

## KNOSSOS IN CRETE ISLAND

### Engineering geological conditions and problem:

- Knossos is the site of the most important and better known palace of Minoan civilization. According to tradition, it was the seat of the legendary king Minos. The Palace is also connected with thrilling legends, such as the myth of the Labyrinth with the Minotaur, and the story of Daidalos and Icaros.
- The site was continuously inhabited from the Neolithic period (7000-3000 B.C.) until Roman times. The Linear B tablets (Mycenaean script) of the 14th century B.C. mention the city as ko-no-so.
- An earthquake and probable eruptions of Thira volcano destroyed the town before 1890 BC. The new Palace built in 1700 BC and destroyed in 1570 BC, by an earthquake. It was rebuilt in 1450 BC and redestroyed in 1375 BC. A new town which was built, was destroyed definitively in 823 AD.
- Weathering of natural building materials is an important cause of damage.

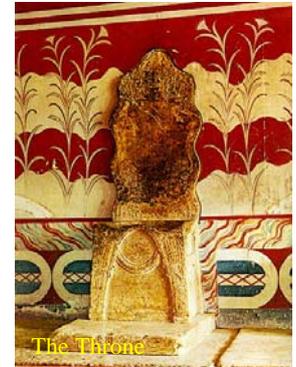


### Protection measures already have been taken or have to be taken:

- Restoration of buildings
- Conservation of the building stones consisting mainly of biogenic limestone, marly limestone and gypsum.
- Conservation of frescos is also needed

The restoration of Knossos Palace to its present form was carried out by Arthur Evans. The interventions were mostly imposed by the need to preserve the monuments uncovered. The Archaeological Service of the Ministry of Culture carries out only consolidation work, whenever necessary.

Frescos, 14-12th c. BC



The Throne



The Palace

### References on studies already performed:

- 23th EPHORATE OF PREHISTORIC AND CLASSICAL ANTIQUITIES: Reports on excavations and restoration-conservation activities.
- MORAITI, E & CHRISTARAS, B. (1991): Weathering of marly limestones used in the antiquities of Crete, Greece. Stratigraphy and mechanical consideration. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Int. Symp. Conserv. Monum. Medit. Basin, pp. 483-492
- SAVIGNIONI, L. & DE SANCTIS, G. (1901). Esplorazione Archaeologica delle provincie occidentali di Creta. Mon. Ant., Rona, vol. 11, pp. 72-110.