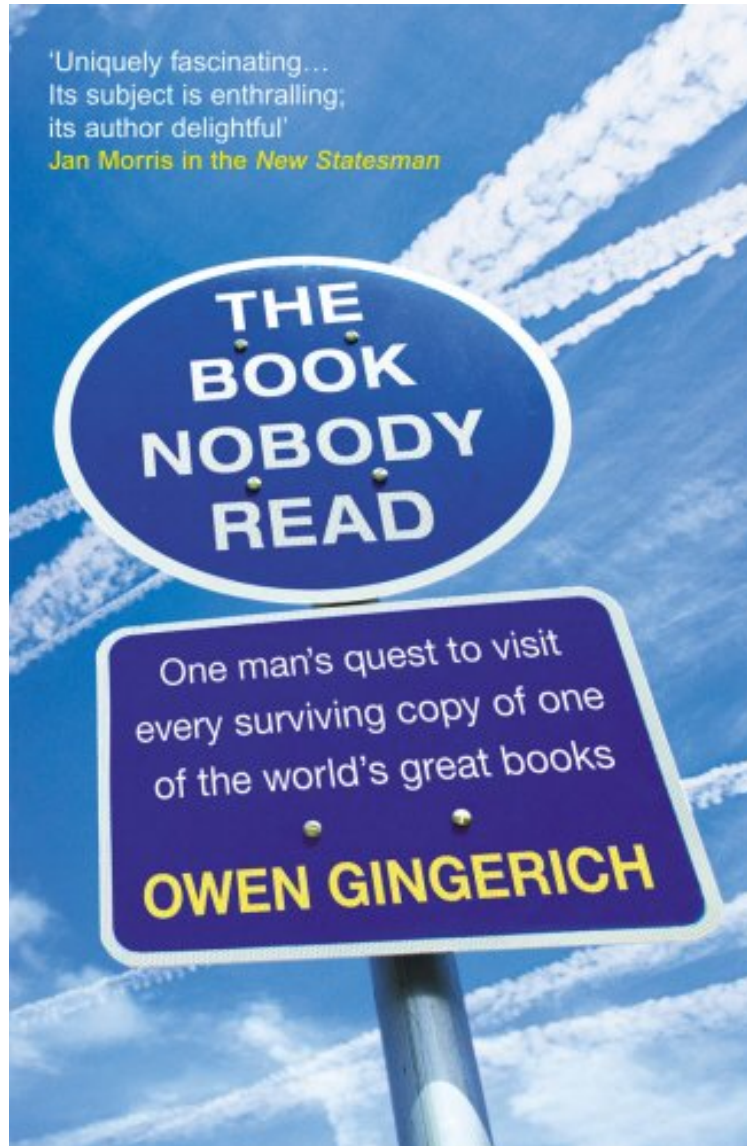


The Book Nobody Read

Owen Gingerich

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1543 saw the publication of one of the most significant scientific works ever written: De revolutionibus (On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres), in which Nicolaus Copernicus presented a radically different structure of the

cosmos by placing the sun, and not the earth, at the centre of the universe. But did anyone take notice? Harvard astrophysicist Owen Gingerich was intrigued by the bold claim made by Arthur Koestler in his bestselling *The Sleepwalkers* that sixteenth-century Europe paid little attention to the groundbreaking, but dense, masterpiece. Gingerich embarked on a thirty-year odyssey to examine every extant copy to prove Koestler wrong... Logging thousands of hours and hundreds of thousands of miles Gingerich uncovered a treasure trove of material on the life of a book and the evolution of an idea. His quest led him to copies once owned by saints, heretics, and scallywags, by musicians and movie stars; some easily accessible, others almost lost to time, politics and the black market. Part biography of a book and a man, part bibliographic and bibliophilic quest, Gingerich's *The Book Nobody Read* is an utterly captivating piece of writing, a testament to the power both of books and the love of books.