

## 1: Minoan Crete -- The Palace of Knossos 3

*Read this book on Questia. Few modern travelers, in these breathless days of rapid transit by plane or motor car, have either the time or the opportunity to wander on foot and alone over a Greek island.*

The Minotaur was a half man, half bull, and was kept in the Labyrinth "a building like a maze" by the king Minos, the ruler of Crete. Before he entered the Labyrinth to fight the Minotaur, Ariadne gave him a ball of thread which he unwound as he went into the Labyrinth so that he could find his way back by following it. Theseus killed the Minotaur, and then he and Ariadne fled from Crete, escaping her angry father. Axes were scratched on many of the stones of the palace. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. October Learn how and when to remove this template message Fieldwork in revealed that during the early Iron Age, Knossos was rich in imports and was nearly three times larger than indicated by earlier excavations. Whilst archaeologists had previously believed that the city had declined in the wake of a socio-political collapse around BC, the work found that the city had prospered instead, with its final abandonment coming later. The city had two ports: Many of them were inscribed with Knosion or Knos on the obverse and an image of a Minotaur or Labyrinth on the reverse. The Romans believed they were the first to colonize Knossos. Discovery and modern history of the antiquities Main article: Knossos modern history The site of Knossos was discovered in by Minos Kalokairinos. From the layering of the palace Evans developed an archaeological concept of the civilization that used it, which he called Minoan, following the pre-existing custom of labelling all objects from the location Minoan. Since their discovery, the ruins have undergone a history of their own, from excavation by renowned archaeologists, education and tourism, to occupation as a headquarters by governments warring over the control of the eastern Mediterranean in two world wars. This site history is to be distinguished from the ancient. Palace complex The features of the palace depend on the time period. Currently visible is an accumulation of features over several centuries, the latest most dominant. The palace was thus never exactly as depicted today. In addition, it has been reconstituted in modern materials. The custom began in an effort to preserve the site from decay and torrential winter rain. The palace is not exactly as it ever was, perhaps in places not even close, and yet in general, judging from the work put in and the care taken, as well as parallels with other palaces, it probably is a good general facsimile. Opinions range, however, from most skeptical, viewing the palace as pure fantasy based on s architecture and art deco, to most unquestioning, accepting the final judgements of Arthur Evans as most accurate. The mainstream of opinion falls between. Location View to the east from the northwest corner. In the foreground is the west wall of the Lustral Basin. View to the south. The hill in the background is Gypsades. Between it and Knossos is the Vlychia. The South Entrance is on the left. Reception courtyard in the palace of Knossos. The Royal family would entertain guests here. Members of the court would stand on the tiered platforms in the background. Most of the structures, however, were designed to serve a civic, religious and economic center. The term palace complex is more accurate. It had no steep heights, remained unfortified, and was not very high off the surrounding ground. These circumstances cannot necessarily be imputed to other Minoan palaces. It can, however, be said that Knossos bore no resemblance to a Mycenaean citadel, whether before or during Mycenaean Greek occupation. The complex was constructed ultimately around a raised Central Court on the top of Kephala Hill. The previous structures were razed and the top was made level to make way for the court. Either arrangement is confusing unless the compass points are carefully marked. Kephala Hill is an isolated hill at the confluence. In ancient times the flow continued without interruption. Today the stream loses itself in the sewers of Heraklion before emerging from under a highway on the shore east of the port. It flows down from higher ground at Arkhanes to the south, where part of it was diverted into the Knossos Aqueduct. The water at that point was clean enough for drinking. Looming over the right bank of the Vlychia, on the opposite shore from Knossos, is Gypsades Hill, where the Minoans quarried their gypsum. The limestone was quarried from the ridge on the east. The archaeological site, Knossos, refers either to the palace complex itself or to that complex and several houses of similar antiquity nearby, which were inadvertently excavated along with the palace. To the south across the Vlychia is the Caravanserai. Further to the south are Minoan houses. The

Minoan Road crossed the Vlychia on a Minoan Bridge, immediately entering the Stepped Portico, or covered stairway, to the palace complex. Near the northwest corner of the complex are the ruins of the House of the Frescoes. Across the Minoan Road entering from the northwest is the Arsenal. On the north side of the palace is the Customs House and the Northeast House. From there to the northeast is the modern village of Makrotoichos. Between it and the palace complex is the Royal Villa. On the west side is the Little Palace. Today a modern road built over or replacing the ancient, Leoforos Knosou, serves that function and continues south. The excavated ancient Royal Road is part of the complex. The junction of the ancient and the modern roads is partly over the Little Palace. Just to the northwest of there, off the modern road, is where Evans chose to have Villa Ariadne built as his home away from home and an administrative center. The villa is on a slope overlooking the ruins. At the edge of the property, on the road, is a pre-excavation house renovated many times as a residence for the official Keeper, called the Taverna. Immediately to the south of the villa, over parts of the Little Palace, is the modern Stratigraphical Museum, a square building. Excavation continues sporadically on its grounds. To the south of the museum is a modern settlement across from the entrance to the west court. Parking facilities are to the north, off Leoforos Knosou. A band of fields has been left on the northwest between the palace complex and the city streets of Heraklion. The east and west are protected by north-south mountain ridges, between which is the valley of the Kairatos. General features Magazine 4 with giant pithoi placed by the archaeologists for display. When full, they were multi-ton and immovable. They were sunken for easier access to the wide mouths and for support. The great palace was gradually built between and BC, with periodic rebuildings after destruction. Structures preceded it on Kephala hill. The 1, rooms are connected with corridors of varying sizes and direction, which differ from other contemporaneous palaces that connected the rooms via several main hallways. Within the storerooms were large clay containers pithoi that held oil, grains, dried fish, beans, and olives. Many of the items were processed at the palace, which had grain mills, oil presses, and wine presses. Beneath the pithoi were stone holes that were used to store more valuable objects, such as gold. The palace used advanced architectural techniques: Water management The palace had at least three separate water-management systems: The aqueduct branched to the palace and to the town. The pipes were tapered at one end to make a pressure fit, with rope for sealing. This toilet was a seat over a drain that was flushed by pouring water from a jug. This toilet and bathtub were exceptional structures within the 1,room complex. As the hill was periodically drenched by torrential rains, a runoff system was a necessity. It began with channels in the flat surfaces, which were zigzag and contained catchment basins to control the water velocity. Probably the upper system was open. Manholes provided access to parts that were covered. Some links to photographs of parts of the water-collection-management system follow.

## 2: Why Is The Palace At Knossos Known As The House Of The Double Axes?

*The House of the Double Axe; the palace at Knossos [Agnes Carr Vaughan] on [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com) \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers.*

Louis University According to ancient mythology, King Minos built a perplexing labyrinth to house the Minotaur, a monstrous creature to which his wife had given birth. Each year, the myth states, seven girls and seven boys were chosen to enter the labyrinth as tributes to become food for the Minotaur. Once inside, they wrestled with their demons, experienced a rebirth, and finally, emerged as adults ready to take their places in society. The myth of the labyrinth can thus be understood as a rite of passage or a coming of age ritual in ancient Greece. It was this mythological labyrinth that Sir Arthur Evans believed he had discovered at the Palace of Knossos, located just a few miles from the city of Heraklion on the island of Crete. Floor Plan of Knossos Palace Source: John McEnroe, Architecture of Minoan Crete Evans is typically credited with the unearthing of this vast palace, but he was not the first person to dig on this site, nor was he the first to find the citadel. A Cretan businessman named Minos Kalokairinos first discovered the palace in While digging in the area, Kalokairinos unearthed some walls of the palace complex, as well as some large pithoi stone storage jars. The Ottoman Empire, which controlled the island at this time, forced Kalokairinos to stop and refused to grant him permission to excavate further. Curious as to what they were, Evans asked the dealer where he acquired them. The dealer explained they came from Crete. He went there with the intent to find the meaning of the stones and discovered that they were milk stones , used as charms by Creteian mothers breastfeeding their newborns. Evans, familiar with the myth of the Minotaur, hoped to find the labyrinth used to hold the creature. Almost immediately, he began discovering the ruins of a building sprawling over many acres, with twists and turns in every direction he looked. Proclaiming success, Evans claimed that he had unearthed the palace of King Minos and its labyrinth. Minoan Double Axe, c. Evans gave the palace this name because he discovered double axes in many of the rooms, as well as axes carved into the walls of the citadel. To keep Cronos from hearing the cries of the infant Zeus, Gaia made the priests who inhabited the cave clash their weapons together and stomp loudly upon the ground. Some scholars have stated that the double axe is possibly a symbol representing the thunder-god, or the Minoan Zeus. The male attendant next to Zeus also holds a double axe. Professor Spyridon Marinatos was also excavating in the cave on Mount Ida and discovered a side chamber containing hundreds of sacrificial axes, though most were miniatures and not intended for actual use. Along with the axes, there also appeared to be an altar. During other excavations in the cave, a bronze shield was discovered depicting the infant Zeus and his protectors, the priests. These artifacts prove that at least some of the inhabitants of the island were worshiping Zeus. Double axes also have a ceremonial connotation and were used in the ritual sacrifice of bulls to the gods. Evans even went so far as to name one of the rooms at Knossos the Hall of the Double Axes, implying its ritualistic nature. Prayers and other rituals were performed with each sacrifice, to ensure the prosperity of the people. The second name given to the Palace of Knossos was the House of the Labyrinth. When looking at the architectural plans of the palace, there appears to be no logical order to its arrangement. With no central axis, the rooms seem as if they were placed in random spots, making the navigation of the palace confusing. The maze-like design of the complex led Evans to think that the palace was the labyrinth. When examining the ground floor of the palace, Evans discovered a meander pattern decorating the floor. The pattern ran in only one direction, towards the middle of the complex. Many cultures throughout history use labyrinths and characteristically design them for inner enhancement and development, a path for one to experience. Across cultures, they all share the same meaning: A labyrinth has only one entrance and one exit. As people move along the pathway, taking its many twists and turns, they are expected to clear their minds and reflect upon life. They enter the labyrinth with a particular question or goal in mind, and as they walk through, they are meant to contemplate their question. Once they reach the center, they are to have found the answer for which they were looking, so on the return trip they could emerge with a new understanding. By looking at the labyrinth in this way, one can see how it compares to the journey of life. Going through the labyrinth is like the trek every individual must take growing up. The myth of the labyrinth

began with Minos of Crete trying to become King. To secure the throne he made a deal with Poseidon and asked him if he would send a bull to show the Cretans that he was the rightful heir to the throne. Poseidon agreed under one condition: Minos must sacrifice the bull in honor of him. When Minos received the bull, however, he decided to keep it as a pet. This grotesque creature sickened Minos, but instead of killing the beast, he decided to imprison the monster. He too called on Daidalos, to construct a maze-like structure to house the Minotaur, and Daidalos built a labyrinth with many twists and turns that was impossible to escape. Upon hearing of his many victories, King Aigeus, ruler of Athens at the time, urged Androgos to battle the bull of Marathon. As a consequence, Aigeus was forced to pay tribute every year of seven girls and seven boys to become food for the Minotaur. He did this with the intention of going to Crete to kill the Minotaur and stop the human sacrifices. At once, the tributes and Theseus set sail for the Island of Crete where they would face their destinies. Knowing that Theseus would never find his way out of the labyrinth, she went to Daidalos and asked for help; he gave her a golden ball of yarn that would help to guide Theseus through the maze. Once they met, a great battle ensued. In a time when most people were not able to read or write, myths were the most efficient way to transmit knowledge. They taught people about morals, as well as things that were relevant to everyday life. By defeating the Minotaur, Theseus was able to prove to his father that he was ready to ascend the throne. The Minotaur in the center of the labyrinth represents the demons that Theseus must overcome or the questions for which he must find answers. Once he wrestled with his demons, he then retraced his steps and emerged with a new understanding of life. In his book *Ritual: In their culture, the youths are put through a test prior to their initiation into adult society. A monster, represented by a gluttonous creature who demands young people to satisfy its cravings, symbolically kills them. The elders in the Australian society use a bullroarer to represent the voice of the creature; it produces a low methodical roar, which is meant to inspire fear in the children. The result, according to Anna Freud, is that the personality changes. The ritual would most likely coincide with puberty*—not physical puberty, which happens at different ages, but social puberty that marks an epoch of life in which every society accepts the children as new members in the adult society. Growing up in any culture, children pass through stages of life that mark milestones. Some cultures have elaborate rituals that go along with each milestone. The life of a wealthy aristocrat would differ significantly from the life of a slave. Girls and boys were raised the same until the age of seven; they would mainly stay at home with their mothers. After the age of seven, depending on social class, it was predetermined what happened next. Boys who were lucky enough started their education, ending their bond with their mothers and taking the first steps to becoming an adult. They would spend the day learning from their paidagogos male tutors until the age of eighteen when they would enter the military. The women in the community taught the girls how to be good wives. They learned the art of cooking and textile-making, as well as dancing. Other children would become apprentices or work in the fields with their fathers. Unfortunately, the child of a slave could only become a slave. They took that journey to the next phase of their lives, not knowing what to expect. When one enters a school, they begin to learn about many different topics; the questions in life become clearer, and in turn they change and grow as people. This process is similar to traversing the labyrinth: The purpose of journeying into the labyrinth is to emerge a changed person with a new understanding and perception of life. The labyrinth represents the journey every person is forced to make. They have to pick their path on blind faith, hoping they choose the right one. While they walk the pathway of the labyrinth, they are presented with obstacles arising from deep within themselves. By overcoming these problems as they arise, they are taught essential life lessons. The paths taken in life are similar to traveling through a labyrinth because no one knows where they will lead or if it is the right path. In the myth, Minos stated he hated the Minotaur and wanted to keep it a secret that his wife had copulated with a bull and gave birth to such a monstrous creature. What is interesting is that Minos himself came from a human-bull union. His mother was Europa, the daughter of the king of Tyre. All the while, Zeus was watching her from afar, admiring her beauty. He came up with the idea to turn himself into a bull and seduce her. As Europa approached the bull, he seized her and carried her across the sea to the island of Crete. He took her into the cave on Mount Ida where his grandmother had hidden him away from his father. They mated, and she gave birth to three sons, one of them being Minos. Moreover, it was a custom for Minos, to go to the cave on Mount

Ida every nine years to meet with his father, Zeus. They would discuss the way Minos should run the government, as well as what laws he should enact. Gaia concealed Zeus there, Zeus and Europa conceived Minos there and every nine years Minos would meet his father for a consultation. The meander pattern began framing frescoes, and vases began showing up with the same wandering designs. Many coins were discovered on the Island of Crete often illustrating the famous legend of the island.

## 3: Knossos. Shrine of the Double Axes & Industrial Quarter

*Written by the author of other books on Mediterranean civilization and history, another of the many recent books on Crete and the Minoan culture, this is concerned less with the discovery and exploration of the Island of Minos than with daily life in the great house of the Double Axe at Knossos from.*

It is easily reached by public bus from Heraklion as it is right on the south edge of the city. It covers an area of 20 square metres and is the most spectacular of the Minoan palaces. You also must separate the palace from the city of Knossos which existed even after the palace ceased to. There have been many excavators at Knossos. Large scale efforts failed until Arthur Evans came on the scene, as they were not able to purchase the land due to the high price demanded by its owners. The excavators tried in the following sequence: In it was first excavated by Minos Kalokairinos, a Cretan merchant and antiquarian. He discovered part of the west wing magazines of the palace and a section of the west facade. Stillman, the American Consul in Greece. Heinrich Schliemann, the excavator of Mycenae and Troy, along with W. Joubin, a French archaeologist. Finally, in , the systematic excavation of the palace began under the direction of Sir Arthur Evans His work was interrupted in by the Balkan Wars, but was resumed from until , when the investigation of the West Court and the palace was completed. Between BC, the Minoan civilization peaked with Knossos as the most important city-state. In 15th century BC, the Mycenaean from the Greek Mainland had increasing influence or conquered the island of Crete and settled at the palace of Knossos. It is known from the clay tablets written in Linear B preserved by fire in this case they used the Greek language. These periodic destructions were caused by earthquakes accompanied by fire, probably started by upset oil lamps and cooking fires. The city of Knossos had citizens and continued to be an important city until the early Byzantine period. The Palace is connected with the myth of the Labyrinth, and Theseus verses the Minotaur, but it is highly likely the legends actually refer to a cave system near Gortyn. There is no real trace of a labyrinth at Knossos, but there are caves near Gortyn, which has had the legend of the Labyrinth associated with it. The west side of the Palace had the chambers for ceremonies, temple repositories, administration rooms, and the large magazines store rooms of pithoi storage jars. The main palace building with the throne room is in the west wing. Further to the west of the palace is the west court of the palace and the theatre, where all the ceremonies and gatherings took place. The East side of the Palace, was the most architecturally complex, with many more floors, verandas and official rooms with wonderful frescos. Click on Image to Expand. See bibliography from Minoan Main Page for sources. You enter the Palace through the West Court. Its walls were decorated with a fresco depicting a procession The Prince of Lilies fresco is in the south propylon off the corridor , which today is exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion. Moving ahead you enter the Central Court at the south end. Moving north in the central court you pass by the temple repositories religious artifacts were found here of the west wing, the grand staircase to the upper floor of the west wing, and finally the Throne room itself. Taking the grand stairway up to the second floor allows you to look down on the pithoi magazines. While it is argued that the restorations are not authentic, it is the only restored Minoan site in existence. If you are interested in seeing an extremely interesting site and getting a feel for what a multi-story Minoan palace might have been like, it is the closest thing you will ever find. The photos below shows the reconstructed NW corner of the palace with the Bull fresco everyone takes a picture of this thing. The throne room at Knossos. The throne is on the right hand wall and the walls are covered with the famous griffon fresco. The bowl is not original to the room. Storage magazines at Knossos from the backside of the main palace building west wing. These many passages help to give the impression of a labyrinth amidst the many hallways of the Knossos site. North Lustral Basin, used for ritual purposes. Giant pithoi from the east wing of the palace. Shield Room from the east wing showing frescos with the number 8 shield design. Another view of Knossos with a religious horns of consecration shown in the middle. South side of the Great Palace. The blocks in the front are called ashlar masonry as they are finely fitted. The dark spots are charring from fire. Most Minoan sites underwent a "Fiery Destruction" at one or more times. A closeup of the horns of consecration shrine from the picture above. Horns of Consecration played an important role in Minoan religion and were found in shrines, murals, and

were even architectural features. Some sample double axes recovered from the ruins of double axe shrines. These are in the archeological museum in Heraklion. These are very large bronze blades and are not normal sized samples. Often the bases of one of these double axe altars could be a Horns of Consecration. It served as public baths with running water, where the traveller or visitor to Knossos could bath. Heraklion Heraklion is modern city with Knossos on its outskirts. It has the largest population and port in Crete. There are even vestiges of Venetian fortifications here. It is the capital of the prefecture of Herakleion and the administrative capital of the entire island that lies almost in the middle of the north coast. The city boasts of an excellent archeological museum, is just outside ancient Knossos, and close to the interesting archaeological areas of: Phaistos, Ayia Triada, Gortyn and Malia. It is a thriving city with an active nightlife. I noticed there were a large number of video arcades, coffee shops and bars in this city along one main street where the hostel is located. In the off-tourist season, it can be difficult to find good restaurants open unless you are a local I suppose, and it can be quite cold in the winter. I was here in January and froze my butt in the nice unheated hostel as it was near zero celcius a couple of nights.

## 4: The symbol of the Double Axe - Picture of The Palace of Knossos, Knosos - TripAdvisor

*It is not connected with double axes, it is connected (to some extent) with a double headed axe. In Greek mythology, King Minos dwelt in the palace of Knossos, where he had Daedalus construct a.*

A labrys from Messara Plain. In Greek mythology, King Minos dwelt in a palace at Knossos. He had Daedalus construct a labyrinth, a very large maze by some connected with the double-bladed axe, or labrys in which to retain his son, the Minotaur. Daedalus also built a dancing floor for Queen Ariadne. The myth of the Minotaur tells that Theseus, a prince from Athens, whose father is an ancient Greek king named Aegeus, sailed to Crete, where he was forced to fight a terrible creature called the Minotaur. The Minotaur was a half man, half bull, and was kept in the Labyrinth – a building like a maze – by the king Minos, the ruler of Crete. Before he entered the Labyrinth to fight the Minotaur, Ariadne gave him a ball of thread which he unwound as he went into the Labyrinth so that he could find his way back by following it. Theseus killed the Minotaur, and then he and Ariadne fled from Crete, escaping her angry father. As it turns out, there probably was an association of the word labyrinth, whatever its etymology, with ancient Crete. The sign of the double axe was used throughout the Mycenaean world as an apotropaic mark: Axes were scratched on many of the stones of the palace. It appears in pottery decoration and is a motif of the Shrine of the Double Axes at the palace, as well as of many shrines throughout Crete and the Aegean. And finally, it appears in Linear B on Knossos Tablet Gg as da-pu2-ri-to-jo po-ti-ni-ja, which probably represents the Mycenaean Greek Daburinthoio potniai, "to the mistress of the Labyrinth," recording the distribution of one jar of honey. Hellenistic and Roman period[ edit ] This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. October Learn how and when to remove this template message Fieldwork in revealed that during the early Iron Age, Knossos was rich in imports and was nearly three times larger than indicated by earlier excavations. Whilst archaeologists had previously believed that the city had declined in the wake of a socio-political collapse around BC, the work found that the city had prospered instead, with its final abandonment coming later. The city had two ports: According to the geographer Strabo the Knossians colonized the city of Brundisium in Italy. The city employed a Phocian mercenary named Phalaikos against their enemy, the city of Lyttus. In the 3rd century BC Knossos expanded its power to dominate almost the entire island, but during the Lyttian War in BC it was checked by a coalition led by the Polyrrhenians and the Macedonian king Philip V. Many of them were inscribed with Knosion or Knos on the obverse and an image of a Minotaur or Labyrinth on the reverse. The Romans believed they were the first to colonize Knossos. Discovery and modern history of the antiquities[ edit ] Main article: Knossos modern history The site of Knossos was discovered in by Minos Kalokairinos. The excavations in Knossos began in by the English archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans – and his team, and continued for 35 years. Its size far exceeded his original expectations, as did the discovery of two ancient scripts, which he termed Linear A and Linear B, to distinguish their writing from the pictographs also present. From the layering of the palace Evans developed an archaeological concept of the civilization that used it, which he called Minoan, following the pre-existing custom of labelling all objects from the location Minoan. Since their discovery, the ruins have undergone a history of their own, from excavation by renowned archaeologists, education and tourism, to occupation as a headquarters by governments warring over the control of the eastern Mediterranean in two world wars. This site history is to be distinguished from the ancient. Palace complex[ edit ] The features of the palace depend on the time period. Currently visible is an accumulation of features over several centuries, the latest most dominant. The palace was thus never exactly as depicted today. In addition, it has been reconstituted in modern materials. The custom began in an effort to preserve the site from decay and torrential winter rain. After, the chief proprietor, Arthur Evans, intended to recreate a facsimile based on archaeological evidence. The palace is not exactly as it ever was, perhaps in places not even close, and yet in general, judging from the work put in and the care taken, as well as parallels with other palaces, it probably is a good general facsimile. Opinions range, however, from most skeptical, viewing the palace as pure fantasy based on s architecture and

art deco, to most unquestioning, accepting the final judgements of Arthur Evans as most accurate. The mainstream of opinion falls between. Location[ edit ] View to the east from the northwest corner. In the foreground is the west wall of the Lustral Basin. View to the south. The hill in the background is Gypsades. Between it and Knossos is the Vlychia. The South Entrance is on the left. Reception courtyard in the palace of Knossos. The Royal family would entertain guests here. Members of the court would stand on the tiered platforms in the background. From an archaeological point of view, the terms "Knossos" and "palace" are somewhat ambiguous. The palace was never just the residence of a monarch, although it contained rooms that might have been suitable for a royal family. Most of the structures, however, were designed to serve a civic, religious and economic center. The term palace complex is more accurate. In ancient times, Knossos was a town surrounding and including Kephala Hill. This hill was never an acropolis in the Greek sense. It had no steep heights, remained unfortified, and was not very high off the surrounding ground. These circumstances cannot necessarily be imputed to other Minoan palaces. Phaestos , contemporaneous with Knossos, was placed on a steep ridge, controlling access to the Mesara Plain from the sea, and was walled. It can, however, be said that Knossos bore no resemblance to a Mycenaean citadel, whether before or during Mycenaean Greek occupation. The previous structures were razed and the top was made level to make way for the court. The court is oblong, with the long axis, which points north-northeast, generally described as pointing "north". Plot plans typically show the court with the long axis horizontal, apparently east-west with the north on the right, or vertical with the north on the top. Either arrangement is confusing unless the compass points are carefully marked. Directly to the south is Vlychia Stream, an east-west tributary of the north-south Kairatos River. Kephala Hill is an isolated hill at the confluence. In ancient times the flow continued without interruption. Today the stream loses itself in the sewers of Heraklion before emerging from under a highway on the shore east of the port. It flows down from higher ground at Arkhanes to the south, where part of it was diverted into the Knossos Aqueduct. The water at that point was clean enough for drinking. Looming over the right bank of the Vlychia, on the opposite shore from Knossos, is Gypsades Hill, where the Minoans quarried their gypsum. The limestone was quarried from the ridge on the east. To the south across the Vlychia is the Caravanserai. Further to the south are Minoan houses. The Minoan Road crossed the Vlychia on a Minoan Bridge, immediately entering the Stepped Portico, or covered stairway, to the palace complex. Near the northwest corner of the complex are the ruins of the House of the Frescoes. Across the Minoan Road entering from the northwest is the Arsenal. On the north side of the palace is the Customs House and the Northeast House. From there to the northeast is the modern village of Makrotoichos. Between it and the palace complex is the Royal Villa. On the west side is the Little Palace. Today a modern road, Leoforos Knosou, built over or replacing the ancient roadway, serves that function and continues south. The excavated ancient Royal Road is part of the complex. The junction of the ancient and the modern roads is partly over the Little Palace. Just to the northwest of there, off the modern road, is where Evans chose to have Villa Ariadne built as his home away from home and an administrative center. The villa is on a slope overlooking the ruins. At the edge of the property, on the road, is a pre-excavation house renovated many times as a residence for the official Keeper, called the Taverna. Immediately to the south of the villa, over parts of the Little Palace, is the modern Stratigraphical Museum, a square building. Excavation continues sporadically on its grounds. To the south of the museum is a modern settlement across from the entrance to the west court. Parking facilities are to the north, off Leoforos Knosou. A band of fields has been left on the northwest between the palace complex and the city streets of Heraklion. The east and west are protected by north-south mountain ridges, between which is the valley of the Kairatos. The compartments in the floor were the permanent locations of pithoi , or storage jars, like these, which stored wet and dry consumables, such as wine, oil and grain. When full, they were multi-ton and immovable. They were sunken for easier access to the wide mouths and for support. The great palace was gradually built between and BC, with periodic rebuildings after destruction. Structures preceded it on Kephala hill. The features currently most visible date mainly to the last period of habitation, which Evans termed Late Minoan. The palace has an interesting layout [41] [42] [43] €” the original plan can no longer be seen due to the subsequent modifications.

## 5: Labrys - Wikipedia

*Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.*

Given the narrow doorway that leads into the hall, this seems unlikely. More likely it was used by those needing to access the north part of the Palace. This passage way was originally open to the elements but some time after BCE it was covered over. It is thought that there may have been a dining area above the North Pillar Hall. Inside the Pillar Hall itself a large number of incised clay tablets were found, which suggests that this was an administrative area. Being close to an entrance to the Palace, the area may have been used to record produce as it was brought into the Palace. The North Pillar Hall may also have been a place where people newly arrived at the palace would gather. Parts of the hall have been heavily restored, including some of the pillars and steps. It was here that the Bull Relief Fresco was found. Opposite this chamber there would originally have been another, also decorated with a fresco. The north east corner of the Palace was found to be badly damaged when it was excavated and this makes it difficult to understand what the area was originally used for. The north east corner contained a large number of store rooms. Among the finds was a large number of clay cups. Perhaps this is where meals were prepared before being taken to the refectory. After the destruction of BCE many of the storerooms in this area and in the East Wing were filled in. The East Wing The east side of the palace would have consisted of four levels of which three remain. There would have been one level above the central court, one level adjacent to the central court and the two levels below the central court, cut into the side of the hill. The last three still exist. The lower floors, designated the residential quarters by Evans, are reached by the Grand Staircase, which would also have continued up to the upper floor. The north end of the East Wing originally comprised store rooms and rooms where craftsmen worked and is known as the Temple Workshops. Some of the rooms had benches in them. The walls in this section are so strong that they probably had to support a storey or storeys above. The drainage system The Sanctuary of the Great Goddess no longer exists, only the remains of the cellars below can be seen today. But as was so often the case, when the building collapsed a large number of objects from upper floors fell through to the ground floor and many of these were recovered during the excavations. Among the finds was sanctuary equipment including a small three-pillar shrine and altars, one of which had horns of consecration on top. A statue of a goddess, possibly three metres high, almost certainly existed as bronze locks of hair were found in the cellars. The Sanctuary was reached up a flight of twelve stairs from the Central Court. Beyond this area the drainage system is still preserved to the east of the Room of the Stone Drain Head. The excavation of the Grand Staircase proved to be a major headache to Evans and his team, not least because it was actually quite a dangerous undertaking. Amazingly much of the staircase had been preserved in place even though a lot of the support had been built using wood which had carbonised in the ensuing period. There are 54 stairs in the staircase which descends four flights to the Hall of the Double Axes. On their way down, the stairs open onto two colonnaded landings. At the bottom of the stairs lies the Hall of the Double Axes itself. Many argue that it is unlikely that the royal apartments would have been located in this part of the palace. Not only are they at the bottom of four flights of stairs, but the original building would also have had several storeys above ground level. The light wells would not have allowed much light to penetrate into the rooms down here and they do indeed look very gloomy today, even without the missing additional storeys. Moreover, not far from here there were workrooms used by craftsmen and it is argued that royal apartments would not have been located so close to such an area. It has been suggested that the area would have been more suited to the carrying out of religious ritual. The Hall of the Double Axes was a double chamber with an inner and an outer space. The inner space could be closed off by eleven sets of double doors. A similar arrangement can be seen in the "royal rooms" at the Palace of Phaistos. Presumably some aspects of religious ritual were public and others were not, and so it was necessary to be able to close off the inner area from the view of others. The area takes its name from a Dolphin Fresco which was found here in pieces, although it probably fell from the floor above during

the destruction of the palace. A replica of the fresco now adorns the north wall. A lustral basin adjoined the Dolphin Sanctuary and this area now contains a "bathtub" which was found some distance away and not in the lustral basin at all. Evans had some problems with bathrooms at Knossos. In the Throne Room, Evans could not accept that the sunken area was a bathroom as it was located only four metres from the throne so he decided it was a place of ritual purification. But here, in his royal apartments he was quite happy to interpret the lustral basin as an ordinary bathroom. As it approaches the Palace, the road divides into two. One road goes to the theatral area, while the other road leads to the West Court. Originally it would have passed through the Minoan town on the way to the palace. A little imagination is now needed to picture it as it would have originally been because today it passes along a deep, tree-lined trench. The theatral area The theatral area is a paved area thirteen metres by ten. Around it is an L-shaped area of steps which would offer standing room for about people. Given the size of the town and the palace itself, this area does not accommodate a particularly large number of people. There are a number of areas of the Palace that have not been dealt with in this brief description. In particular, the lower southern part of the East Wing and the independent structures to the south of the palace have not been described. For a fuller description of the Palace one of the many guide books to the Palace of Knossos should be consulted.

## 6: Myth, Ritual, and the Labyrinth of King Minos - Armstrong Undergraduate Journal of History

*A version of this archives appears in print on November 22, , on Page BR22 of the Sunday Book Review with the headline: People Of the Bull; THE HOUSE OF THE DOUBLE AXE: The Palace at Knossos.*

Since this labyrinth is named after the island of Crete, the question that arises is "What is the nature of the connection between Crete, the labyrinth and the myth? But is this true? Homer writes in the Iliad of the eighth century BCE, "Out in the dark blue sea there lies a land called Crete, a rich and lovely land, washed by the waves on every side The topmost layer was the Palace of Knossos. Earthquakes had destroyed it as it had the palace and pre-palatial dwellings beneath it. Evans named the culture "Minoan" after King Minos of whom Homer writes. The myth of Theseus slaying the Minotaur in the center of the labyrinth is the most pervasive basis for the existence of the labyrinth in ancient Crete. The excavations unearthed a multitude of references to this myth. There were brilliantly colored frescos of young women and men performing "bull vaulting". Could these bull-vaulting performances be the enactment of the myth? In any case, It seems obvious that the bull was used in some form of ritual performance and that the myth was more than poetic fantasy. A multitude of images and artifacts give evidence of the divine power held in the symbolism of the bull and the double axe - horns of consecration, golden seals with dancing figures, statues of bulls, sacred horns, statues of a goddess holding the double axe, and maze-like meander pattern frescoed on the walls of a corridor. The double axes held in the hands of the BCE Knossos Goddess may be understood, like the serpents, as symbolizing her rulership over the related domains of life and death. Some say the legendary labyrinth was the palace itself. This palace, also known as the "Palace of Minos" and the "House of the Double Axe," was made up of five great palace complexes of labyrinthine complexity. It was multistoried with as many as one thousand five hundred rooms. Deep within this complex was the ritual center. There is mention of extensive catacombs on the side of the ridge overlooking Knossos as well as a cave that opens on the side of Mount Ida that were explored by G. Tournefort, a French botanist, on July 1, 1 At every ten steps one was arrested, and had to turn to right or left, sometimes to choose one of three or four roads. First, although labyrinth images are found in such disparate places as Brazil, Arizona, Iceland, Europe, Algeria, Scandinavia, Egypt, India and Sumatra, none has ever been found in Crete that could be dated during the Minoan civilization. In fact, the only material evidence that a labyrinth existed in Crete is the labyrinth engraved coins dated c BCE - almost a millennium after the Minoan civilization ended. Up until recent times, the oldest verifiably dated labyrinth was a 7-circuit labyrinth incised into a clay tablet found in Pylos, Greece, circa BCE. In other cultures, elliptical lines that trace the path of the sun and moon or other symbolic patterns were inscribed in floors as guides for ceremonial dancing. Third, the myth describes a maze not a labyrinth. A "maze" sets up challenges and confusion with its many pathways and dead ends. A "labyrinth" is unicursal, having only one pathway that leads you to the center. The labyrinth symbolically represents the journey into the other world and the return - a death of one state and rebirth into another. The symbolism of the maze as it is used in the Myth of Theseus and the Minotaur however does represent this larger mystically meaning. Finally, it seems that The Palace of Knossos became know as the labyrinth by a confusion of terminology. The primary emblem of the Palace of Knossos was the double axe. The Lydian ancient country on the Aegean word for the double axe is labrys. It was much later when visiting Greeks saw the bewildering ruins of the palace that the name labrys came to be applied to its maze-like , complexity and in turn for the palace itself to be referred to as the labyrinth or maze. Tracing the history of the connection between the labyrinth, the Palace of Knossos the myth and the Island of Crete can never be conclusive. Few cultures have survived as long or have had such a persistence of symbolic forms and images throughout its uninterrupted development. What we find is a fascinatingly rich culture, full of grace and beauty, alive in its symbolic expression, and joyous in its dance and celebration of life and nature. Jane Buckman is a professional artist with an interest in earth spirituality, symbolism, myth and sacred space. Her paintings and sculptures have been exhibited internationally since Visit her website at [www](http://www).

## 7: The Palace of Knossos - Welcome Greece

*In Greek mythology, King Minos dwelt in a palace at Knossos. He had Daedalus construct a labyrinth, a very large maze (by some connected with the double-bladed axe, or labrys) in which to retain his son, the Minotaur.*

Shrine of the Double Axes Excavation of the Shrine of the Double Axes The southern part of the East Wing is an area of small rooms and corridors that appears to have been religious in character. There are storerooms and magazines, lustral basins and light-wells. Fragments of painted plaster and pieces of stucco relief suggest that there was an important hall or set of rooms upstairs but the only actual cult room that Evans found is the Shrine of the Double Axes. The room is tiny, barely a metre-and-a-half square, with a plastered clay bench at the back. It was installed, according to Evans, by squatters who reoccupied the site of the palace shortly after its final destruction. On the bench was a pair of sacred horns with sockets to hold small bronze double-axes. Around them were a number of terracotta figurines—a goddess with upraised arms, a pair of priestesses cupping their breasts and a pair of male votaries. In front of the bench was a raised area, paved with water-worn pebbles, a tripod altar and a collection of LMIIIb vessels. Industrial Quarter The area to the north of the Domestic Quarter was dedicated to storage facilities and small workshops—in the lower levels, at least. A doorway near the east end of the East-West Corridor led into a suite of that included a cellar room where the filled contained a cache of flecked green porphyry known as lapis Lacedaemonius along with a couple of unfinished amphorae made out of the same material. Beyond to the room with the lapis is another with a bench in one corner. Evans thought it was a school room but it was more probably a Potters Workshop. At the northern end of the suite was a small open area known as the Court of the Stone Spout right because of a drain outlet that projected into the court from high up the east wall. Bits of a number of similar scenes were found but this is the most complete. Along the side of this block of rooms is the East Portico, a four columned verandah overlooking the valley of the Kairatos. No treads were found but presumably it was a stairway. The terrace wall, which shows evidence of several rebuildings, was severely damaged by the earthquake that finally destroyed Knossos. However, Evans uncovered a large block of masonry, which he called the East Bastion, at the end of the aforementioned passageway. The bastion included a postern and a set of steps that, after a number of turns, led to the bottom of the terrace and out to the meadows beyond. It was in this low-lying ground between the palace and the Kairatos River that Evans envisioned as the arena for the bull-games. Next to the Central Court is a rectangular block of basement rooms including magazines equipped with large storage jars and smaller rooms with cult vessels and kitchen ware. Several of the rooms contained loom weights that had fallen from the floor above, indicating that weaving took place there. Fragments of painted plaster and stucco reliefs together with a pair of column bases suggest that a large hall of considerable importance Evans called it the East Hall occupied one of the upper storeys—perhaps the one level with the Central Court. In the fill on the northern edge of the block a number of faience plaques were found, part of a panel or group of panels known as the Town Mosaic above left. Originally, they probably decorated a wooden box or chest but that has long since disintegrated. The pieces include fragments of landscapes, animals, marching soldiers and the prow of a ship but most notable are the towers and houses of a seaside town. The buildings are very carefully rendered and show many details of construction that proved very useful to Evans in his reconstruction of the palace. He thought the complete composition was a siege scene, similar to the one that appears on a silver vessel from Mycenae. A remarkably similar version of a complete scene was found painted on the walls of a house at Akrotiri on the island of Thera right. Running north is the Passage of the Draught Board Evans found a game board made of crystal, faience and ivory along with gaming pieces which runs past a room with a rather well preserved drainage system. A downspout brought rainwater to a long stone conduit which led to the outlet on the wall of the Court of the Stone Spout.

## 8: Knossos - Wikipedia

*What did the Union victory in the Battle of Shiloh mean for the Union? 1)It won the war in the West for the Union. 2)It gave the Union greater control of the Mississippi River valley.*

Houses and urban form; pottery Click to enlarge The Second Palace at Knossos was surrounded by houses of the same period, which varied in size and complexity. For example, the South House, located just below the south-west corner of the palace, was built partly of cut stone, and had at least two floors and a basement. The house had rooms divided by pier-and-door partitions, a pillar crypt, lustral basin, and plumbing; one room had a wall-painting of a bird. The plan of the house shows that several groups of valuable artefacts were recovered: Though many governmental functions were probably carried on within the palace, valuable and prestigious objects did circulate beyond its limits. Symbols and Motifs Double axe, from side. Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford Several objects and designs clearly had great symbolic meaning for the Minoans - even though we may not know exactly what their significance was. Double axes occur in two forms - solid functional axes, and axes made of thin, almost foil-like metal sheets, which could never have been used. Double axe, from side. In the South House there was a conical stand for a double axe, perhaps like the thin examples already mentioned. Steatite vase fragment from Knossos. Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford Horns of consecration have already been mentioned. This stone steatite, also called soapstone vase fragment shows a horn of consecration set on an altar-like structure outdoors, with a man walking or dancing?? Faience figurine of Snake Goddess, from Knossos. This female figurine, made out of faience, holds a snake in each hand. She is known as a snake goddess, but we have no way of determining whether she was a deity, a priestess, or a snake handler. It is made of serpentine with horns added separately. Bull-leaping fresco, from Knossos. Ivory statuette of an acrobat, from Knossos. Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford And finally, marine motifs such as the octopus on this jar may also have had some religious significance, as vessels decorated in the Marine Style are usually found with other items of cult equipment. The Tripartite Shrine on the west side of the Central Court was mentioned above. Temple and Grand Stand fresco. The Temple and Grand Stand Fresco is thought to depict this shrine. Fresco of Sacred Grove and Dance. It has been suggested that the West Court may have been used for religious ceremonies. The Temple and Grandstand Fresco gives an idea of what these might have been like. Libation table from Dictaeon Cave, with Linear A inscription. Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford Outside the palace there were other kinds of cult places, such as peak sanctuaries set on relatively low hilltops with a good view of a major site and its territory. The peak sanctuary for Knossos is on Mount Juktas nearby. View from inside the Dictaeon Cave This stone libation table inscribed in Linear A see below was found in the Dictaeon Cave in eastern Crete. Entertainment The Theatral Area, Knossos. Gaming board, from Knossos. But perhaps the best evidence for entertainment is this object identified as a gaming board. Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford The stone libation table from the cult cave was inscribed in Linear A, a script whose language we do not know. Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford The Minoans also kept track of commodities in transit by using stamp seals. Seals, and sometimes sealings - the impressions they left on clay used to close vessels and parcels - have been studied in order to understand this aspect of Minoan rule. Foreign Contacts Ivory statuette of an acrobat, from the Palace of Knossos. The ivory used to make the acrobat came from either Egypt or Syria. Crete had many contacts in Egypt. Some Minoan frescoes depict monkeys, which were not native to the island. Wall-painting from the tomb of Senmut at Thebes in Egypt, ca. Water colour of fresco fragment with bull and male? From remains of garden near Hyksos Palace, Egypt. Further Reading Author s: University of Texas Press Published in: Yannis Tzedakis, Holley Martlew. Flavours of their Time Year:

## 9: Life in Neo-Palatial Knossos

*Humanities Chapter 4 Quiz. STUDY. Why is the palace at Knossos known as the House of the Double Axes? Representations of double axes decorated it.*

The whole of the site, including all of the outlying buildings and tombs, covers an area of about 80 hectares acres. Although there is evidence of occupation throughout, it is difficult to estimate its density but the size suggests an urban area with a population of several thousands. Obviously, the central and most important building was the palace but there were a number of smaller buildings containing ceremonial elements. More about them in a future article. The first was a massive earthquake, which apparently destroyed all of the palaces in Crete some time around BC. It is almost certain that this was directly linked to the volcanic eruption that blew the island of Santorini apart at about the same time. Like the other palaces, Knossos was immediately rebuilt, bigger and better than before. The second was probably the result of the capture of the city by Mycenaean Greeks from the mainland in approximately BC. Texts found in association with this phase of occupation were written in Linear B, which most scholars are convinced was an early form of Greek. Although this palace survived relatively undamaged, all of the others were destroyed and abandoned. The usual explanation is that the newcomers used Knossos as their headquarters and destroyed all rival centres of power. Occupation continued until perhaps as late as BC when the site was again destroyed by fire. This time it was not rebuilt. The ruins visible today belong primarily to the Second Palace Period—a somewhat larger version of the one destroyed by the earthquake of ca. At first glance, the layout seems rather rambling and haphazard but in reality it was very carefully thought out. It covered an area of approximately x metres 2. As was the case with contemporary palaces elsewhere in Crete, the focal point of the complex was a large, rectangular Central Court and, like most of the others Zakro being the exception there was an extensive open area along the west side of the palace known as the West Court. The West Wing contained most of the cult rooms and formal areas—as well as most of the storage facilities for agricultural products. It is generally believed that the upper storey included a number of halls with large windows overlooking the West Court where the elite of the palace watched the ceremonies taking place below. The East Wing was apparently far less formal. It included the industrial areas and workshops of the palace—and probably the domestic apartments as well. Stone was the primary building material on the ground floor, at any rate with a timber frame construction to provide flexibility in case of earthquake. The standard stone wall consisted of a mix of rubble and clay with facings of dressed masonry but solid masonry walls have also been found, Wood was used for the upper storeys and for all columns, roofs, door and window frames—these were reproduced in cement by Evans in the course of his restoration of the site right. The interior walls were plastered with clay and, if they were to be painted, with a second coat of lime plaster. The floors of the more utilitarian rooms were generally of beaten earth but other materials include a type of cement mixed with small pebbles that Evans called tarazza as well as flagstone paving. Gypsum slabs were used for interior surfaces and limestone for areas such as courtyards that were exposed to the elements. Lighting and ventilation in such a large complex presented a number of problems for the builders. Arranging the rooms around large courtyards in the time honoured Near Eastern fashion reduced them somewhat but could never be the complete solution. While there is good evidence for windows in the upper storeys, ground floor windows raise issues of security and privacy and were probably used sparingly if at all. Some of the interior rooms could be lit by raising the height of the ceiling above that of the surrounding rooms and placing clerestory windows high on the walls. Obviously this method could not be used in every room and another solution was required. The answer was to use light-wells, vertical air shafts that ran the full height of the building. Some rooms could be opened up by means of a shuttered door system known as a polythyron. The photo above left shows the foundations of polythyrons in the Hall of the Double Axes. Drainage—a fundamental factor in the architecture of a building of this size—was looked after by an elaborate system of terracotta pipes and stone ductwork. The sections of pipe right were long and tapered, with collars to ensure a snug fit when joined together and sealed with clay. Many of the larger ones had one or more pairs of handles to aid in manoeuvring them. The engineering of the

system was very precise with the gradients carefully measured. Not only were the builders able to deal with the sudden torrential downpours that occur periodically in the Cretan winter but were able to harness the flow to dispose of waste water from latrines and industrial areas of the palace. The best preserved section is beneath the domestic quarters in the East Wing and will be dealt with more fully in that part of the article. The network of pipes fed into larger, stone drains in each section of the complex. These were quite capacious and Evans was able to trace one that ran under the North Entrance Passage and North Pillar Hall, and into the neighbouring field.

**Polythyrons** In the course of his excavations Evans uncovered a number of sets of multiple doors, which have come to be known as polythyrons or pier-and-door partitions. Essentially, these consist of a series of openings framed by square-sectioned wooden piers. Each wooden door is double-leafed and designed so that the two leaves fit into reveals on either side of the partition. They are not hinged but rather the whole door turns in sockets in the stone threshold and wooden lintel.

**Reconstruction of the Polythyron doorways in the Hall of the Double Axes** Reconstruction in Watercolour by Piet de Jong The standard interpretation is that they were purely functional and used in much the same way as shuttered windows, to create privacy and to let in fresh air and light or to keep them out, as the case may be. There were quite a number of them in what Evans identified as the Domestic Quarters at Knossos. However, the number of doors seems excessive and the arrangement would have been most inefficient, especially in the winter. Certainly, the Hall of the Double Axes at Knossos shown restored, above has three ranges of polythyrons with no less than 11 doors, which seems a little extreme. More recently, it has been argued that they were associated with ritual activities that required, in the course of their proceedings, to be quickly darkened or lit.

**Appearance** The palace at Knossos was built on a more human scale than the great palaces and temples of Mesopotamia and Egypt but it was still an awe-inspiring structure. It is true that the main focus seems to be inwards, on the Central Court that was the common feature of all Minoan palaces. The same sort of thing can be found at Phaistos and Mallia. At the north end was a block of broad steps, known as the Theatral Area, at the end of a long, straight paved roadway. At Phaistos there is a very similar arrangement. The device, like much else in Aegean Bronze Age civilization, was borrowed from Anatolia. The seal impression left was found at Chania and depicts a young, heroic figure undoubtedly a god standing on a mountain peak above a large, rambling building, its rooftops crowded with exactly such horns. From paintings we learn that the Minoans were particularly fond of deep, rich reds and blues in their decorative schemes. Walls and architectural elements such as columns or pillars were stuccoed and painted. Architraves the beams supported by the columns and other flat surfaces were often decorated with chequerboard, running spiral or rosette patterns, carved in limestone.

**Function** When Arthur Evans excavated the site at the beginning of the last century, he identified the building as a palace, a logical interpretation at the time. It was clearly a large complex and in the Near East at the time there were only two sorts of large complexes—temples and palaces. Both were monumental in scale but temples tended to be much more formal in their layout with all of the major elements arranged along a single axis. Monumentality was the key in the most important temples, at any rate, to reinforce the awesome power of the god. The epitome of this tendency was the ziggurat, a stepped platform with a temple at the top such as the one, right, at Ur in southern Iraq. These often rose to heights of 50 metres or more, towering over the city below. Egyptian temples of the time were similarly monumental, with enormous pylons leading to a sequence of open courts and columned halls and finally to the sanctuary itself, at the heart of the complex. The layout of the complex at Knossos was a much more random affair—at first glance, at any rate. There was no main axis and no real symmetry to the design. Much of the interior was given over to storage space and workshops. The other rooms are generally small and intimate. Evans identified small suites that he took to be domestic quarters. These were generally provided with light wells and polythyrons to ensure privacy yet also provide access to verandahs and small courts. The plumbing was excellent, with an elaborate system of latrines, drains and bathing facilities. Of course, the first thing he had discovered here was clearly a throne room—there was even a throne sitting against the wall! Apart from the size, there was nothing particularly monumental about it—no stepped tower; no grand entrance—nor was there anything that could be described as a cult image such as the colossal statues found elsewhere. There was art everywhere, but apparently no mythological scenes or depictions of cult activity. It all must have seemed much like the ideal life of a Victorian gentleman to Evans.

However, it is now clear that the throne room was a late addition, that the young man was not a king but a god, and that the games and other activities had a religious function. Moreover, there are no scenes of military triumphs nor processions of slaves and booty that typify the ideology of kingship in the ancient world. While it is true that there is no large sanctuary corresponding to the cella of a later Greek temple, there are a quite a number of smaller shrines within the complex including pillar crypts and lustral basins discussed in more detail later. Even the throne room has been plausibly re-interpreted as a shrine. In fact, it is widely suspected that if anyone sat on that throne, it was probably a woman, either a priestess or a goddess. Women are commonly the focus of attention in the murals found at Knossos and men often reduced to the role of attendants.

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