

LA LISSÈ PETRE IN OD. III, 293-296, ED I TERRITORI DI GORTINA E DI FESTÒS IN EPOCA ARCAICA

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with a passage of the Odyssey (3.293-296) and other related sources regarding the Southern coast of Crete between Gortyn and Phaistos. According to the interpretation put forward, the lissèpetre here mentioned corresponds to the Lithinos Cape. It is described as the border between the territories of Gortyn and Phaistos. As other sources show, the lissèpetre is also known as Lissès or Lissèn. It does not correspond to the *Maleou - mikròslithos*, which is referred to in the same Odyssey passage. The latter cape appears to be the small headland that protects Kommos from the South, and which was the harbour of Phaistos.

The territory of Phaistos included the Western Mesara. Starting from the early Archaic period it extended from the Lithinos Cape Northwards, including the earlier harbour of Phaistos-Kommos – and the later one – Matala. The latter only became the harbour of Gortyn after it conquered Phaistos around the middle of the 2nd Century BC.

The territory of Gortyn comprised the Eastern Mesara. In the Archaic period it developed from the Lithinos Cape Eastwards. On the coastline the territory of Gortyn included the emporion-harbour of Lebena. This harbour goes back as early as the Iron Age, as a newly identified site shows: it is located behind the headland of Lebena. Along the Southern coast there were other harbours in the territory of Gortyn: Lasaia - KaloiLimenes, and the polis and hormos of Amyklaion, which has yet to be found.