

## REPRODUCTIONS OF OFFERINGS TO THE CRETAN SNAKE GODDESS

*West  
Room*

Very little is known of the religion of the prehistoric Cretans. Like many primitive peoples, they seem to have worshiped a female deity, the Mother goddess. Their religion seems to have been almost monotheism, for while the Mother goddess had a youthful consort she quite overshadowed him. Her most common attribute is the snake, and for that reason she is often called the snake goddess. In the palace at Knossos she had a shrine, which has been excavated. In this shrine were found a number of small objects, apparently votive offerings. These are reproduced in case III in alcove C. The goddess herself is represented (No. 1) wearing a dress of distinctly modern character, consisting of a fitted skirt and a low cut jacket with tight sleeves. Snakes coil about her body and high headdress. A second figurine (No. 2) represents a votary of the goddess. Among the votive offerings are a cross like the modern Greek cross (No. 6), two dresses (No. 4), and various animals—flying fish (No. 5), a goat (No. 8) and a cow (No. 7) with their young.