

LES FRESQUES DU PALAIS DE CNOSSOS:
ART MINOEN OU ART NOUVEAU?

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ABSTRACT

The early twentieth century restoration of the site of Knossos has provoked controversy for more than a hundred years. Critics attack not only the architectural reconstructions, but also the restoration of many of the frescoes. They are often depicted as being marked by the artistic and cultural context of the time, but these arguments are lacking. How should we consider the material legacy of the English archaeologist Arthur Evans? Closer to an amusement park, or simply worthy of a scientific caution?

This article attempts to assess the reliability of the restoration of the frescoes, and to better understand their resemblance to Art Nouveau. It is possible that there were contemporary influences. In order to measure their importance, the training and artistic tendencies of restorers are first discussed. Finally, the restoration of the most emblematic frescoes of the site of Knossos is analyzed.