

Silvia Paltineri

The Ligurians

I Liguria and the Ligurians according to literary sources

The term “Ligurians” (Greek *Lígyes*; Latin *Ligures*; Etruscan *Lecuste/Lecste*) has been in use since the Archaic Period (de Marinis and Spadea 2007, 17–25) to describe an ancient people located in a large territory along the coastline of the western Mediterranean, up to the Pillars of Hercules. The *Periplus* of Pseudo-Scylax (fourth century BC) stated that this territory extended from the Rhone to Antion (Antibes/Antipolis), where the land of the Tyrrhenians begins. We turn to later authors for an indication of the extent of this territory inland: Cato states that the Lepontii belonged to the Tauriscian peoples (themselves, as Taurini/Taurisci, generally considered to be Ligurians) whereas Livy stated that the Laevi and the Marici, who founded Pavia, were Ligurians. According to Polybius the mountains area from the Maritime Alps to the Apennines was Ligurian territory (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 9–15, 21–25; Venturino Gambari and Gandolfi 2004, 11–16). Philistus of Syracuse argued that the Sicels, expelled by the Umbrians and the Pelasgians, were descendants of the Ligurians. This context, interestingly, allows us to connect this source with the Hellenistic and Roman accounts of Cyncus, the king of the Ligurians who was changed into a swan after Phaethon’s death. The Ligurians were also believed to be the first inhabitants of Corsica. Additionally, the sources for the western labours of Hercules (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 11–13) note the Ligurians as controllers of the passes of the western Alps and the routes from Italy to the Iberian peninsula.

The rugged land, the limited resources and the harsh living conditions led the Ligurians to engage in mercenary activities (Melli 2014, 95). Ligurian mercenaries are mentioned as soldiers in the army of the Carthaginians during the Battle of Himera (480 BC), an alliance that lasted until the Punic Wars. In addition to being merchants and sailors the Ligurians were known as pirates: a negative portrayal which reflects the context of the conflict with Rome (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 17–19).

II The Territory

Although recent years have witnessed an increase in the volume of archaeological evidence, the context of the pre-Roman record in Liguria is still fragmentary and

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Fig. 1. Map of the Ligurian groups (elaborated by Silvia Paltineri)

mixed. In addition, many important sites remain unpublished. Despite these shortcomings it is still possible to trace the general lines of a historical trajectory from the formation phase to the time of Romanization. But, as we shall see, it is clear that Liguria was fully involved in the great transformation of the western Mediterranean.

The geographic area of the Ligurian groups (Fig. 1) extended from southern France with the coastal and mountain areas of Liguria reaching from the Maritime Alps through the Ligurian Apennines to the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines. These boundaries, on the basis of the archaeological record, do not appear to have been fixed, and they varied with time. A distinctly Ligurian territory came only with administrative organization of this area under Augustus: the *Regio IX (Liguria)* was situated between the Varus (mod. Var) river (southeast France), the Macra (mod. Magra) river (now the eastern boundary of the territory) and the Po river (now the northern boundary) (Fig. 2).

The Ligurian-Etruscan border changed several times during the Iron Age. According to the archaeological evidence in northwestern Tuscany, the area between the Arno and the Magra rivers seems to have been culturally aligned with the Etruscans in the early Iron Age (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 219–223), whereas the same area seems to be under Ligurian control in the late Iron Age. This fluctuation of borders is evident in Livy (41.13.4) who states that the territory of Luna (mod. Luni) was under



Fig. 2. The Ligurian territory with the main Roman roads under Augustus (from Wikipedia; free from copyright)

the control of the Etruscans before passing to the Ligurians (Paribeni 1990; de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 369–371; Venturino Gambari and Gandolfi 2004, 191–204).

The border with the Celtic world, on the other hand, began to emerge in the thirteenth century BC and hardened at the end of the Bronze Age (ca. 1180–ninth century BC) (Venturino Gambari and Gandolfi 2004, 11–28; de Marinis and Spadea 2007, 57–64). The territories south of the Po began to become distinguishable from those of the Po, both in ceramics (showing connections with eastern and southern France) and in an aspect of the funerary ritual that persisted in the Iron Age: the adoption of a stone slab to cover the cinerary urn (as at the necropolis of Alba). Even in this case, however, it was a very fluid boundary, especially on the side of the Apennines leading to the Po and Po Valley.

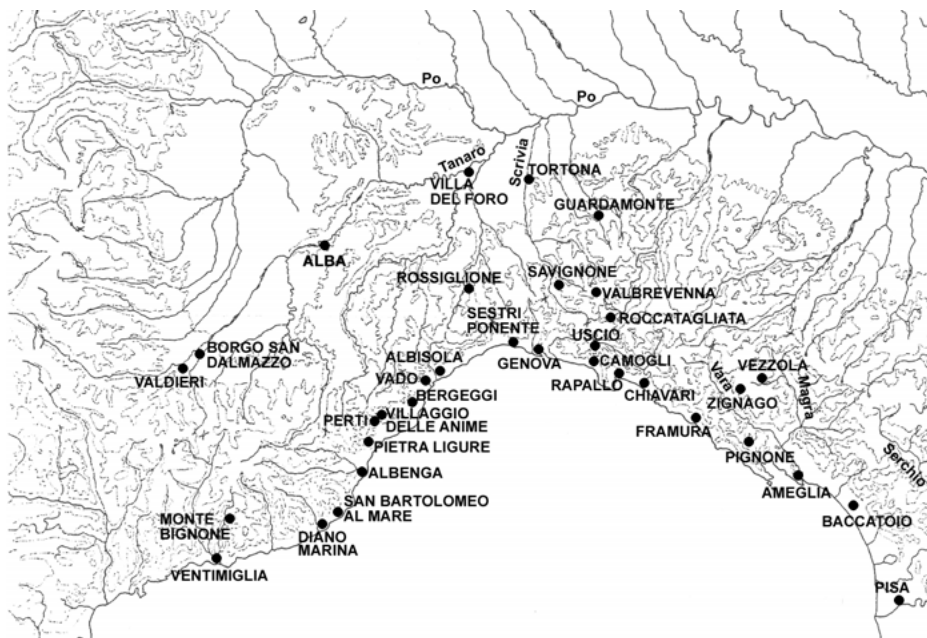


Fig. 3. Map of the Ligurian sites from the Late Bronze Age to the Late Iron Age (elaborated by Silvia Paltineri)

III The archaeological evidence (end of the Bronze Age – end of the seventh century BC)

There are signs of the emergence of a new form of spatial planning in Liguria at the end of the Bronze Age. As the importance of sea trade began to rival the traditional agricultural and pastoral economy, the sea became very important. Next to the hill settlements (Zignago, Pignone, Vezzola, Uscio, Camogli, Sant'Antonino di Perti, Villaggio delle Anime) new coastal sites arose, designed to serve both agricultural activity and maritime trade (Diano Marina, San Bartolomeo al Mare, Vado, Genova, Chiavari) (Fig. 3 and 16). This trend, due to the initiative of local communities, was fully developed by the early Iron Age. At this point some key sites of the Bronze Age are abandoned – sites such as the hill settlement of Uscio (Maggi 1990; de Marinis and Spadea 2007, 109–112) – and newer coastal towns grew. In this way we can understand the development of the center of Chiavari: though the settlement remains unexplored, the cremation necropolis, which has been explored, dates from the late eighth to the beginning of the sixth century BC (Paltineri 2010; Leonardi and Paltineri 2012, 295–296).

The development of coastal communities is part of a new historical context in which the Etruscans played a major role: the Ligurian coast, from the seventh cen-



Fig. 4. Chiavari. View of the necropolis, with box graves in stone and rectangular enclosures (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 212)

tury BC onwards, traded on the routes from the main Tyrrhenian centers to southern France and the Iberian peninsula. It is no coincidence that starting with the end of the seventh century BC other coastal sites grew in eastern Liguria. These included Rapallo (Melli 1996), a dock at the mouth of the Magra river and a number of other small ports (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 129–220). The recent discoveries of two cemeteries in Albisola and Albenga (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 216–217) on the west Ligurian coast not only confirms this trend, but helps us recognize an extension of the sea route to the west of Genoa, which emerged as the main *emporion* at the end of the seventh century BC on the initiative of the Etruscans.

The necropolis of Chiavari (in use from the end of the eighth to the beginning of the sixth century BC) is one the most important complexes of the early Iron Age period in all of northwestern Italy (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 197–216; Paltineri 2010; Leonardi and Paltineri 2012; Paltineri 2015). Its monumental cremation burials, including round and rectangular stone enclosures (Fig. 4), are divided into three areas, east-west oriented, with different tomb groups (Fig. 5). The first area (area A) contains 44 tombs, the second (area B) 45 tombs, and the third area (area C) 37 tombs. Both the round and the rectangular enclosures contained stone box graves in which there were singular or sometimes double burials, and perhaps in very few cases multiple burials. Regarding these cases, and due to the fact that the analysis of the remains is as yet incomplete, the number and the sex of the deceased have been determined on the basis of archaeological indicators alone (that is, razors or

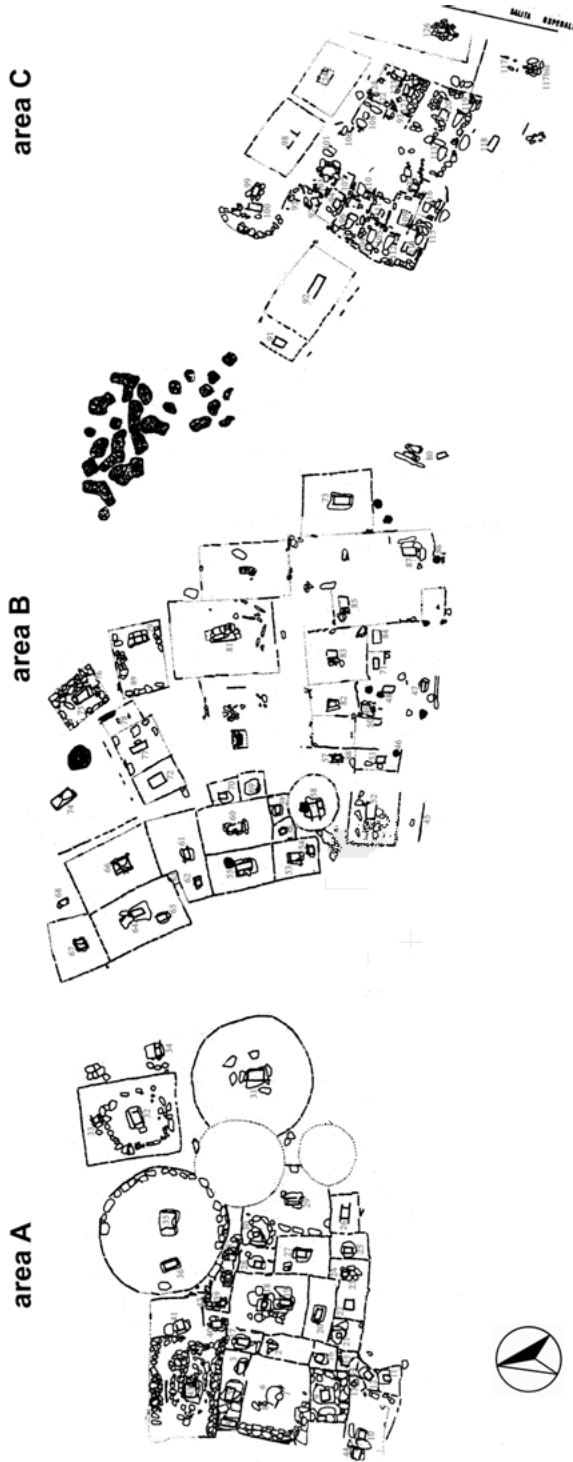


Fig. 5. Chiavari. The three groups of tombs (from Paltineri 2010, pl. IV)



Fig. 6. Chiavari. Grave goods from Tomb 19 (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 248)

weapons for male burials, spindle whorls for female burials). The grave goods included a few clay vases. For the most part these were comprised by one piece (the urn) although in some cases a second, empty vase was included. In a few cases findings also included small vases (a *kylix*, a *kyathos* or a simple beaker). The status of the deceased is indicated by the presence of metallic artefacts such as fibulas, weapons, razors or personal ornaments. Metallic artefacts were put into the burial urn, which was generally covered by a stone slab, lid, bowl, or cup.

The cemetery of Chiavari shows, for the first time in the early Iron Age, signs of cultural aspects that we might call typical of Ligurians: cremation burials in stone box graves; weapons in male graves and, between grave goods, biconical vessels with high necks and always without handles, generally unpainted, sometimes with white geometric decoration; truncated bronze bosses; arm-rings with open and spherical ends; basket shaped rings, as in the case of Tomb 19 (Fig. 6).

Biconical vessels are common in the south of France and in north Tuscany. In the nineteenth century a big cemetery was discovered at Baccatoio, near Pietrasanta. The whole complex was, unfortunately, destroyed but some of the drawings (Fig. 7) indicate the presence of the same type of biconical urns we see in Chiavari and burial structures that can be compared with the monumentality of Chiavari's necropolis. The arm rings with open and spherical ends are also found in the Po River plain, especially along the Po-Ticino exchange route and in the Lake Maggiore centres (from the end of the seventh century-beginning of the sixth century BC), but the type first occurs in the Ligurian necropolis of Chiavari, which contains 90% of the findings. It is possible that these artefacts indicate exchanges with northern Italy (Fig. 8).

The presence of a number of shared metallic and pottery types is a further indication of trade with northern Italy and, more generally, with Hallstatt cultures. In



Fig. 7. Drawings of an urn from the necropolis of Baccatoio (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 159)

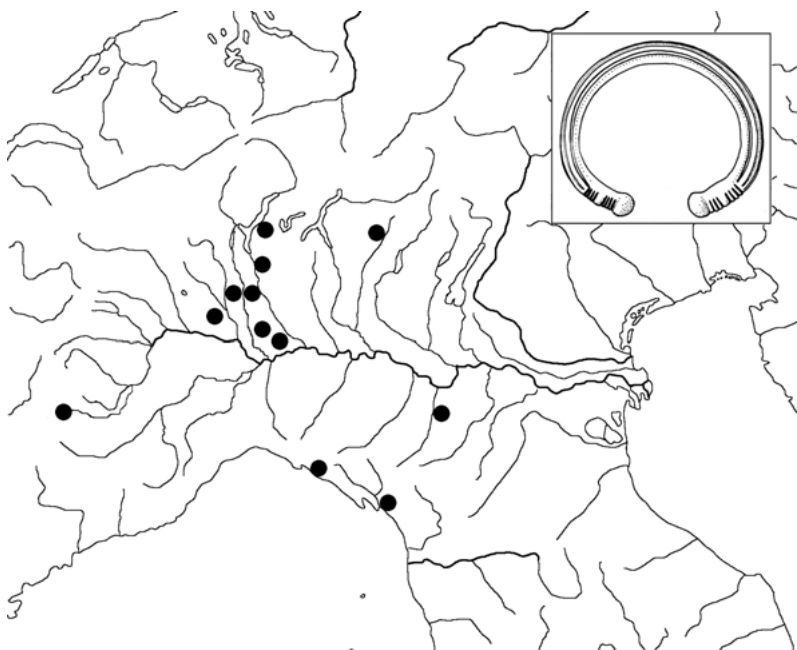


Fig. 8. Distribution map of the “Chiavari type” arm-rings (from Paltineri 2010, 93)

terms of metal goods, examples include pendants, belt clasps and, in two burials “Hallstatt type” disks (three disks with central boss in each burial, one of the shield and two for the armour: Fig. 9). In terms of pottery, many types are very common both in Chiavari and in northwestern Italy.

The community of Chiavari also had relations with Etruria. From the end of the eighth century BC the Ligurian site, along with other settlements in northern Tuscany, made use of a sea route which began in southern Etruria. Examples demonstrat-

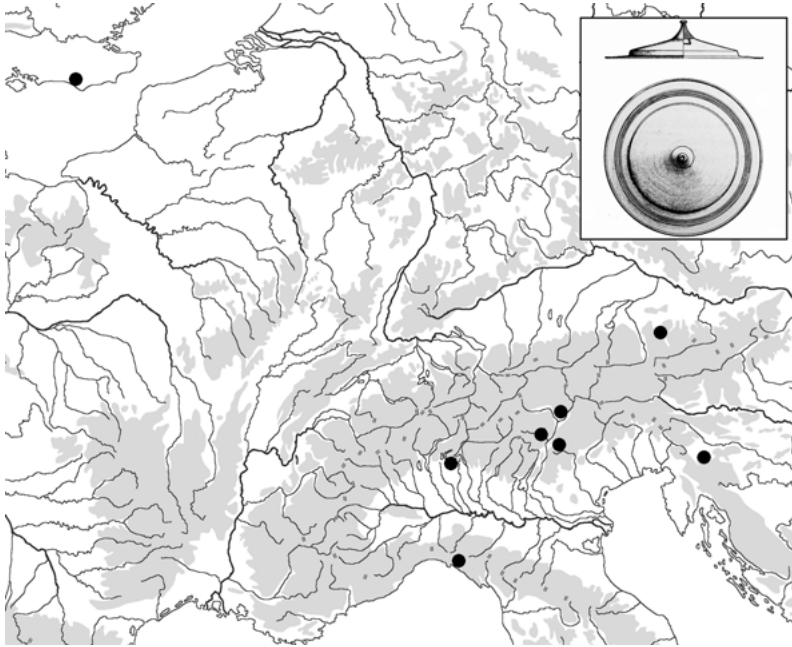


Fig. 9. Distribution map of the “Hallstatt type” disks (from Paltineri 2010, 122)

ing the use of this trade route include the following. The *olla* from Burial 9B, datable to the end of the eighth century BC, is painted with horizontal lines and concentric circles (Fig. 10). It was probably imported from the territory under the control of Vulci. Another import is the proto-Corinthian cup from Burial 60 and datable to the third quarter of the seventh century BC (Fig. 11). Indeed, painted vessels from the southern territory were found in a number of other sites in northern Tuscany. Other shapes can be associated with the same tradition. The small corpus of bucchero *kyathoi* is one example. The *amphora* from Grave 9 A exhibits a very close affinity with material from central Etruria: the decoration with carved pendant ending with a rose can be compared to findings from Volterra and Populonia and it seems to have been imported (Fig. 12). The local imitation of Etruscan artefacts is very interesting, as in the case of the two *ollae* from Grave 10, with plastic decoration on the body and on the lid (Fig. 13), or in the case of the *olla* from Burial 40 A (Fig. 14), which is a local imitation of the Vulci type.

From the middle of the seventh until the end of the seventh century BC the cemetery bears traces of closer relations with Pisa. Pisa, where the proto-urban process had been completed, now enjoyed direct control over many centres in Versilia and in the Serchio valley (Bruni 1998, 153–191). It is indeed possible that this Etruscan city tried to control the coastal trade between northern Tuscany and Liguria. The marker of this cultural (and political) development is the importation of a type of bucchero cup (Fig. 15), probably produced in Pisa, into the Chiavari market. These cups are



Fig. 10. Chiavari. Olla from Tomb 9B (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 204)

often decorated with three indented lines under the lip and in a few cases we find stamps on the body or on the base.

Until the third quarter of the seventh century BC, we see a plurality of Etruscan influences in Chiavari. At the end of the century the situation is different: the influence of Pisa seems to have significantly altered the balance between northern Tuscany and Liguria. But the development of an urban complex is a process that we can see only in Pisa. In Liguria the community of Chiavari did not develop the social structures that are typical of urban centers. Although the grave goods and their distribution in the cemetery do reveal a complex society and the development of a hierarchical community, there was no urban context (Leonardi and Paltineri 2012, 300–303).

Although we may suppose that Chiavari, before the influence of Genoa, was the first and the most important port of eastern Liguria, it seems that it was not strong enough to counter the fact that the Etruscan people decided to found their *emporion* in Genoa. This is most probably why, from the sixth century BC, we see the growth of Genoa and disappearance of Chiavari.



Fig. 11. Chiavari. Protocorinthian cup from Tomb 60 (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 193)

IV The birth of Genoa and the opening of international trade (end of the seventh – fifth centuries BC)

Massalia was founded at the end of the seventh century BC by the Phocaeans. Etruscan trade was subsequently reorganised around the port of trade of Genoa-Portofranco (Fig. 16), itself a development of Etruscan initiative. Portofranco is located in between sea routes and internal routes leading to the Po valley (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 316–319; Melli 2006; 2007, 28–31; 2014, 71–74). From its foundation Genoa was exposed to diverse cultures. Finds at this site include, in addition to a number of artefacts (especially bucchero) from Pisa, imports from southern Etruria (especially from Caere) and Etruscan and Greek wine amphorae datable to the end of the seventh century BC. These finds indicate an active trade route running along Ligurian territory and connecting Etruria with the south of France.

The Acquasola tumulus (Melli 2007, 31–32; Melli 2014, 71–73) is, in addition to Portofranco, another exceptional context to explore the phases of the development of Genoa (Fig. 17). It is a burial tumulus of 15 m in diameter, paved unfortunately in Roman times, which housed cremation burials within stone box graves (Fig. 18).

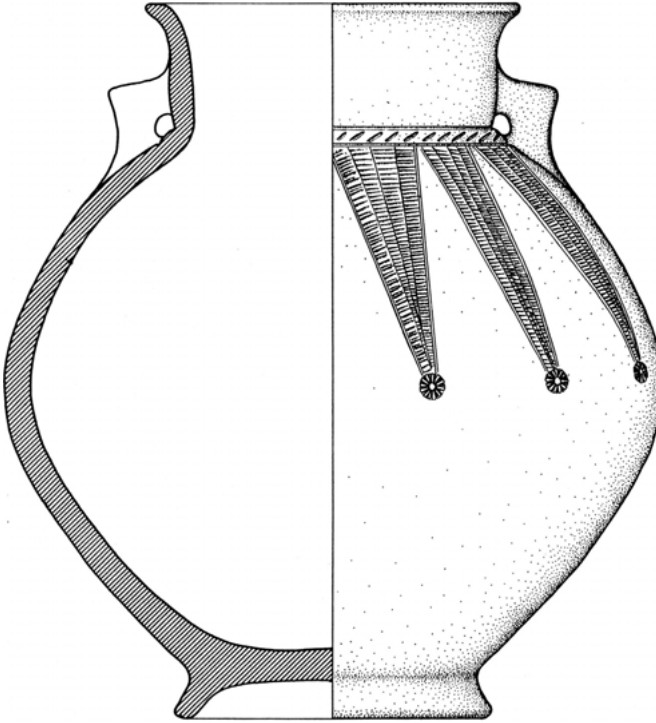


Fig. 12. Chiavari. Amphora from Tomb 9 A (from Paltineri 2010, 191)

The box graves are of a type known in Chiavari and in Albenga. Grave goods that could be recovered are datable from the mid-seventh to the fourth centuries BC and indicate that this monumental structure, created for a person of rank, was used for several generations. The reference model for this kind of structure can be found both in southern France (Melli 2014, 72) and in Etruria. The Acquasola tumulus illuminates the oldest phase of occupation of Genoa. In the sixth century BC the city underwent a (re)founding with the creation of the settlement on the Castello hill, a commanding position over the sea, that could be defined as an *oppidum* (Milanese 1987; Melli 2007, 33–34; 2014, 75–84) (Fig. 16).

The oldest huts were built entirely of perishable materials. At the end of sixth century BC we begin to find stone foundations (Melli 2014, 75), clay floors and constructions made of wooden frames filled with straw. The roofs were probably made from a perishable material such as wood or straw because there are no shingles or tiles dating before the fourth century BC. Next to the houses there were workshops for metalworking. The *oppidum* of Genoa, between the end of the sixth and fifth centuries BC, served as the center of exchange in the middle of Liguria. We find Etruscan artefacts (70–80%), rarer material from the territory of Golasecca, and pottery produced in southern France in imitation of Greek prototypes (Melli 2014, 76).



Fig. 13. Chiavari. Olla from Tomb 10 A (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 196)

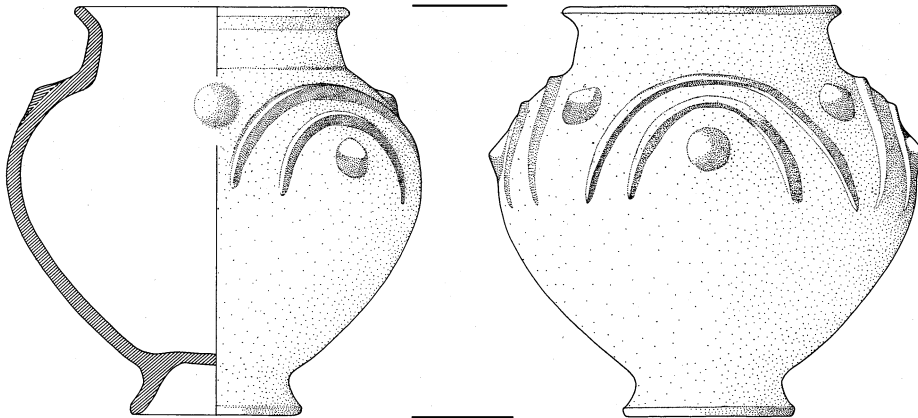


Fig. 14. Chiavari. Olla from Tomb 40 A (from Paltineri 2010, 233)

It is possible to relate the phases of the *oppidum* with a cemetery located on the hill of Sant'Andrea (Fig. 16) which dates from the beginning of the fifth century BC

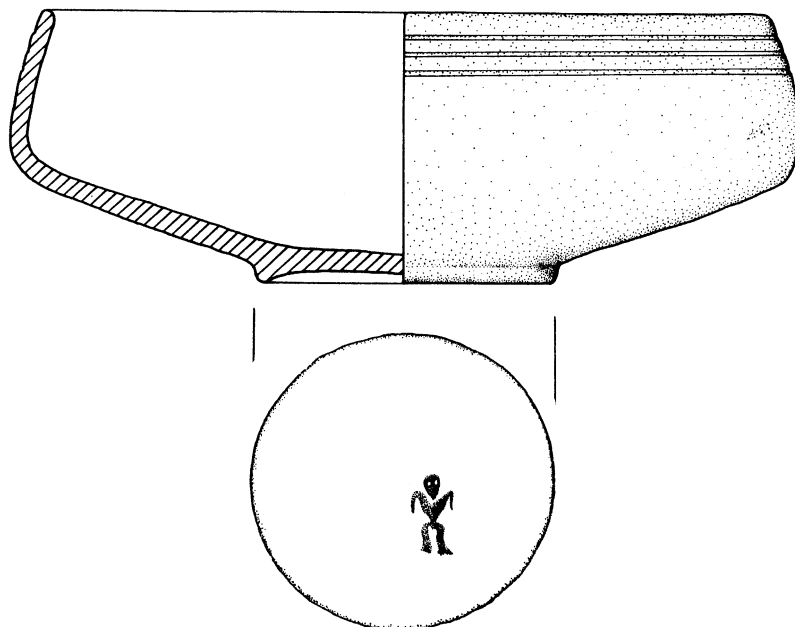


Fig. 15. Chiavari. Bucchero cup from Tomb 3 A (from Paltineri 2010, 182)

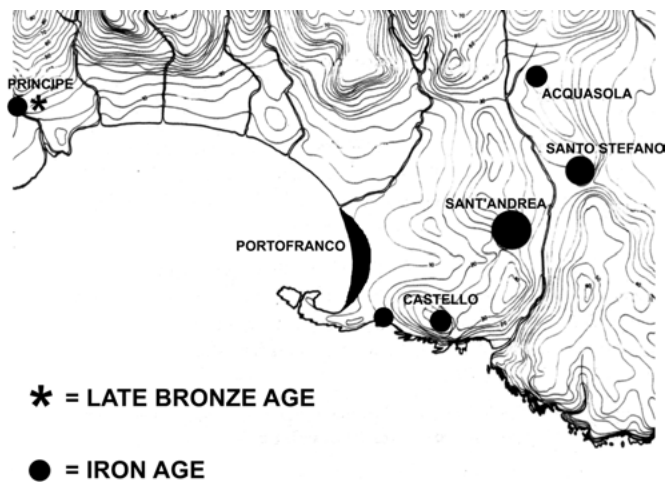


Fig. 16. Archaeological finds in the Gulf of Genoa (elaborated by Silvia Paltineri)

and was in use at least until the fourth century BC (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 309–315; Melli 2014, 85–93). This cemetery, unfortunately still unpublished, has 122 circular well tombs, a type of burial which is unusual in the Ligurian contexts but was well known in Etruria. The grave goods reflect the various cultural components of the settlement. We find objects from different places and in some cases it is very



Fig. 17. Genoa. The Acquasola tumulus (from Melli 2007, 31)



Fig. 18. Genoa. Stone box grave from the Acquasola tumulus (from Melli 2007, 32)

likely that people of foreign origin were buried in Genoa. Among the materials derived from Mediterranean trade are vessels imported from Etruria and Attic black and red-figure vases (de Marinis and Spadea, 2004, 337–357). The presence of Attic craters and southern Etruscan bronzes (stamnoid *ollae*, *olpai*, *Schnabelkanne*, *simpu-*



Fig. 19. Genoa. Grave goods from Tomb 84 (from Melli 2007, 76)

la, etc.) is a sign that the Genoese community adhered to Greek-Etruscan style symposia (Fig. 19).

It was during this international phase that Genoa adopted a writing system. The epigraphic documentation, ranging from the late sixth to the second centuries BC, is a testament to the primacy of the Etruscans and confirms the international nature of the *oppidum* (Melli 2014, 80). The corpus of inscriptions (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 302–307; Melli 2014, 82) from the cemetery of the hill of Sant’Andrea and from the settlement on the Castello hill certifies that the handwriting and language used in Genoa were Etruscan (according to northern Etruscan style of handwriting) though among the personal names listed we also find Greek (*Krulu*) and Celtic names such as *Nemetie*, mentioned in an inscription on a stone of serpentine marble dated to the middle of the fifth century BC (Fig. 20).

The foundation of Genoa was the beginning of a great transformation which generated significant changes both to the territorial structure of Liguria and to the nature of her international relationships. Moreover, this included the development of a stable traffic route connecting the sea with the Po valley. Between the sixth and fifth centuries BC a number of different centers emerged along the Apennine valleys: the tombs of Valbrevenna, Savignone and Roccatagliata, together with the settlements of Villa del Foro, Tortona, Guardamonte and Rossiglione. These developments are an indication of the dynamic role now played by Genoa which, by increasing inward traffic, revitalized the Apennine area (Venturino Gambari, et al. 1996; Gambari 2003; Chiaramonte Trerè 2003; de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 225–233, 278–281; Ven-



Fig. 20. Genoa. Stone serpentine, inscribed with the personal name *Nemetie* (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 298)

turino Gambari and Gandolfi 2004, 29–48). In some cases, for instance, the existence of these trade routes is very well documented; Etruscan pottery that was imported by the river emporium of Villa del Foro came through Genoa and reached the Po valley (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 274–275). Along the same road, but in the opposite direction, pieces typical of the culture of Golasecca were imported, such as the Ticino *fibulae* and the “stralucido” ceramic decorative style. Artefacts from Golasecca are also attested in the *oppidum* of Genoa.

Central Liguria became increasingly important as a result of this new international context. This may explain, in eastern Liguria, the decline of Chiavari and the reuse of the hill settlement of Uscio (Fig. 3). Uscio was located on the top of the Borgo mountain and so had access to the east-west pathways, the inland of Genoa, the eastern Ligurian inland, and western Emilia (de Marinis and Spadea 2007, 111). This settlement was used from the Neolithic Age and abandoned in the early Iron Age, when Chiavari was developing on the coast. It can be argued that, when Chiavari disappeared and the community of the Tigullio gulf returned to the hill in the middle and in the late Iron Age, the settlement of Uscio experienced something of a rebirth.

In western Liguria, the castellaro of Sestri Ponente and the important site of Bergeggi (founded at the end of the sixth century BC and inhabited without interruption



Fig. 21. Map of Lunigiana, with indications of the stele statues of the Iron Age (elaborated by Silvia Paltineri)

until the first century BC) confirm that even here hilltops were favoured for settlements (de Marinis and Spadea 2007, 113–116; Giannattasio and Odetti 2009) (Fig. 3). It should be stressed that throughout the fifth century BC the hill settlements were not excluded from international trade. In eastern Liguria Bergeggi was connected to the Ligurian-Etruscan trade routes and Attic pottery is attested in the Vara valley, Sestri Ponente and Pietra Ligure (Venturino Gambari and Gandolfi 2004, 165–190; Melli 2014, 77–79).

At the time when Genoa was founded, in Lunigiana (eastern Liguria), the presence of Ligurian communities who controlled the paths of the Apennines in the direction of the Po valley is confirmed by the presence of stele statues (Fig. 21). These monuments, unfortunately found reused and therefore without context, use the iconography of warriors. There were originally local stele statues of the Copper Age which were subsequently reused in the Iron Age. Some specimens have weapons dating from the late seventh and the sixth centuries BC such as axes and javelins/lances (Fig. 22), but also an “antenna” sword that can be compared with Hallstatt culture swords (Fig. 23) (de Marinis 1995; de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 219–223, 268–270). Inscriptions, in the Etruscan alphabet, were added (Fig. 24): the text includes local names (Maggiani and Prosdocimi 1976).

The stele of Lerici (Fig. 25) is different from the others. It has an image of the warrior in profile with panoply (helmet, shield, shin guards, sword, javelins) and was probably inspired by funerary stele which were typical in northern Etruria, in territories such as Volterra (Gervasini and Maggiani 1998). Other specimens which are probably more recent, such as Bigliolo and Reusa (Fig. 26), seem to indicate a desire to move away from the flattened form of the stele to the statue in the round. It can



Fig. 22. The stele statue of Filetto, called “Filetto I” (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 269)

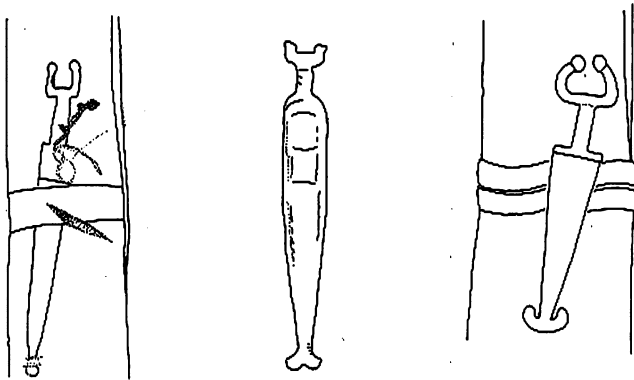


Fig. 23. “Antenna” swords on the stele statues. From left to right: stele statue of “Filetto I”; stele of “Lerici”; stele statue of “Filetto II” (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 208).

further be argued that the examples of sculpture in the round from seventh century Etruria influenced the monuments of Lunigiana (Paltineri 2011, 149–155).



Fig. 24. The stele statue of Zignago (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 594)



Fig. 25. The stele of Lerici (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 268)

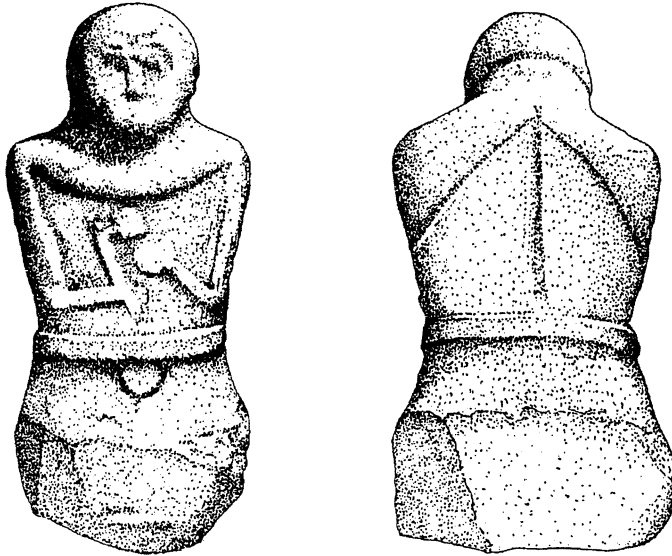


Fig. 26. The (stele) statue of Reusa (from Giannattasio 2007, figure 28B)

V The new international context (second half of the fifth – beginning of the third century BC)

From the second half of the fifth century BC, the political situation in the Tyrrhenian Sea – with the defeat of the Etruscans at Cumae (474 BC) and the rise of Syracuse – led to a progressive weakening of the Etruscan presence in Genoa. These events, however, do not seem to have led to a decline of the Ligurian *oppidum*. Indeed, at this time the level of work at the site is impressive, the area was remodeled with new terracing and, significantly, bordered by a wall (Milanese 1987; Melli 2007, 38–42; 2014, 77) (Fig. 27).

From the late fifth to the early fourth century BC Liguria was gradually absorbed into the orbit of Marseilles, and imports from Etruria into Genoa and the region decreased to such an extent that, from the middle of the fourth century, Etruscan wine imports were permanently replaced by Massaliote. This change coincides with the arrival of the Gauls on the Italian peninsula, a movement which led to the new organization of the Po valley. There seems, however, to have been no traumatic impact in Liguria and especially along the coast. The *oppidum* of Genoa was itself restored in the fourth century with the addition of new terraces to accommodate a growing population (Milanese 1987; Melli 2007, 42; 2014, 84). The port of Genoa likewise remained prosperous and a part of the circuit of ports distributing Attic red-figure vases, black varnished pottery and Etruscan and Faliscan red-figure vases (Venturino Gambari

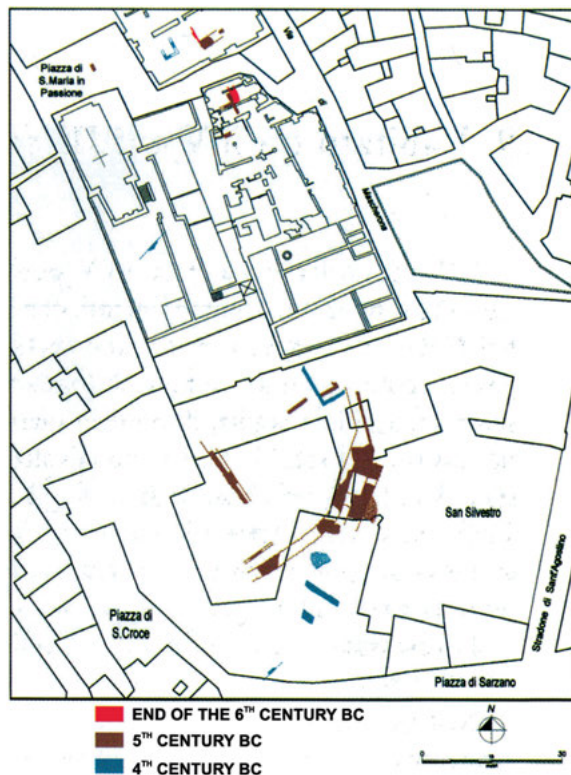


Fig. 27. Genoa. The area of the oppidum with the external city wall (from Melli 2007, 39; elaborated by Silvia Paltineri)

and Gandolfi 2004, 172–181) (Fig. 28). Among the local productions we note the appearance of vessels with nail impressions (the “Rossiglione” type).

The vitality of the Ligurian coast between the fourth and third centuries BC is evidenced by the growth of new trading centers. In eastern Liguria Albangaunum (mod. Albenga) and then Albintimilium (mod. Ventimiglia) were involved in the Masaliote trade and traded widely with the interior of Liguria (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 391–393). In eastern Liguria, the important site of Ameglia (of which only the necropolis is known) was established in the fourth century BC at the mouth of the Magra river. The cemetery of Ameglia, the greatest funerary complex of this chronological phase (Fig. 29), follows the pattern of monumental structure, also with stone box graves and cremation burials, previously used in the cemetery of Chiavari (Fig. 30). It is clear that this community was involved in international trade. Grave goods include fine, imported vessels such as overpainted pottery from southern Etruria, *skyphoi*, *kylikes* and black varnished pottery as well as weapons (helmets, swords, lances) of the Celtic type (Fig. 31) (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 374–378, 382–385, 404–431). Other cemeteries in Versilia, and north-western Tuscany, show signs of Ligurian funerary practices: these include cremation, the use of stone box



Fig. 28. Genoa. Etruscan red-figure crater from the necropolis (From Melli 2014, 92)



Fig. 29. Ameglia. The necropolis (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 374)

graves and the presence of weapons in the male burials. This evidence confirms that the area between Pisa and Magra river was a porous border between the Etruscans and the Ligurians, and that in this phase it was no longer in the hands of the Etruscans (Paribeni 1990; de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 369–371).



Fig. 30. Ameglia. The stone structures including box graves (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 375)

The framework of the inland, although largely incomplete, is quite different and is characterized by strong localism, especially in western Liguria (de Marinis and Spadea 2007, 141–146). The eastern Ligurian inland seems to be organized into villages and hill sites (Venturino Gambari and Gandolfi 2004, 173–184). These communities continued the tradition of the stone box graves, now spread from Versilia to the Emilia western inland (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 361–367, 402–404; de Marinis and Spadea 2007, 85–108, 159–167). Aspects of material culture in the inland territory were strongly influenced by the Gallic presence in the Po valley, especially weapons (swords, helmets).



Fig. 31. Ameglia. Helmet from Tomb 28 (from de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 419)

VI Romanization (middle of the third – second centuries BC)

The Romans came into contact with Liguria in the middle of the third century BC, at which point Genoa was drawn into the orbit of Roman trade. Thus begins the uneasy process of Romanization (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 449–451; Melli 2014, 99–105). Divisions within the Ligurian tribes and the complex morphology of the land itself, divided between the coast and the mountains (Fig. 1), induced the Romans to adopt a wide range of methods, from the coercive to the assimilative. The Romanization of Liguria involved at some times massacres, punitive actions, systematic deportations and territorial confiscations; at other times the conclusion of treaties of alliance (*foe-*

dera) or the creation of patron-client bonds. Other instruments of conquest were the formation of colonies, the agrimensorial organization of the territory and the creation of roads (Fig. 2).

In the third century BC Genoa, in order to maintain its commercial role, became allied to Rome (a *civitas foederata*). During the Second Punic War Liguria sided with the Carthaginians and Genoa became isolated until, in 205 BC, and as a consequence of its loyalty to Rome, the *oppidum* was destroyed as punishment by Mago, founder of the Savo (mod. Savona) alliance. The city was rebuilt soon after by Spurius Lucretius (203 BC).

The conflict between the Romans and Ligurians, which began in 238 BC, reached a turning point with the founding of the colony of Luna (177 BC) on the eastern coast, which was connected to Luca (mod. Lucca), the Latin colony created in 180–179 BC. The Romanization of the inland area required several military campaigns. Operations against the Ligurian Statielli began in 173 BC from bases in the Ligurian center of Dertona (mod. Tortona), a strategic position with access to the inland Ligurian territories and northwestern Italy. In 148 BC the Via Postumia was created which connected Genoa to Dertona; this road guaranteed complete control of the internal territory.

The new conquerors made use of the socio-political fragmentation of the Ligurians who were divided into several independent tribes (Fig. 1) often in conflict with each other over land. This situation is revealed by an exceptional epigraphic text of 117 BC known as the “Sententia Municiorum” or “Tavola del Polcevera,” that mentions the sentence handed by the Roman senators Q. and M. Minuci Rufi regarding the holding and use of lands that were disputed between the Ligurian tribes of Genuates and Viturii Langenses (de Marinis and Spadea 2004, 476–479; Melli 2014, 199–200).

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