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The “Lady of Zominthos”

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The “Lady of Zominthos”

Jaimee Uhlenbrock

- 1 During the 2020 season of excavation at the mountain-top palace complex of Zominthos on Mount Psiloritis in central Crete, several terracotta figurines of particular interest were found. They were brought to light among other finds from Room 65 in a group of buildings called the “Northern Complex” that belonged to the New Palace Period. However, the figurines and associated finds were found under an altar in a level belonging to a previous phase of the palace that dated to the Protopalatial period, around 1900 B.C.E.
- 2 The figurines, called idols in the many news reports, are hand modeled and in technique and style are characteristic of other Middle Minoan figurines from Cretan peak sanctuaries. At least one bull figurine was among the finds from beneath the altar (Fig. 1), but there also is at least one standing female (Fig. 2). Believed to be significant for Zominthos, this female figurine has been dubbed by the excavators “The Lady of Zominthos,” a name that has been taken up by many news media outlets. The location of the later altar directly over the figurines is strongly suggestive of cult continuity.

Fig. 1 – A bull figurine

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Fig. 2 – Fragmentary figurine of the Protopalatial period named the “Lady of Zominthos”

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ABSTRACTS

Several news outlets for October 2020 have reported the discovery of a Middle Minoan terracotta figurine dubbed “The Lady of Zominthos.”

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