

ANTIQUITY AND ITS INTERPRETERS



Antiquity and Its Interpreters examines how the physical and textual remains of the ancient Romans were viewed and received by writers, artists, architects, and cultural makers of early modern Italy. The importance of antiquity in the Renaissance has long been acknowledged, but this volume reconsiders the complex relationship between the two cultures in light of recent scholarship in the field and a new appreciation and awareness of the act of history writing itself. The case studies analyze specific texts, the archaeological projects that made “antiquity” available, the revival of art history and theory, the appropriation of antiquities to serve social ideologies, and the reception of this cultural phenomenon in modern historiography, among other topics. Demonstrating that the antique model was itself an artful construct, *Antiquity and Its Interpreters* shows that the originality of Renaissance culture owed as much to ignorance about antiquity as to an understanding of it. It also provides a synthesis of seminal work that recognizes the reciprocal relationship of the Renaissance to antiquity.

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This volume evolved from the conference “Antiquity and Antiquity Transumed” organized by the editors at the University of Toronto in March 1994 under the auspices of the Department of Fine Art and the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies. However, as the gestation period of the project indicates, this is not a replica of the event but the fruit of much subsequent reformulation. And the essays have been much expanded, changed, and revised with an eye to the overall thematic coherence of the volume; moreover, they represent the contributions of those scholars involved in the conference who undertook to pursue the project through its taxing second phase.

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