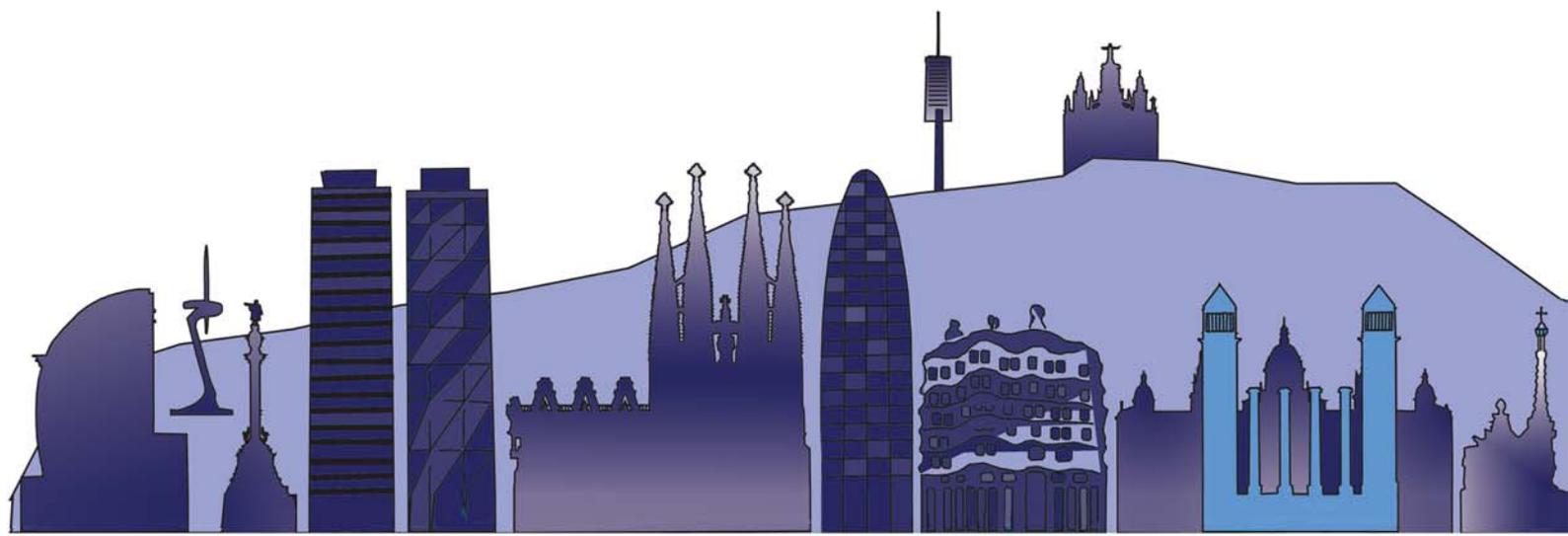


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Palynology of the Terramare, the Middle Bronze age of the Po Plain (SUCCESSO-TERRA project)

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In the framework of the national-funded project SUCCESSO-TERRA (*Human societies, climate-environment changes and resource exploitation/sustainability in the Po Plain at the Mid-Holocene times: the Terramara*), an interdisciplinary geoarchaeological and archaeobotanical (pollen and macroremains) investigation has been carried out, aiming at reconstructing the land transformations that occurred at the onset, duration, and end of the Terramare culture in the southern-central Po Plain (Emilia Romagna region). The Terramare are archaeological vestiges of banked and moated villages that developed in the central sector of Po River alluvial plain during the Middle and Late Holocene. The project expressively focuses on the Terramara Santa Rosa di Poviglio and on the Vasca Grande di Noceto. The relationships between the Late Holocene regional environmental and land-use changes have been investigated to obtain a detailed comprehension of adaptive strategies of the Terramare people during the Middle/Recent Bronze ages (1550–1170 years BC; Cremaschi *et al.* 2016).

Pollen samples were collected from trenches excavated within the main structures of the archaeological sites (the moat and ditch surrounding the Santa Rosa di Poviglio site, and the infilling of the Vasca Grande di Noceto site). Pollen extraction also includes sieving and heavy liquid floatation to concentrate pollen and non pollen palynomorphs.

Pollen was common and well preserved. A set of anthropogenic pollen indicators, common in the spectra (and in the spectra from other Italian archaeological sites; Mercuri *et al.* 2013), was considered especially useful to reconstruct agricultural dynamics besides the distribution of wild vegetation (wood and wetland plant associations).

The palynological research showed a transformation in flora composition and plant communities, suggesting a dynamic agricultural economy. The latter was possibly practiced on the basis of wood management and crop fields. At the top of the sequence of Santa Rosa di Poviglio, in correspondence with the drying of the moat system, a dramatic decrease of woods may had a twofold causation: increased aridity (natural factor) and intensive land-use (anthropic factor) might have played a fairly synchronous action on vegetation.

References

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