
Visible and Invisible Frontiers in Central Tyrrhenian Italy between the Neolithic and Bronze Age

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Résumé

The geographical area considered for the purpose of this contribution is that of central Tyrrhenian Italy, a territory marked by the Ligurian Apennine range to the North, the Tiber river to the East and the Fiora river to the south (roughly corresponding to present-day Tuscany and northern Latium).

This area is characterized by the existence of cultural aspects that appear as related to wider cultural spheres originating from contacts between different human groups. The region's receptive vocation, already evident in the Middle Neolithic and then, increasingly, in the Eneolithic up to the end of the Bronze Age, can be assessed through its environmental context and related to the North-South and East-West communication routes but also the territory's natural resources.

Over the course of the Neolithic, and during its earlier phase, the territory is characterized by the widespread diffusion of local aspects, seeing a cultural diversification in the middle and late stages of this period, directly connected to the exploitation of communication routes and the contacts taking place with the Adriatic coast, the south of the Peninsula as well as with the North-Western regions (the Ligurian-Provencal and Transpadane mountainous ranges).

During the Copper and Bronze Ages, material culture analysis has allowed to ascertain the existence of cultural articulations throughout peninsular Italy. In particular, in the currently examined area, a number of distinct cultural entities have been identified as compared to the main cultural *facies* of the Peninsula. These entities, referred to as groups, are defined by several factors, first and foremost through a geographical combination of different archaeological contexts, certain distinctive elements and a number of features common also to other groups.

The aim of this contribution is to highlight the visible and invisible frontiers of material culture between the Neolithic and the end of the Bronze Age, both from a diachronic and synchronic perspective, highlighting landscape markers that might be considered as border elements while at the same time defining the intercultural exchange networks present across this territory.

Mots-Clés: Italy, Neolithic, Copper Age, Bronze Age, Material culture, Frontiers

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