continues to be lost even when it has been found again. And it never ceases to haunt the present.

Peter Miller's *History and Its Objects* is an attempt to write the history of this uneasy relation with the past. How do we gain access to these vanished worlds through the remains that have been left behind? And what is the genealogy, as it were, of this quest driven by the loss of the past, and which effaces the past even as it makes it accessible to us? How did this quest evolve from the antiquarians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries up until contemporary times? And what has it told us about the fundamental nature of the historical matter constituted by the physical remains of the past, regardless of what those remains are? Peter Miller's brilliant scholarly essay brings into conversation the approaches of collectors (such as Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, one of the founders of antiquarianism), pioneering museologists (in particular through the foundation of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg), archaeologists (above all R. G. Collingwood), cultural historians (notably Gustav Klemm), and philosophers (foremost among them Friedrich Nietzsche).

The subject is vast. It goes well beyond antiquarianism or art history or even cultural history in general. It is a work that will appeal to a wide audience, in fact to everyone sensitive to the issues raised by the way we remember the past. The depth and breadth of *History and Its Objects* is sure to make it a historiographical classic of histories of material culture. For this is not simply a work of erudition; it is a profoundly human book, too. Peter Miller is not afraid to share with us how the work took form in the wake of his father's passing, when the author found himself left with objects that had belonged to his father and that had suddenly become relics of a past both incredibly present and terribly absent. Be we historians, archaeologists, philosophers, or writers, we have surely all experienced this loss of past and felt the *Sehnsucht*, as Nietzsche called it, which generates remembrance of both the most fictive and the most genuine kind. When I finished reading Peter Miller's book, I found myself both regretful and hopeful. I regretted that he had not gone further still, that he had not addressed today's presentist world, which finds us immersed in a total and simultaneous present, haunted by "a past that will not pass." But I also hoped that his book would inspire others to write along the same lines and continue the dialogue with things from the past—its relics, both humble and grandiose—that *History and Its Objects* has begun.

Laurent Olivier, *Musée archéologie nationale*