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*Minotaur: Sir Arthur Evans and the Archaeology of the Minoan Myth* (review)

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of tone) on science studies, by Steven Feierman on writing the colonial history of Africa, by Caroline Bynum on writings, modern and medieval, about “the body,” and by Jerrold Seigel on the problematics of the self are valuable, and in Bynum’s case genuinely innovative. For the rest, they are harmless enough, but there is rather more of wheel spinning than there is of traction.

—Clifford Geertz

**Joseph Alexander MacGillivray, *Minotaur: Sir Arthur Evans and the Archaeology of the Minoan Myth* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000), 373 pp.**

Schliemann, as we all know, discovered the ruins of Troy, circa 1871, and hung jewelry, said to have been Helen’s, on his Greek wife Sophie, for a photograph. A little less widely known is Sir Arthur Evans’s work, beginning in 1894, on the palace at Knossos, in Crete. There he found the Labyrinth that was built to contain a bull-headed monster, the Minotaur. Neither Schliemann nor Evans had a scholar’s credentials. What they both had was (1) enough money to finance their explorations and (2) a belief in the essential veracity of classical myths, as that there *had* been a Trojan War, over a woman named Helen, or that there was indeed substance to Greek tales of the monster hidden in the maze. It’s not surprising, therefore, that both of them have been subjected to scholarly “correction,” based on evidence they were perhaps too naive to comprehend. Professor MacGillivray’s book isn’t immune from that tendency, but it does offer us, in its central 100-plus pages, a full enough account of the Cretan excavations and reconstructions. One could wish to be able to search the details of larger illustrations—they tend to come four or five to a page—and for less space devoted to Evans’s possible sexual proclivities, but what we have is a good survey of how one man helped relate Greek myth to demonstrable fact.

—Hugh Kenner

**Barbara Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550–1720* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 280 pp.**

“Matters of fact,” “evidences of the fact,” “truth of the facts,” “discourses of the fact,” “notorious matters of fact,” and the more emphatic “undoubted certainty of the matters of fact” emerged in the lexicon of an early modern England with an ever-increasing and “popular taste for facts.” In Shapiro’s formulation, then,