

LA COROPLASTICA DI PRINIÀS NEL CONTESTO CULTUALE CRETESE DELLA TARDA ETÀ DEL BRONZO

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ABSTRACT

The oldest clay votive figurines, which were found on the Patela hill, near Priniàs, date back to the LM IIIC period (1200-1070). They are, mostly, female figures with up-raised arms, traditionally interpreted as idols, but there are also bovine figures and a fragment probably pertinent to a fantastic being. Almost all of them come from an open area to the east of the settlement, but a small group of fragments was unearthed in the Hellenistic layers (residual finds) of the nearby fortress and another one in a site to the south of the Patela hill. Despite their fragmentary state, the study of the votive objects from Priniàs, based on stylistic and technological analysis, allows us to connect them to the coeval Cretan productions. Furthermore, the analysis of the topographical features of the find-spots and the comparison with contemporary Cretan shrines allow us to make some assumptions on the social significance of the religious practices performed by the community who lived in the settlement during the first phase of its history.