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Pilgrims in Lower Lunigiana and Traces of Ancient Settlements: the Case of Trepuncio and Xago in Avenza

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Introduction

The Medieval Lunigiana was, as noted, a transit area. With an area of circa 1,700kmq¹, it was indeed developed in a vast network of routes: not only the tract par excellence, the Francigena, had a particularly important and fragile tract in Luigiana, but its numerous sub-routes traversed the Apennines in many points and crossed other routes from East to West; in addition, various routes led to the sea, at the fluvial port of San Maurizio, the dock of Ameglia, and the marine borgo of Portovenere (Coppedé, 1990; Ambrosi, 1992; Salvatori, 2001a; Salvatori, 2001b; Salvatori 2001c). Defining these tracts on paper, as they had been brought to light by an indeterminate number of historical research of an erudite nature, means drawing a large and intricate web, focusing on the Apennine passes above the Vara and Magra rivers (first of all the passo della Cisa), on the routes of the paths on the ridge and on the valley floor, and the crossing of the 120 castles that dominated the Lunigianese high grounds.

Despite the noting of the main tracts of this complex system, many still escape our knowledge due to gaps in the available documentation as well as rushed readings of resources in the past. Each in depth analysis that manages to shed light on the position, function and precision of each crux is therefore precious, utilised not only to significantly correct the complex framework but also, in perspective, to allow local administration and cultural and touristic entities to use the history of the territory with more awareness.

It is for this reason that we present here a study on two small towns of Lower Lunigiana – *Xago* and *Trepuncio* – near Luni and Carrara, mentioned in documentation in relation

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to the traversing of pilgrims and travellers and until today not considered by scholars of the territory.

1. Written Documentation

The two toponyms appear together in a document of the *Codice Pelavicino* only once – the *lober iurium* of the Bishop of Luni – today a critical digital edition is in course, opera of the substantial *equipe* of the University of Pisa (Salvatori, Riccardini, Balletto, Rosselli del Turco *et alii*, 2014). It is an interesting document for more than one reason. In 1180 the Bishop of Luni made a pact with some *milites* of Carrara to found a new *borgo* near the Avenza River (today the Carrione torrent) and the sea (Salvatori, Riccardini, Balletto, Rosselli del Turco *et alii*, 2014).

Emerging figures of the local society attempted to gain the support of the Bishop to invest resources in the construction of *iuxta faucem fluminis et in litore maris* buildings to render the level area of the coast inhabited and popular: a section of the territory that could have become unpopulated during the Dark Ages, but which during the second half of the 12th century became once again desirable (Salvatori, 2007). At that time, at the mouth of the Avenza, there were only a few ravines or *grotacias* (Bernieri, Mannoni T. & Mannoni L., 1983: 62; Garzella, 1991)², but the bishop intended to modify the landscape by constructing *casamenta et hedificia* to populate the area and gain due tributes from the new settlement. From this perspective particular attention was given to the areas at the mouth of the river where the Bishop wanted to build his structures (*secundum quod sibi placuerit*); the assets left behind by travellers, merchants, pilgrims who had died in the *borgo* were to be divided between the Bishop ($\frac{2}{3}$) and those who had hosted the diseased; a third of the bishop's takings would be utilised to finance the management of the local church.

Et si viator vel peregrinus ibidem obierit, due partes earum rerum quas habuerit erunt domini episcopi et tertia hospitis. [...] postquam ecclesia ibidem facta fuerit et presbiter ibidem institutus, terciam partem concedet dominus episcopus de eo quod provenierit de advenis peregrinis sive mercatoribus et viatoribus.

It is evident that the Bishop and the *milites* predicted that the *borgo* of Avenza would have become, after its construction, a place of intense transit. The position effectively raised hope due to the vicinity of the populated area, still a significant fraction of the municipality of Carrara today, from one side to the 'Roman' road which connected Massa and Carrara and Sarzana and on the other side the sea.

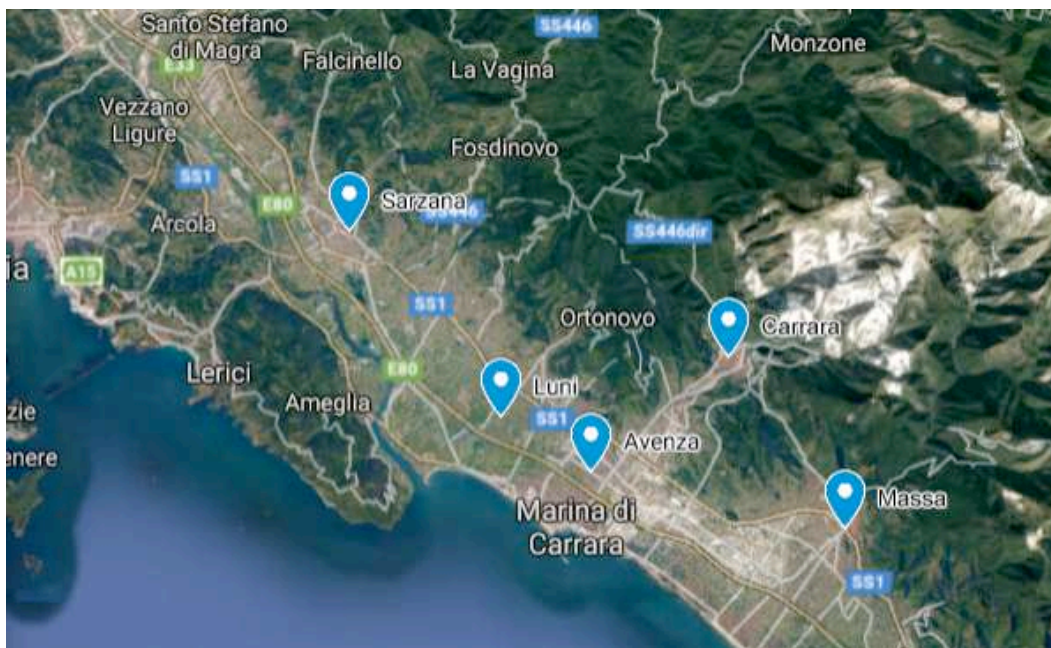


Figure 1: Current position of Avenza in relation to nearby towns.

Source: Google Maps.

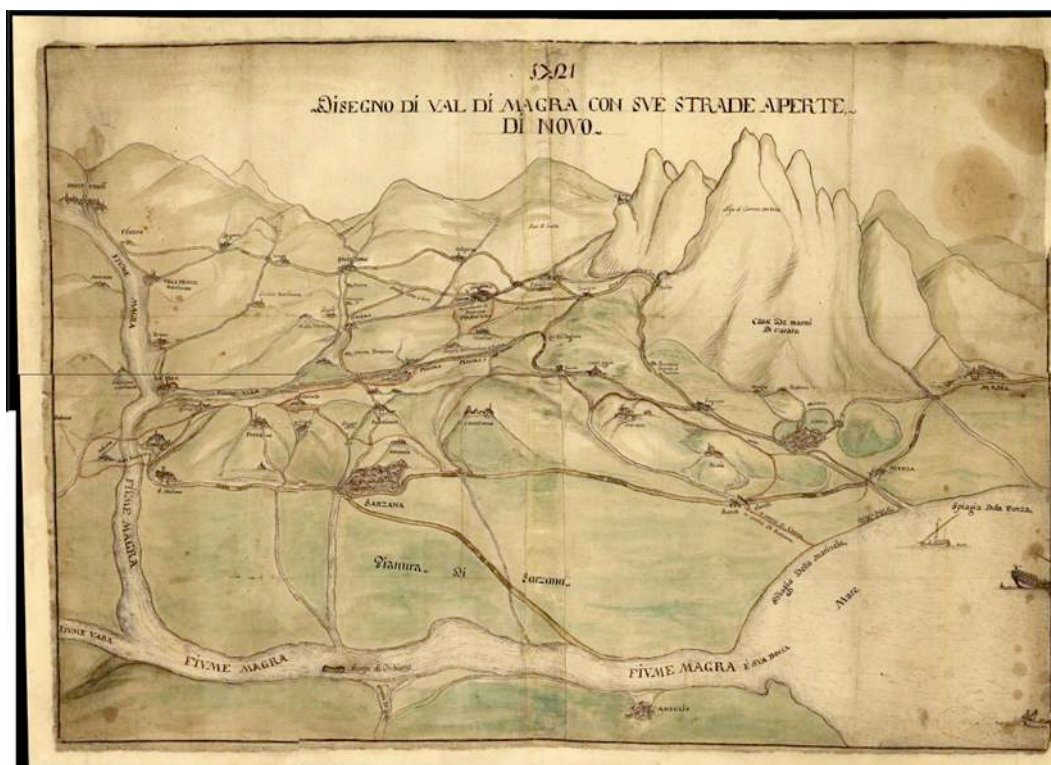


Figure 2: Position of Avenza on a map from 1721.

Source: Archivio di Stato di Genova: 53 Magra: *Disegno di val di Magra con sue strade aperte di novo*.

The concept is reiterated in the following phrase:

Si quid vero de Xago a Trepuncio usque ad Aventiam advenerit, medietatem in integrum dominus episcopus sibi retinuit et aliam medietatem iamscriptis et eorum heredibus in feudum concessit.

In this case, half of the rights were reserved for the Bishop, leaving the other half to his *militēs* associates who were – we believe – related to the entry of people and goods to the *borgo*, from Xago and Trepuncio directed towards Avenza: the two towns consequently amounted to particular points or areas of access to the new settlement.

In the *Codice Pelvicino*, Xago appears, other than in 1180, in only one document in the 13th century which tells us nothing of its position³. Fortunately, the toponym is abundantly present in the fiscal resources of the modern era: we can indeed identify Xago of 1180 with the *Porto Cacho* or *Cacho*, the Avenza dock, attested in a valuation of Carrara in 1541. Here Bona Toni Ambrosini declared to own, among others things, a pasture in *Porto Cacho*, a field in *Padulo* (thus in an area characterised by ponds and marshland), an olive grove in *Murulungo*, and a field in *Traponzo* (our Trepuncio)⁴. *Porto Cacho* was hypothetically situated in the current estate of villa Ceci (Di Pierro, 2000: 128-129).

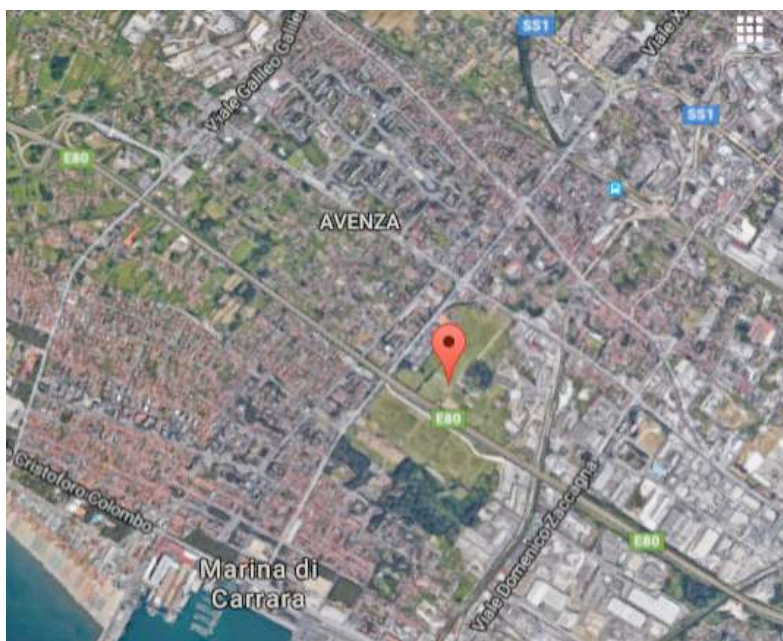


Figure 3: Hypothetical position of Porto Cacho in Avenza.

Source: Google Maps.

Normally in Latin palaeography the X o has the value of the corresponding letter, otherwise it is an abbreviation of 'Christ' (Cappelli, 2011). It is therefore not implausible that at that time the place was pronounced 'Xago – Csago – Ksago' (or how it was interpreted by the notary editor of the document of 1180) was rendered Cacho in the text, Caco (Del Giudice, 1982; Roberts, 2014)⁵, without a priori excluding the possibility that another passage existed from Xago to Sacco to then arrive at Cacco⁶.

If we accept this interpretation, the document of 1180 tells us that Trepuncio was an access point to the small town, then *borgo* of Avenza, equal to a small maritime dock – on a pre-existent river (*Xago – Cacho*), at this time in the lido neighbouring the new settlement⁷.

Trepuncio appears in various medieval and modern documents and in some historical maps. One document written on the 12th September 1283 on the plain of Luni (*in plano de Luna*)⁸ is particularly interesting because it contains a survey supported by the Bishop of Luni, Enrico da Fuēcchio, on the lands in the area of *Aguto* or *Circhio de Luna*, the amphitheatre of the ancient Roman city⁹. One century after the establishment of Avenza the area between the *borgo* and Luni, from the amphitheatre to the sea, became the subject of a dispute on the part of the men of the neighbouring communities, particularly: Castelnuovo, Serravalle, Carrara and, evidently, Avenza itself. As was customary for arguments of the era, some ‘good men’ were appointed to determine the respective jurisdiction.

The Bishop of Luni of the 12th century evidently had a long-term vision, given that in the course of 100 years not only was the settlement of Avenza effectively constructed and strengthened, but the entire coastal zone became desired and precious. The reason is demonstrated in the document describing, in the area between the mountains and the sea, an intense fragmentation and the presence of pits and ditches, utilised to reclaim the land and render it more fertile. In this context, Trepuncio (*Treponçum*) is taken as a topographic limit of the survey ordered by the Bishop and appears to be a small town very close to Avenza, which maintains the role of access point¹⁰.

The third and last document of the *Pekavicino*, which talks about Trepuncio, is somewhat below that just described and contains the statutes of Carrara of 1260: here the *podestà* (chief magistrate) of the Carrara municipality is committed to constructing the ‘bridges of Trepuncio’ in wood or other materials in order to enable travellers to pass through¹¹. We therefore once again find the new town as an access and transit point to serve the viability in a maritime/fluviat area, intense enough to require specific operations on the part of administrators of the dominant community.

2. The *Tripontium* Toponymic type

The *Tripontium* Toponymic type is very ancient and can be found in a vast area between Italy, France and Great Britain where similar names of small towns have been identified. The earliest attestation of a *Tripontium* (today Tor Tre Ponti, LT) is handed down to us by Strabo in his *Gheographikà* (lib. V,3) a monumental work written between 64 BC and 19 AD, and Plinio (23 - 79 AD) in *Naturalis Historia* (Gnoli, 2009/2010). The *Itinerario di Antonino* (Cuntz & Wirth, 1990) then reveals the presence of a *Tripontium* in Great Britain - current Newton and Biggin in the north-east of Rugby - at a *vallum* (Fosse Way): it was a frontier military settlement (50 AD - 4th century AD) today brought to light by the Rugby Archaeological Society (Jack Lucas FSA, 1997). In Umbria, an epigraph engraved directly into a rock wall, at a height of two meters from the road level, dated circa 88-85 BC (Sisani, 2013), demonstrates a *Tripontium* – today

Tripunzo municipality of Cerreto Spoleto (PG) – notorious for the Roman baths. We also know that the same name is engraved in the tombstone of Nerva (96-98 AD) conserved at the farmhouse of Mesa (Gnoli, 2005; Quilici 2005)¹² and in the tombstone of Teodorico – the sixth century. AD – found in the ancient *Forum Appii* (today's Borgo Faiti, LT), which refers to the reclamation works of the Pontine plains enforced by the same emperor where, in the group of TRIP letters many epigraphists agree with the recognition, the reference to the small town *Tripontium* is found (Rossi, 2009). Another *Tripontium*, of which the date of attestation is unknown, was located near the city of Rimini, in which the mouth of the *Rivo Tripontij* was also located (Fantuzzi, 1804). On the contrary, the attestations relative to some places named *Traponzo* or *Tripunzo*, and *Trapontium*¹³ probable vulgarisation of the more ancient *Tripontium* date back to the medieval and modern age, such as: *Tripontio*, near Arles in Provenza (Guérard, 1857); Traponzo on the outskirts of the town of Ostra (AN), today via Traponzo; Fosso Traponzo, Belvedere Ostrenze (AN); the Traponzo torrent in the Viterbo area; Tripontio of Bondeno Mantovano (ant. *Trepontium*) (Muratori, 1738); Treponi di Rezzato (BS); San Leonardo in Treponzio, Capannori (LU) among others.

From the diminutive form Transpontino (*trans pontio*), toponym that in the Middle Ages still mentions the homonymous ancient port on the Tiber and which we now find in Rome in the *oltretorrente* of Transpontina, a district located between the Vatican and Castel Sant'Angelo beyond the Vittorio Emanuele II bridge (Molinari, Spera & Santangeli Valenzani, 2015: 89)¹⁴, we extract the information useful to dissolve the etymology of the *Traponzo* type. These testimonies allow us to confirm that the toponymic type had already been established in the Republican period and may have, at most, continued up to the first Late Antiquity period (3rd century AD - 6th century AD). The condition that combines most of the places examined, which presents the *Tripontium* type, is given by their location in territories overlooking the sea, the marshes, the watercourses, the pits and the ditches. On the other hand, no sufficient evidence emerged to justify the more 'natural' etymological hypothesis, which would have derived the name from the presence of three bridges¹⁵. Considering that the term could be composed either by the Latin preposition *inter* (between) or *trans* (beyond) that carry the noun *pontes* (bridges) or the noun *pontus* (ponto) (Rosenberg & Sellier)¹⁶ the toponym would initially indicate a 'small town that stands among the bridges' or 'beyond the bridges'¹⁷, or a 'place that is beyond the *ponto*' or 'in the middle of the *ponto*', here '*ponto*' in the sense of 'depth', 'sea' and 'flute', then by extension 'mirror of water', 'swamp', and 'pit'.

At this point we have several certain elements: Trepuncio was, in the 12th century, a place of passage located in the coastal strip between the base of the Carrara hills and the sea, not far from the remains of the Roman city of Luni, on a course of water and/or in close contact with a damp area that required elevated crossing structures (bridges or piers) and which had undergone – probably between the 11th and 12th centuries – an intense remediation; gave access to the village of Avenza, similar to the nearby dock of Xago – Cacho, and probably marked the western border of the jurisdiction of the *borgo* in the direction of Luni.

Given the antique or late antique origin of the different *Tripontium* traceable in Roman Europe is it possible that a trace of a Roman occupation of the coast exists? Is it possible that the bridges that the podestà had to repair in 1260 are traces of similar structures of an earlier age?

The first thing to ask is where the coast line actually passed in Roman times and if therefore the 'bridges' or 'piers' of Trepuncio, and also coincidentally the *grotacias* attested in the document of 1180, can be considered remains of a contemporary occupation of the nearby Roman colony.

The Roman connections between Pisa and Luni are still under discussion. If it is true that historical cartography draws the "Roman road" in the foothills, it is possible that this route was established in the Early Middle Ages, as a consequence of the swamping of the coastal strip, and that in Roman times the coastline was more advanced and harboured a little further at sea than the present town of Avenza a direct connecting route to Luni (Fabiani, 2006). The hypothesis was made on the basis of the archaeological photointerpretation and unfortunately, for now, has not found any definite confirmations of findings on the ground. The attendance of the Avenza site during the Roman age, near the ancient mouth of the homonymous torrent, would also be suggested by the discovery of a 'sepulchre' and some marble 'cornices', which however, is not accompanied by detailed information and would require a new and targeted archaeological investigation (Banti, 1929).



Figure 4: Viability and centuriation of the Roman era between Luni and the Ricortola torrent.

Source: Fabiani, rielaborato da Pappalardo - Chelli - Parodi – Capitani (2015).

The toponym Avenza, as is known, is attested in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, where however the name indicates only the watercourse (although placed in an erroneous position). A second attestation of the toponym can be found only in 998: a document from the Codice Pelavicino indeed reports between the confines of a land located in a hilly area (*in loco et fundo ubi monte Volpilione dicitur*), of Avenza¹⁸: an indication that clearly does not concern a presumed *borgo*, but the extensive area related to the Avenza as a watercourse, considered in the upstream section. A third mention is found in an act dated hypothetically to 1140, forty years before the foundation¹⁹.

Here we see that two lands were *in Laventia*: the first bordered the *strada Romea* and the lands of the *de la Padule*; the second with *via carrarecia*, with the *strada Romea* and with the land of a certain Giolitta di Sarzana. The text indicates, in our opinion, a transitory situation: in 1140 Avenza was certainly an inhabited place (not just a river), but within a strongly rural context and newly reclaimed. It was crossed by the Romea and by a minor road suitable for wagons: it was therefore the object of exploitation and economic interest that led, forty years later, to the initiative of establishing the *borgo*²⁰.

The evolution of the coastline between Avenza and Luni from about 6000 years ago would indicate, for the area east of the Parmignola, a progressive but intermittent advancement with its formation in the early Middle Ages, between the hills and the depressed sea area hosting a modest lagoon/lake protected from the open sea by sandy shorelines; to the west, however, in Roman times the coastline was more pronounced, with a shoreline above sea level (the current Cordone della Marinella), upstream of which a closed lagoon extended; between this and the city of Luni there was instead a deep inlet open to the sea to the east (Pappalardo, Chelli, Parodi & Capitani, 2015). The analysis carried out did not reveal any 'sandstone bed', calcarenite which, according to some authors, could be the origin of the *grotacias* attested in 1140; these, in our opinion, could instead have been traces of ancient ruins (Pappalardo, Chelli, Parodi & Capitani, 2015). This is a scenario that on the one hand does not exclude the possibility that the 12th century *Trepuncio* had inherited the name from a pre-existing *Tripontium* in a Roman context and on the other that reinforces the already formed hypothesis of the existence of a port in the Middle Ages – or rather a system of small docks – between Carrione and Parmignola.

3. Traponcio in cartography

Thanks to historical cartography it is possible to hypothesise the topographic location of Trepuncio, and consequently propose a project of archaeological investigation to the superintendence and local administrations in order to evaluate the antiquity and the structure of these docks.

The first testimony of Trepuncio in historical cartography dates back to 1583 when the administration of the then principality of Massa had a project for the reclamation of the marshland between Avenza and Sarzana²¹. Here Avenza (*Venza*) is a walled *borgo*

located just east of the river of the same name (**Fig. 5**), connected to the *strada Romea* by a bridge that leads to Sarzana. In the coastal strip between Avenza and the Parmignola watercourse some ditches can be found (fossa maestra, fossa della Caviola, fossa del Beghe, fossa de *Campo Dapio*) and *Traonzolo* (**Fig 6**). We therefore find that the toponym at that time concerned a coastal area between the Parmignola and Avenza torrents, characterised by large swampy sections as can also be seen in a beautiful map of 1621 (**Fig. 7**) that does not present our toponym, but illustrates the need for "bridges" to access the *borgo* of Avenza, including one consisting of several arches, and named St. George (**Fig. 9**).



Figure 5: Part of the map of Marcantonio Pasi relative to the *borgo* of Avenza in 1583. Source: Archivio di Stato di Modena: Mappe e Disegni - Mappario Estense - Acque, Topografia de terreni e confini dello Stato, n. 27



Figure 6: Part of the map of Marcantonio Pasi relative to the *borgo* of Avenza in 1583. Source: Archivio di Stato di Modena: Mappe e Disegni - Mappario Estense - Acque, Topografia dei terreni e confini dello Stato, n. 27.



Figure 7: Sarzana.

Source: Archivio di Stato di Genova: 936 Sarzana (69), Tipo dei confini tra Sarzana e Avenza (1626).

A little later than that just described is a map by Ercole Spina of 1594²², famous because it draws the hypothesis of the alteration of the coastline from the mouth of the Magra to Avenza from the Roman era to 1592. Even if the reconstructed hypotheses before 1592 are to be considered the result of conjecture and largely erroneous (Bini, Chelli & Pappalardo, 2006; Bini, Chelli, Pappalardo, Durante & Gervasini, 2010; Bini, Chelli, Pappalardo, Gervasini, Bruckner & Mancusi, 2013), what should be reliable is the reality that the Spina saw with its eyes and that it had "the Traponcio" on the coastline in front of the sea (**Fig. 8**).



Figure 8: Atlante Spina.

Source: Archivio di Stato di Genova: Atlante Spina, MS ms. 423, n.27, particolare.

We lastly find our toponym in two other maps dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries. On the first (*Projects to arrange the tributaries of the Magra River*)²³ we find that before that period, Treponcio was on the original bed of the Parmignola. So

indeed the point where the torrent is born is described:

Perticara dista 4 a. queste due ultime [si riferisce anche al canale Castagnola] erano con Orto(novo) e le due prime con Sarzana de Carrara. La Parmignola fiume doveria andare al Traponcio suo leto antico [... ter]mini hora termine di san Giorgio

(Perticara becomes distant 4 a. these last two [also refers to the Castagnola canal] were with Orto(novo) and the first two with Sarzana de Carrara. The Parmignola River must go to the Traponcio its ancient bed now ends with St. George)

The second map (*Plan for the boundaries between Ortonovo and Castelnuovo between the territories of Massa and Sarzana, 17th-18th centuries*)²⁴ was drafted for the border dispute between "the Serenissima Republic of Genoa and the Prince of Massa". It is said that:

la Serenissima Repubblica ... al mare, pretende di arrivare fino al luogo descritto come l'antico Traponcio, mentre il Principe pretende di arrivare ... al monte nel cui luogo vi sono dei termini naturali che sono dati dalle cime degli stessi monti.

(the Serenissima Repubblica ... to the sea, claims to reach the place described as the ancient Traponcio, while the Prince claims to arrive ... at the mountain where there are natural terms that are given by the peaks of the same mountains.)

Trepuncio is indicated in the map with the words "l'antiqua Traponcio" and a rectangle that probably indicates a term to be related to two others upstream, placed along the Roman road, recognisable in the previous map as term of St George (**Fig. 9**).

The difference between the claims of the two states concerns precisely the position of Trepuncion, which before probably marked a passage of the Parmignola and in the modern age was instead only a point now distant from the torrent, because it had been diverted towards the estate of Marinella. The wording 'the antique Traponcio' seems to delineate the trace of now obsolete previous settlement structures.



Figure 9: Plan or type of the borders between Ortonovo and Castelnuovo (XVII – XVIII). Source: Archivio di Stato di Genova: 23/Ortonovo e Castelnuovo.

From above it appears plausible that in the Middle Ages, Xago and Trepuncio were two essentially 'maritime-fluvial' access points for Avenza, one probably found more to the south-east, perhaps at the same mouth of Avenza, and the other to the north-west, towards the estate of Marinella and next to Parmignola.

The maritime-lagoon environment required the installation of transient structures, 'bridges' or 'piers', which had given rise to at least one of the two toponyms. In Avenza, as is clear from the written and cartographic documentation illustrated here, it was also possible to access it by road, from the *strada Romea*.

At this point we must go back to rereading the document from which we left, in which we recall three statements that concern the area investigated and the transit of travellers and pilgrims:

- 1) the Bishop reserved the exclusive use of the sea strip, also affected by the mouth of the Avenza;
- 2) the assets of the deceased travellers and pilgrims were an important source of income;
- 3) special attention was paid to those who arrived passing by Xago and Trepuncio, places that - as we propose here - were on the coast and had a marshy environment.

We do not know for certain – even if we consider it plausible – if in Trepuncio there could have been structures prior to those certainly functioning in the Middle Ages, nor how ancient the dock of Xago could be; what we would like to maintain is that the medieval foundation of the village of Avenza in the second half of the 12th century was linked to the economic re-launch of the Carrara coastal strip, implemented both with land reclamation and with putting docks into service. Both the access roads to the *borgo*, the terrestrial (*strada Romea*) and maritime/fluvial (Xago-Cacho and Trepuncio) were perceived by the Bishop and the *milites* of Carrara of 1180 as potentially profitable: an undoubtable sign that important demographic and commercial growth was in progress, in which even the small docks, placed at the centre of a fertile area close to the Romea-Francigena, were considered significant investments due to the transit of goods, merchants and pilgrims.

The vitality of these Traponcio docks seems to remain maintained until the end of the 13th century, and perhaps until the end of the 15th century for those of Xago.

The progress of the coast, however, must have made them increasingly less useful, since in the 16th century they are found only as simple toponyms and reference points (*l'antiqua Traponcio*). The first project for the construction of the port of Carrara dates back to the mid-eighteenth century and sees its structures now located 2 km from the centre of Avenza.

The maps and historical documents consulted make it possible to approximate the current position of both places: Porto Cacho, as mentioned above, is currently at the Villa Ceci and Trepuncio in the Battilana area, just south-east of the mouth of the Parmignola²⁵, where worked boulders of Roman columns were found and where a coring revealed a littoral environment between the depths correspondent to the

current sea level and the -1m, that is to say the depth roughly corresponding to the late antique and medieval period.

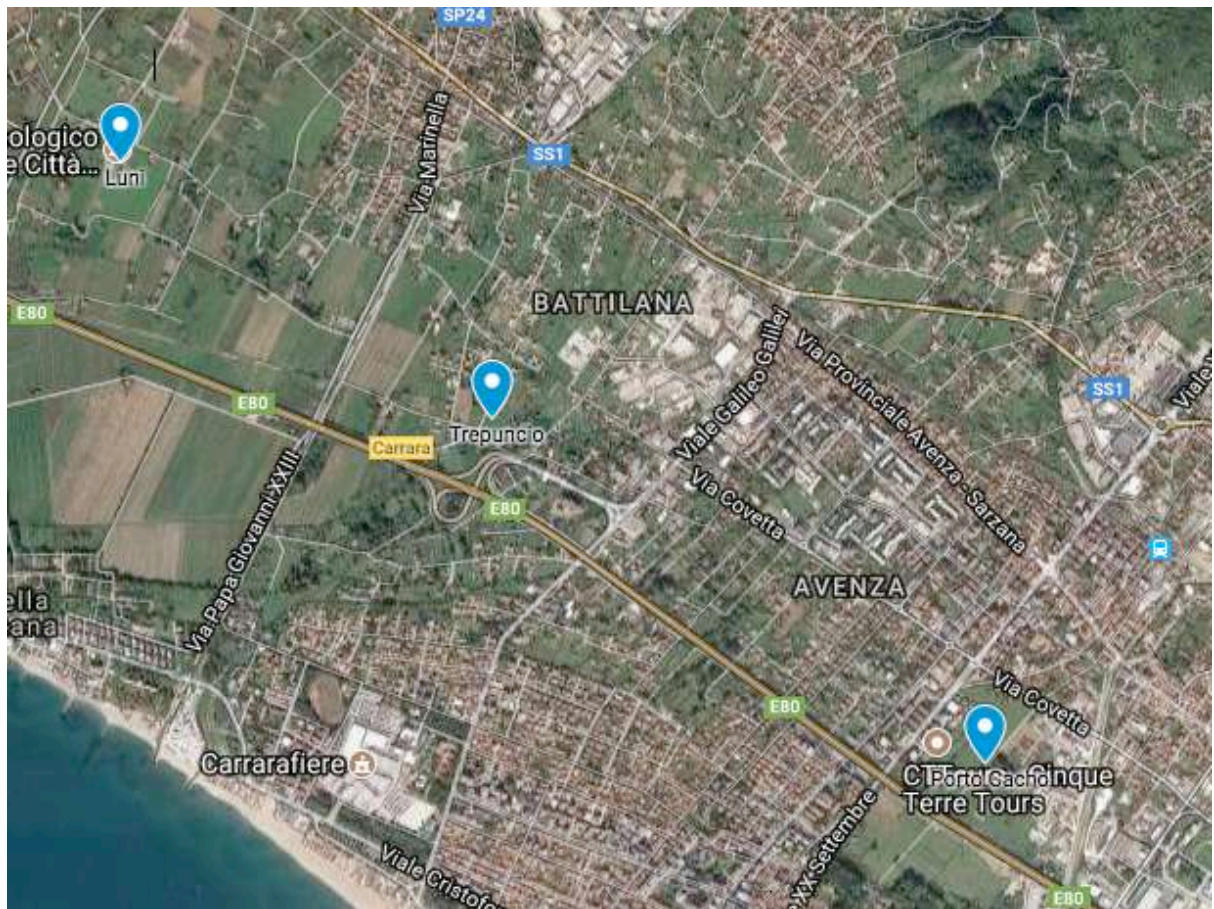


Figure 10: Hypothetical position of Trepuncio and Porto Cacho in regards to Avenza and Luni.

Source: Google Maps.

In our opinion it would therefore be very useful to implement an archaeological survey campaign in these two areas, which includes excavation for sample areas, in order to establish the presence and chronology of the previous layers of use and to bring the traces of these minor port structures to light, noted thus far from written documentation.

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¹ The measurement corresponds to that of the lagoons of the Magra and the Vara. Currently, Lunigiana is divided between two provinces and two regions: the southern and western sectors belong to la Spezia and thus Liguria, the northern and eastern sectors to Massa-Carrara and Tuscany.

² According to Luciana and Tiziano Mannoni it regards (Bernieri, A., Mannoni, T., & Mannoni, L. (1983). Il porto di Carrara, storia e attualità. Carrara, p.62) natural ravines in bio-calcarene (sandstone bed) which, however, does not seem to have been detected; currently the coastline is indeed low and sandy. This could involve, given its vicinity to Luni, ancient ruins, given that the micro-toponym "a le grotte", near Pisa, indicated a point where the access to the Roman amphitheatre was still visible in the middle Ages.

³ *Attolinus de Caço*, testimone in un atto redatto a Carrara nel 1230. *Codice Pelavicino. Edizione digitale*, n. 278-CCCXVI <http://pelavicino.labcd.unipi.it/evt/#doc=CCCXVI_278&page=fol_291r>.

⁴ Archivio di Stato di Massa, fondo Archivio Comune di Carrara - serie I, b. 1, c. 18v.

⁵ The etymology of the word is far from clear. Del Giudice believes it to be a predial (Del Giudice, C. A. (1982). Predial toponyms in Carrese territory. *Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Antiche Province Modenesi*, s. XI, 4, 362-363). Here, the derivation from the Latin *cōactus* is hypothetically proposed, in the meaning of reduced or marginalised, which makes the sense "smaller", "lesser", "on the side-lines" compared to a larger one (REW 2003). It involves a derivation of the verb *cogĕre* eng. to force, from *cogo*, *cōĕgi*, *cōactum*, from **co-ago*, which in English is "to reunite", "to gather" in one point. It is notable however, that in Spanish *cacho* corresponds to "slice", "piece"; un *cacho de tierra*, a slice of land (Roberts, E. A. (2014). *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Spanish Language with Families of Words based on Indo-European Roots: Volume I (H - Z and Appendix)*. Xlibris Corporation, p. 282. It should additionally be noted that currently, in Europe at least two Xago's have been found: the promontory, which closes the bay/pond of Biguglia in Corsica and the sandy coast of Playa de Xagó in the Asturias, although in Spain a Sagobe exists relatively far from the sea between Santiago and Pontevedra.

⁶ Istituto Geografico de Agostini Novara, *Nomi d'Italia, Origine e significato dei nomi - Sacco (sa)*, established in 1308-10 as *sacii*, probably reflects the lat. *saccu(m)* 'sacco', in the geographical metaphorical sense of 'inlet, dead end', or the anthroponym lat. *saccus* senza suff. ab, *sachesi*; M. De Mauro - M. Mancini Garzanti *Dizionario Etimologico*, 'sacco', lat. *saccu(m)*, p. 1823; Devoto-Oli, 5 'sacco', s.m. lat. *saccu(m)*, Formation due to the production of a cavity more or less deep.

⁷ It did not involve an important dock. It indeed assists in the reminder that the first pilot's book that cites Avenza as a dock is that of Giovanni Bertran da Maiorca del 1482 (Giacomo Bertran, *Carta nautica del mar Mediterraneo dall'Atlantico al mar d'Azov, comprese le coste atlantiche dell'Europa e dell'Africa*, in ASFi, *Carte Nautiche 1482*).

⁸ *Codice Pelavicino. Edizione digitale*, n. 264-CCCII

<http://pelavicino.labcd.unipi.it/evt/#doc=CCCII_264&page=fol_284r>.

⁹ Aguto from the Latin *acutus*, in other words subtle; in specific “structure or edifice of an extended form” (v. il Circo Massimo in Roma): involves a construction which in the Roman period should have been utilised for various performances and in particular horse or chariot racing. *Circhio* from the Latin *circus*, in other words *circis*; the name, in the ancient Roman period, identified a structure of a circular form for performances, the sense is specifically that of a “place where one revolves around”.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*: [...] *versus Treponçum usque ad fossam respondentem usque ad angulum civitatis domus canonicorum [...] iuxta muros civitatis Lune, recta linea veniendo versus Aventiam sive Treponçum.*

¹¹ *Codice Pelavicino. Edizione digitale*, n. 275-CCCXIII

<http://pelavicino.labcd.unipi.it/evt/#doc=CCCXIII_275&page=fol_288r>: Item teneatur potestas facere fieri pontes de Trepunçio de lignamine vel alias, ita quod inde possint viatores transire.

¹² Old farmhouse adjacent to the archaeological site of the ancient Mausoleo di Clesippo (Tor Tre Ponti, LT).

¹³ Archivio di Stato di Massa, fondo Archivio Comune di Carrara - serie I, b. 2, p. 492.

¹⁴ Transpontino was additionally the name of the via which crossed the ancient Roman aqueduct which adapted to the bridge of viceré Juan de Vega in 1556, today one of the three bridges of the city of Catania.

¹⁵ This hypothesis of Egidio Forcellino (Appendix Lexici totius latinitatis ab Aegidio Forcellino elucubrat et in tertia editione patavina ab Josepho Furlanetto aucti et emendati (1841), Padova, vol. 5, voce TRIPONTIUM, cl. 1, p. 179). Less probable seems the hypothesis which would want the name derived from the presence of a Roman bridge formed by three pillars, as in the case of the Roman bridge situated on the Appia Antica and resulted to have two arches, from which would derive the Tor Tre Ponti di Latina (Roma).

¹⁶ Rosenberg & Sellier, CALONGHI, *pontus* (ponto), p.2101, 2.

¹⁷ Could also be due to the union of *trans* e *ponctum*, ‘punto’ to signify “il luogo che sta oltre il punto” (the place beyond the point) here in meaning the terminal line of a determined strip of the area.

¹⁸ *Codice Pelavicino. Edizione digitale*, n. 259-CCLXXXVII

<http://pelavicino.labcd.unipi.it/evt/#doc=CCLXXXVII_259&page=fol_281r>.

¹⁹ *Codice Pelavicino. Edizione digitale*, n. 312-CCCL

<http://pelavicino.labcd.unipi.it/evt/#doc=CCCL_312&page=fol_307r>.

²⁰ Pietro Di Pierro (*Avenza e la Via Francigena*, post in Carraraonline.com

<http://www.carraraonline.com/avenza_torre_di_castruccio.php>) indicates the first attestation of Avenza a document of the Codice Pelavicino of 950 which, however does not prove to be it. In 988 the Codice reports instead that between the borders of a terrain in a hilly area *in loco et fundo ubi monte Volpilione dicitur, una terra Avenzese (Codice Pelavicino. Edizione digitale, n. 275-CCCXIII* <http://pelavicino.labcd.unipi.it/evt/#doc=CCLXXXVII_259&page=fol_281r>): this attestation, as is evident, does not refer to an alleged *borgo*, but to a generic area relative to Avenza in its water course, here nevertheless considered in the mountainous part.

²¹ Archivio di Stato di Modena, fondo “Mappario Estense” (1537 - 1589, Ed(ito nel) 1580 da Alberico Malaspina, Rilievi di Marcantonio Pasi, sec. XVI, Acque del Palu(do): Written at the back of the map: “1583 Disegno per asciugare i paduli di Lave(n)za verso Sarzana fatto dal Pasio ing(e)gn(ero) di Ferrara” (1583 Drawing to dry the marshes of Lavenza towards Sarzana drawn by Pasio engineer of Ferrara). Drawn by Marco Antonio architect, engineer and cartographer of Carpi (MO), brother of Pasio Pasi, also an engineer and captain for the Duke d’Este di Ferrara. (cfr. Biblioteca modenese o Notizie della vita e delle opere degli scrittori natii degli stati del serenissimo signor duca di Modena raccolte e ordinate dal cavaliere ab. Girolamo Tiraboschi, t. VI-2, Modena 1786, p. 508.

²² Archivio di Stato di Genova, MS ms. 423, n.27.

²³ Archivio di Stato di Genova, 92 Parmignola (27)

²⁴ Archivio di Stato di Genova, 23 Ortonovo e Castelnuovo.

²⁵ Pappalardo - Chelli - Parodi - Capitani, *op. cit.*, nota 36.