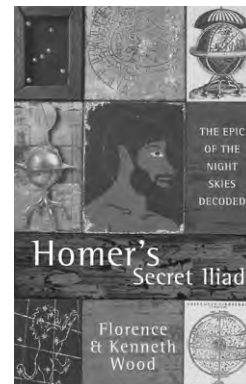
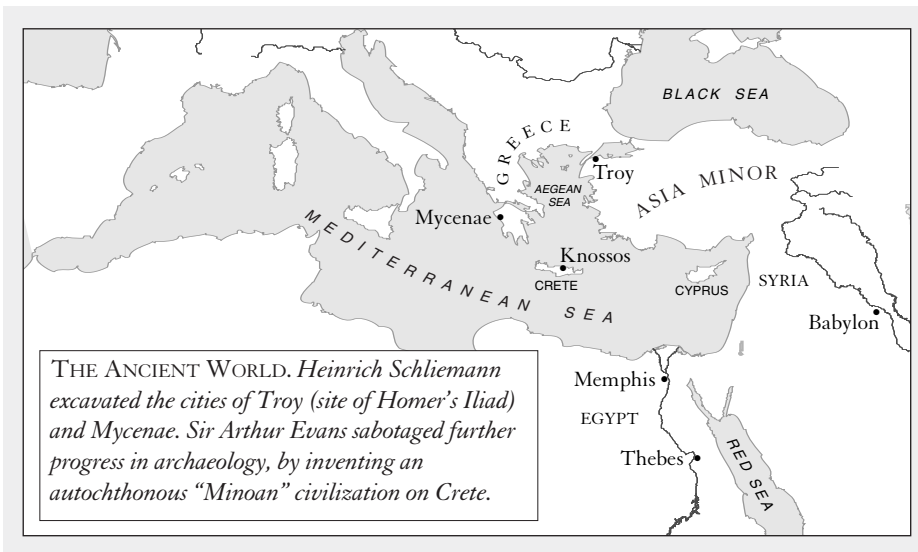


COMMENTARY



**Homer's Secret Iliad:
The Epic of the Night
Skies Decoded**
by Florence & Kenneth Wood
London, John Murray, 1999
294 pages, hardcover, \$40.00

Archaeology and the Truth Of Man's Prehistory

The study of man's most ancient past is more important to the success of his future, than most of us comprehend. Unfortunately, in recent centuries, this has been understood and acted upon, by the oligarchic forces in society who seek to reduce mankind to the condition of beasts, and have twisted the study of pre- and ancient history to prove their definition of man, the better to accomplish this end. Outside of the vast body of work by Lyndon LaRouche, which locates man as a creature of cognition who has understood and acted upon his world for hundreds of thousands of years, only a few determined individuals have succeeded in approaching any aspects of the study of ancient man and civilization from outside the dictates of that oligarchical elite.

One happy exception to that is the 1999 release of *Homer's Secret Iliad: The Epic of the Night Sky Decoded*, by Florence and Kenneth Wood. Written by the daughter and son-in-law of Edna Johnston Leigh (1916-91), this book presents and develops Leigh's hypothesis, that the Homeric epics fall within that oral tradition of other ancient epics

which, through their sung recitation, transmitted to each succeeding generation profound scientific ideas concerning man's relationship to his universe.

Such a concept of man and civilization, which could transmit science, through art, since no later than the end of the last Ice Age, flies directly in the face of modern archaeology, which has been dominated by the British establishment for two centuries. How that British oligarchy has sought to destroy mankind's true history, is captured in another book published in 2000, *Minotaur: Sir Arthur Evans and the Archaeology of the Minoan Myth*, by J. Alexander MacGillivray. This work is the first even remotely objective assessment of the career of Evans, the celebrated excavator of Knossos on the island Crete, and the "discoverer" of the glories of a Minoan civilization, which he supposed to have given birth alone to later Classical Greek civilization.

The Role of Crete

For the word "discoverer," however, substitute, "fabricator." Without drawing the obvious conclusion himself, MacGillivray



**Minotaur:
Sir Arthur Evans and the
Archaeology of the
Minoan Myth**
by Joseph Alexander MacGillivray
New York, Hill and Wang, 2000
373 pages, hardcover, \$30.00

provides overwhelming evidence that Evans was a degenerate racist, deployed by the British Foreign Office, Prime Minister Gladstone, and Oxford University, at a minimum, throughout his life. His assignment was to erase the real history of Bronze Age Crete. That MacGillivray tiptoes around these conclusions is the great flaw of his book.

Ironically, however, MacGillivray was much more forceful and conclusive in a short article in the November/December 2000 issue of *Archeology* magazine, where he wrote: "While he led the field in revealing Minoan art to the public,

Evans allowed his literal reading of the Greek myths to distort his interpretation. . . . Though extremely well versed in ancient Egyptian ritual . . . Evans denied the influence of Egyptian religion on the Minoans. . . . More amazing is how Evans conceived of the well-known ancient Egyptian symbol for the horizon, the slope between two peaks, which adorns colonnades and buildings in Minoan art. He transformed the horizon symbol into what he called Horns of Consecration, ritual symbols that were shorthand for his supposed bull cult of Minos. . . . Once the trappings of his mythical agenda are removed, we will have to re-evaluate a large body of artifacts.” MacGillivray went on to propose that the famous “bull-jumping” fresco uncovered at Knossos, is not a depiction of an actual Cretan sport, but rather, a metaphorical representation of the constellations: “Orion confronts Taurus, composed of the Hyades and Pleiades, while Perseus somersaults with both arms extended over the bull’s back to rescue Andromeda.”

It was his reference to Egyptian astronomy in that article which caused this reviewer to pounce upon MacGillivray’s book, having long been convinced that the Cretan civilization of 2200-1500 B.C. was a critical link between the advanced astronomical knowledge which shaped ancient Egyptian civilization, and its influence on the development of Mycenaean and Classical Greece.

Unfortunately, the book is a disappointment in terms of stating those conclusions, or providing a fuller elaboration of Crete’s debt to Egypt. But, whatever constraints caused MacGillivray to pull his punches here, *Minotaur* is, nonetheless, a useful, if academic, resource for documenting the extent to which the British establishment deployed to suppress a truthful history of the origins of Western civilization.

Evans’ fraudulent treatment of Minos parallels the much better-known fraud of British archaeology, that civilization was born in Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, around 2700 B.C. In manufacturing this “discovery,” the oligarchy certainly chose a civilization in its own

image: Mesopotamia was a society dominated by an elite class of priests and administrators, who held their looted populations in cattle-like backwardness, subservient to an autocratic and irrational pantheon of gods, notably the mother-earth goddess Ishtar (or Isis, the “Whore of Babylon”). Central to their method of control, was the priesthood’s cloaking of its knowledge of the physical world in superstition, magic, and myth.

According to the oligarchy’s Disneyland of ancient history, such cult-ridden societies erupted, autochthonously, out of nowhere, ultimately leading to the development of civilization.

The enormity of this fraud—as well as Evans’ crimes, to which we will return later—becomes clear only when measured against the sweep of earlier millennia, during which man discovered and mapped the motions of the heavens. Contrary to the oligarchs, it is scientific man, discovering and exerting dominion over nature, which has moved civilization forward in all of history.

Antiquity of Scientific Civilization

For example, it was in a direct challenge to Britain’s imposed history of civilization, that India’s great scientist (and political leader), Bal Gangadhar Tilak, proved that India’s culture was far more ancient and advanced than the oligarchy’s Mesopotamia. In his 1893 *Orion, or Researches into the Antiquity of*

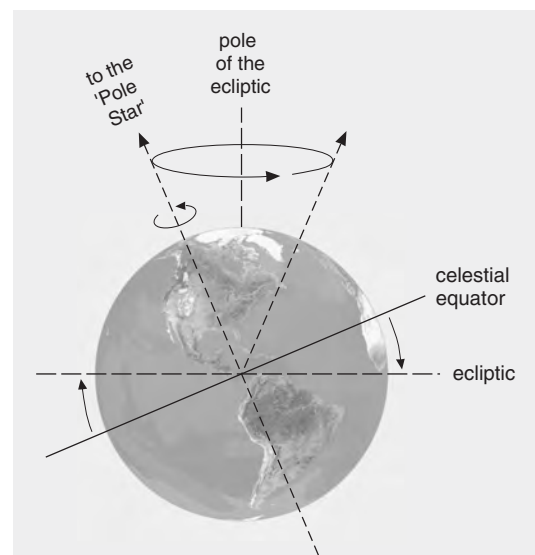
the Vedas, Tilak demonstrated that the description in the ancient Vedic hymns of the position of the constellation Orion at the vernal equinox, necessitated dating the composition of these hymns back to 4500 B.C. His 1903 *The Arctic Home in the Vedas* extended the time-frame back even further, to the period of the last Ice Age.

Tilak’s discovery that the Vedic hymns communicated ancient astronomical and calendrical knowledge metaphorically, has been seconded in recent decades in the demonstration that an advanced, astronomical culture predated Egypt’s Old Kingdom (2600-2250 B.C.), thus laying the basis for the emergence of the “Pyramid Age.” Most of the symbols which are associated with ancient Egyptian religion and mythology—the Scorpion king, the figures of bulls, rams, and lions (ie, the Sphinx)—have their cognates in well-known zodiacal constellations, such as Scorpius, Taurus, Aries, and Leo.

It is in this tradition that Edna Johnson Leigh put forward her hypothesis, that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer, “represent an ancient people’s thoughts related to the science of astronomy and expressed in the form of elaborate narrative poetry.”

It is not clear that Leigh was acquainted with Tilak’s work. But she was raised in an early-Twentieth century American intellectual tradition—

FIGURE 1. *Precession of the equinoxes. The precession appears as a gradual shift in the apparent position of rising and setting stars on the horizon, as well as a shift in position of the celestial pole. This phenomenon arises because the Earth’s axis of rotation rotates (precesses) around an imaginary axis called the “pole of the ecliptic,” the direction perpendicular to the ecliptic plane (or plane of Earth’s orbit) on which the belt of zodiacal constellations is located.*



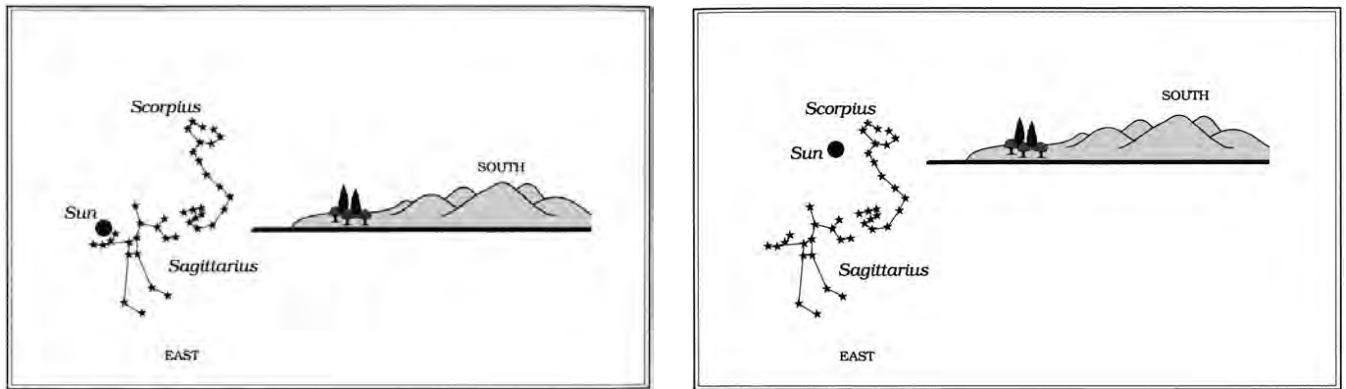


FIGURE 2. Shift of heliacal constellations as observed in different eras. (a) The sun rises in Sagittarius at the autumnal equinox, c. 6500 B.C. (b) The sun rises in Scorpius at the autumnal equinox, c. 4400 B.C. Illustrations from “Homer’s Secret Iliad.”

educated in the Greek Classics, John Keats, and classical music, and with a passion for astronomy, which had been kindled by fellow Kansan Clyde Tombaugh’s 1930 discovery of Pluto. While it is impossible to do justice to Leigh’s argument, and to the book’s articulation of it in this space, an introduction to her essential hypotheses should whet the reader’s appetite.

Astronomy and the Iliad

Leigh argues that the 45 regiments detailed in the *Iliad*’s famous “Catalogue of Ships” in Book II, represent 45 constellations. Part of the evidence derives from a poem, “Phaenomena,” written by Aratus in 270 B.C., in honor of the Fourth-century B.C. mathematician, Eudoxus, a collaborator of Plato. The poem identifies 45 constellations, but places them in a position appropriate to the skies of 3000-1800 B.C. Not only do the number of constellations in Aratus match the number of regiments in the *Iliad*, but Aratus’s poem is further evidence of poetry’s reach into the night skies of the past.

It follows from the comparison of regiments and constellations, that individual stars represent individual warriors, with the brightest star in each constellation representing one of the main characters: Achilles as Sirius in Canis Major; Odysseus as Arcturus in Bootes; red-haired Menelaus as the red giant Antares in Scorpius; Agamemnon (of Lion-gated Mycenae) as Regulus in Leo; and so forth. Some of the drama in the *Iliad* follows the nightly

motion of these constellations across the night sky.

But the real breakthrough is the identification in the *Iliad* of the changes in the night sky caused by the precession of the earth’s axis—a cycle of approximately 26,000 years, known as the “precession of the equinoxes” [SEE Figure 1].

The main changes caused by precession are: First, the shift in the heliacal constellations (the constellations which rise with the sun at equinox or solstice) [SEE Figure 2]; second, the emergence and disappearance of a particular band of stars, depending upon latitude; and, third, the change in the North Star, as the Earth’s axis traces out a circle, similar to the circle traced out by the axis of a wobbling top [Figure 1].

According to Leigh, Homer portrays the changeover in heliacal constellations, by the death or victory of the main warrior in the zodiacal constellation. Thus, for example, Menelaus of

Scorpius is attacked by Pandarus of Sagittarius; Menelaus lives and Pandarus dies, mirroring the change from Sagittarius to Scorpio, in the heliacal constellation on the autumnal equinox—a shift which took place around 4400 B.C. (The approximate date of Homer’s composition of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* was c. 800-700 B.C.) The shift in the vernal heliacal constellation is recorded in the same way, as are the shifts which took place during the next change of heliacal constellations around 2200 B.C. [SEE Figure 3].

(In ancient cultures, it was common for the precession-caused disappearance of a constellation at equinox or solstice to be portrayed metaphorically by the death of an associated mythological figure; e.g., the death of Osiris in the Egyptian religion, was originally a description of the disappearance of Orion as a heliacal constellation, around 6700 B.C.)

Constellation	Date of entry	Duration
<i>Autumnal equinoxes</i>		
Capricornus (Peiros)	8000 BC	1,500 years
Sagittarius (Pandarus)	6500 BC	2,100 years
Scorpius (Menelaus)	4400 BC	2,600 years
<i>Vernal equinoxes</i>		
Cancer (Diores)	8000 BC	1,500 years
Gemini (Sarpedon)	6500 BC	2,100 years
Taurus (Idomeneus)	4400 BC	2,600 years

FIGURE 3. Chronological chart of heliacal constellations at equinox, presented metaphorically by Homer. Reprinted from “Homer’s Secret Iliad.”

Through such heliacal changes, Homer has taken us back to 4400 B.C. But it is the return of Achilles, as the star Sirius, to the battlefield, which moves the astronomical calendar back to 8700 B.C. Sirius, the brightest star in the Northern Hemisphere, disappeared from the skies above Greece around 15,000 B.C., owing to precession. Its appearance (or reappearance, if indeed such knowledge had been handed down from an earlier, Ice Age civilization) would have been dramatic. The authors argue convincingly, that the emphasis placed on Achilles' return to the battlefield, to which Homer devotes several books, represents this singular event.

One of the most elaborate descriptions in this section of the epic, is that of the smith-god Hephaestus creating a new shield for Achilles. It is here that Homer presents us with a direct astronomical image: "He wrought the Earth, the heavens, and the sea, the moon also at her full and the untiring sun, with all the signs that glorify the face of Heaven—the Pleiades, the Hyades, huge Orion, and the Bear, which men also call the Wain and which turns round forever in one place, facing Orion, and alone never dips into the stream Oceanus." These particular constellations mark the area of the night sky in which Sirius and its constellation, Canis Major, reappeared [SEE Figure 4].

Not New Age Kookery

Homer's Secret Iliad is rich in the elaboration of its hypotheses, such as its discussion of the gods and goddesses as planets, able to wander throughout the ecliptic band of the skies and, thus, influence the fate of the mortals, who are the fixed stars, and hence fixed in their actions. The book provides dozens of examples to bolster each of its arguments, which are extensive. Florence and Kenneth Wood spent years, following the death of Edna Leigh in 1991, working through her hypothesis, and fitting hundreds of examples into the architecture which Leigh had created.

In the introduction to the book, Ken-

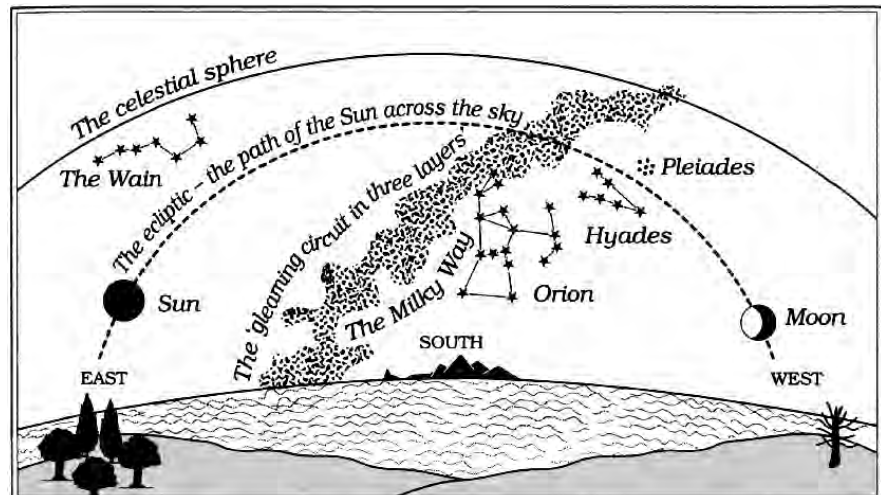


FIGURE 4. In describing how Hephaestus created the great shield of Achilles, Homer referred to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, and the stars shown in the diagram. Illustration from "Homer's Secret Iliad."

eth Wood describes the cold reception accorded to himself and his wife, when they presented their analysis to establishment academia. Fortunately, they came in contact with serious scholars, such as Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Deschend, authors of the 1983 *Hamlet's Mill*, who are themselves investigating how the knowledge of precession shaped ancient civilizations; their studies have already pushed the calendar of civilization much farther back than the oligarchy would like.

Work of this sort is very different from the school of outright New Age kooks, who have many popular books currently in circulation, which present the evidence of ancient societies' knowledge of precession and astronomy, as magical, mysterious, or even coming from aliens from outer space. (One might call this the "Edgar Cayce" school of history, after the agent who claimed that his knowledge of the extreme antiquity of Egypt came from his ability to "channel" the knowledge directly from ancient Egyptians.) Instead, *Homer's Secret Iliad* joins the growing list of serious contributions in many disciplines piling up each year, which demonstrate that mankind has advanced, through his powers of cognition and discovery, throughout tens of millennia—rather than stumbling from one cultish civi-

lization to the next over the last 2,500 years.

British Racist Evans

Returning to *Minotaur* and the life of Sir Arthur Evans, we can see how the British oligarchy will stop at nothing to enforce that latter conception. If one approaches MacGillivray's thoroughness from such an overview of the intellectual battle afoot, then the book is a goldmine. Without that overview, the text becomes tediously academic.

Arthur Evans was born in 1851, to a middle-class businessman father who had been picked up by British Royal Society circles, and groomed as a promising lackey in the relatively new field of archaeology. The young Evans was raised on a diet of Darwin, Huxley, and Aryan racial superiority. As MacGillivray reports, "Evans came to Oxford just as the Aryans marched from myth into history, and he was as proud as any other to proclaim his connection to them." Evans' racism was unabashed; he wrote in 1875 that, "I believe in the existence of inferior races and would like to see them exterminated." He became the son-in-law of racist historian Edward Freeman, who once publicly expressed the wish that every Irishman would murder a Negro, and then be hanged, for the greater good of the Germanic race. (Evans' marriage to

Margaret Freeman, who shared the racist views of her father and new husband, was one of convenience, since Evans was a homosexual, whose sexual proclivities became public toward the end of his life.)

Evans just barely graduated from Oxford, thanks to the intervention of his father and Freeman. His first assignment was as an intelligence agent deployed under the government of Prime Minister William Gladstone. Not yet 20 years old, Evans was arrested by the French as a spy in Paris in 1870, during the Franco-Prussian war; then arrested by the Austrians in 1875 in Zagreb, during an insurrection against the Ottoman rulers; and finally arrested again in the Balkans in 1882.

Deployed vs. Schliemann

It was time to redeploy Evans, and his new assignment was to destroy the work of Heinrich Schliemann, and “replace” him as the preeminent archaeologist of Bronze Age Mediterranean cultures. Schliemann, a German businessman, was a lifelong lover of Homer’s epics, who became convinced that Troy and Mycenae were not fictional locations, but grounded in history. He devoted his life to proving this—discovering, and excavating, first, Troy, and then, Mycenae.

Evans was introduced to Schliemann in 1883 in Athens. In 1884, he was given the necessary credentials for his new career, and was appointed to head Oxford’s Ashmolean Museum. During this period, the British, through Oxford, were running an “inside/outside” operation against the influence of the Greek Classics in education. Benjamin Jowett, representing the “pro-Classical” side, was deployed to translate Plato’s dialogues, so as to beat the ideas out of them, and render Plato an ancient Newtonian. Jowett’s crime continues to this day, by the preponderance of his translations in modern editions.

Evans was groomed to cover the other side, attacking the “excess” reliance on the study of the Greek Classics, and, then, sabotaging the study of the origin of Greek culture.

That Schliemann was diverted from

travelling to Crete in 1883 and in 1885, in order to be honored by the British Royal Society and Queen Victoria herself, could not have been coincidental. Eventually travelling to Crete in 1886 and 1889, he was never able to obtain excavation rights, and died in Italy in 1890, on his way back to Greece and Crete. The possibility that his enemies orchestrated his demise should not be overlooked.

Evans arrived in Crete in 1893 and spent the next four decades creating a “Minoan” civilization in the image dictated by his, and his controllers’, perverted worldview. Evans’ assignment was to portray Crete as a mysterious, relatively advanced, autochthonous soci-



Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Sir Arthur Evans, at the excavation site at Knossos.

ety, which gave rise to “Minoan” (Mycenaean) civilization, and from it, Classical Greece. As MacGillivray demonstrated in the magazine article quoted above, Evans deliberately ignored, obscured, and even destroyed evidence that Crete and Mycenae were outposts of Egyptian colonization and science.

The ‘Minoan’ Myth

MacGillivray describes in detail how Evans simply rebuilt the palace at Knossos, and other structures, to conform to his preconceived fabrication of Minoan society. Even the term “Minoan” is

Evans’ creation; there is no evidence that the people of Crete ever called themselves “Minoan.” (Prior to his trashing of Cretan history, Evans had performed a similar intellectual fraud on Stonehenge, describing it as a cult center of a prehistoric Aryan belief system, rather than the advanced astronomical observatory which it was in c. 3000 B.C.)

Along with this, MacGillivray provides extensive documentation of Evans’ appropriation and manipulation of the work of some of his colleagues, and his outright destruction of the careers of others. Not only did Evans cripple the archaeological investigation of Cretan civilization, but he delayed for over fifty years a crucial breakthrough in the study of the early Greek language. Evans had discovered hundreds of baked clay tablets with a hitherto undiscovered form of writing on them, known as Linear B. In order to enforce the idea that Crete was an isolated, unknown culture, Evans insisted that the language could not be an early form of Greek. He refused to make the inscriptions available to others during his lifetime. It wasn’t until the 1950’s, a decade after Evans’ death, that Michael Ventris, a young British architect and cryptographer, proved to the astonishment of the world’s experts, that the language of the Linear B script was, indeed, an early form of Greek.

Evans’ life and work exemplify the British oligarchy’s method of holding back scientific advance. Through suppression of evidence—and, more importantly, through brutal imposition of ideological assumptions—Evans reigned as the High Priest of a scientific inquisition for more than fifty years.

Over recent decades, the discrediting of Evans, and of other elements of British-controlled archaeology, have broken that inquisitorial control, and scientists and amateurs, such as Edna Leigh, are now making valuable contributions to the discovery of mankind’s true pre-history. It is *that* history which the controllers of the Sir Arthur Evanses of this world fear the most.

—Susan Kojinda