



Archaeobotany and the Archaeological Park “Terramara Montale” (Northern Italy): a winner joint-venture

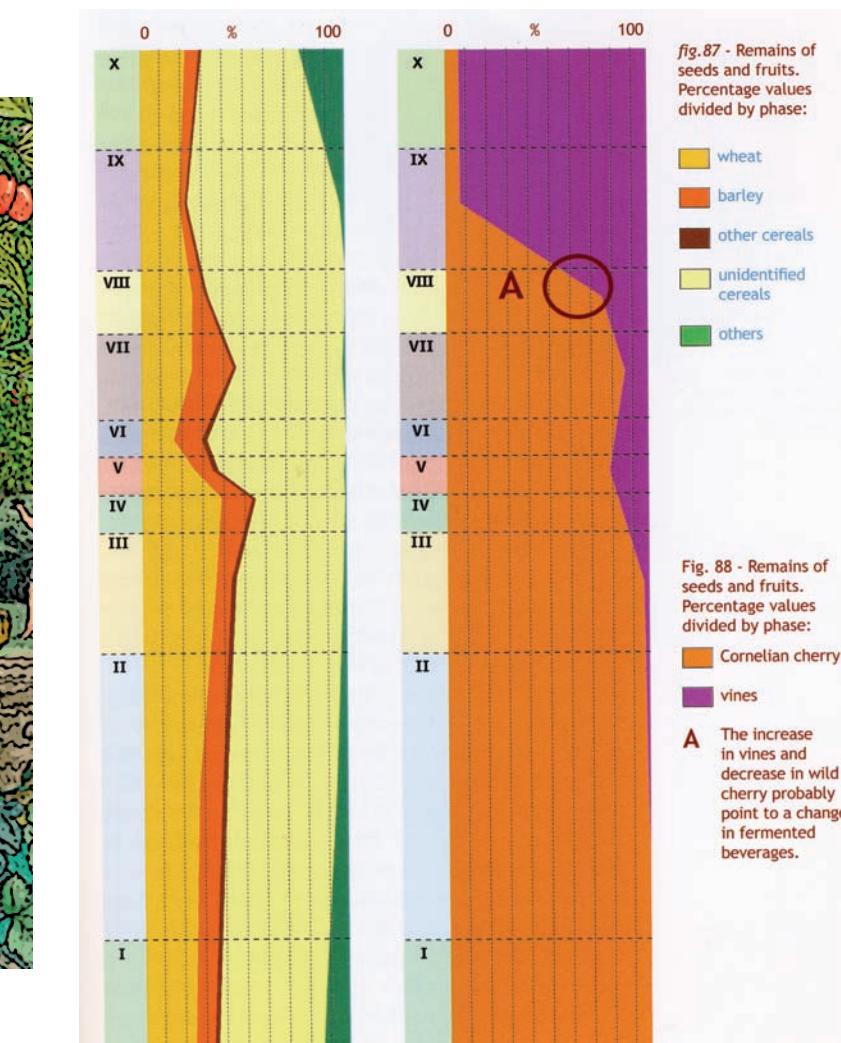
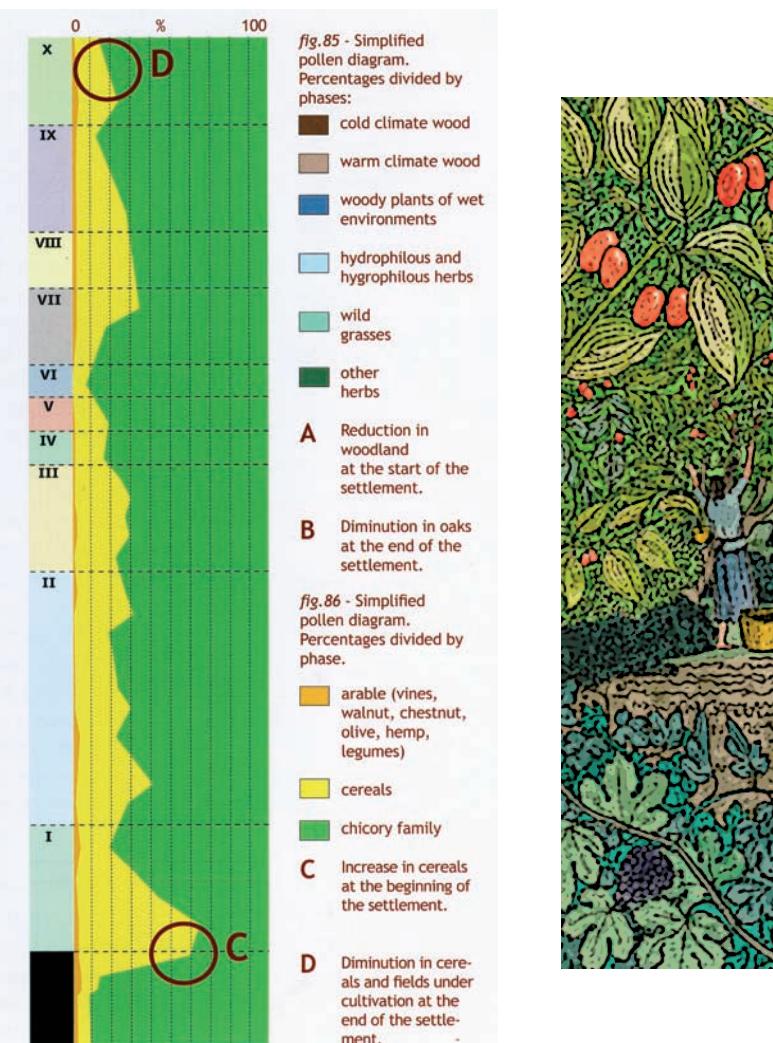
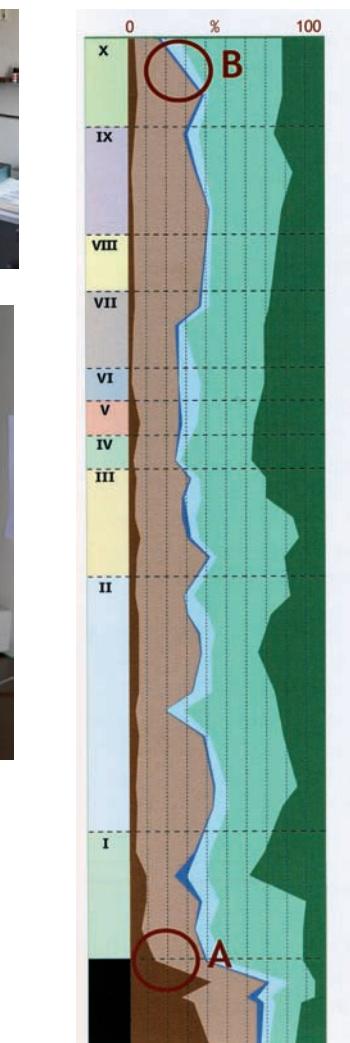
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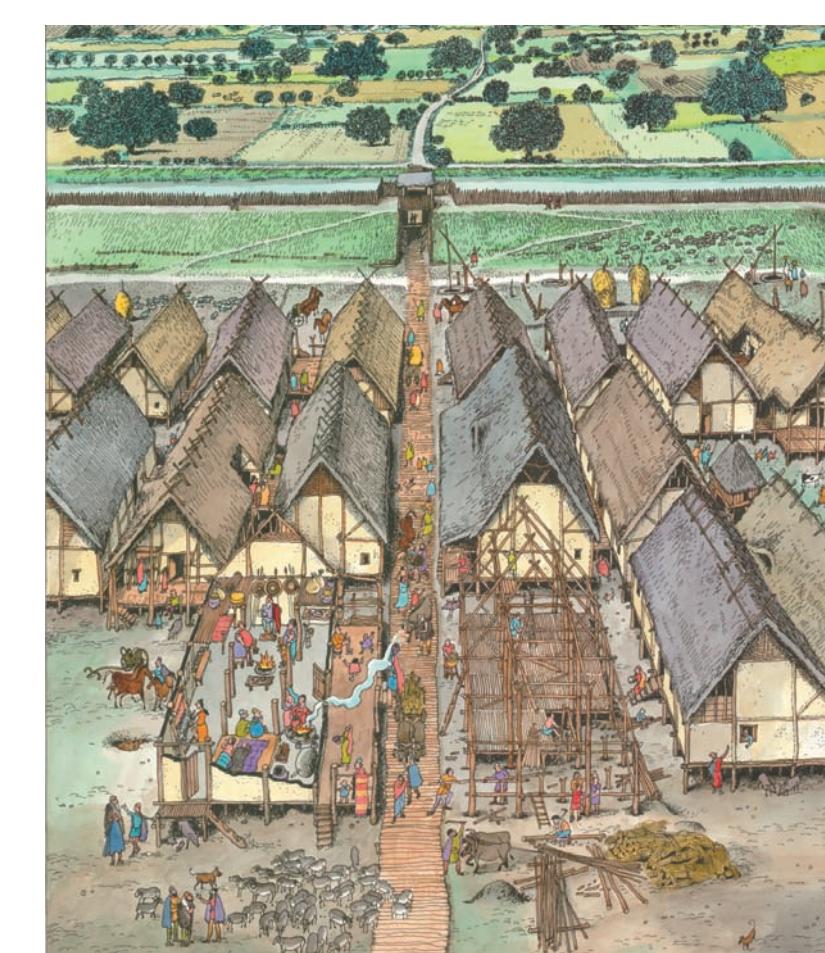
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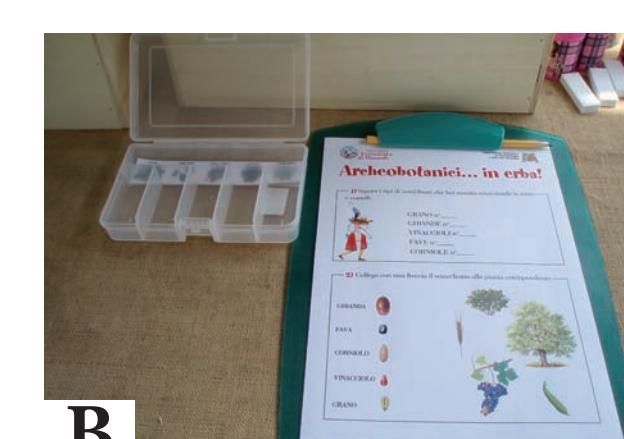
The Archaeological Park and Open-Air Museum Terramara Montale, opened in 2004 under the direction of the Civic Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology of Modena, was built in the homonymous archaeological area, in which several years of excavation have brought to light finds of the terramare civilizations settled in the Po plain during the Bronze Age (2nd millennium BC). Along with several archaeological remains, the large amount of archaeozoological and archaeobotanical finds allowed to obtain more detailed information about the everyday life of the inhabitants of the site, useful to reconstruct the environment and the history of the terramara.



The archaeobotanical research (eg. Mercuri et al., 2006a, 2006b) has brought a great surplus value to the realization of the Park; the green area of the Open-Air Museum has been realized following the indications obtained from palynological, carpological and xylo-antracological analyses. Panels show the landscape at the time of the village. Moreover, the study of archaeobotanical remains has been essential to understand the man-plants interactions (for fortifications, houses and furniture, crops and agricultural practices, plants food, weavings and textiles) during the life of the settlement.



Thanks to the archaeobotanical analyses, the Park creates workshops, activities and demonstrations of experimental archaeology to involve the visitors of all ages in ethnobotanical aspects of the site:



A) The environment at the time of terramare - Demonstration of the techniques employed to reconstruct past environments;



B) Archaeobotany for kids - All at work sieving soils, collecting and identifying fruits and seeds of plants cultivated or collected in the Bronze Age;



C) The woodworking - With the original essences, demonstration of manufacturing techniques employed to realize different tools;



D) Building without bricks: the houses of the terramara - Demonstrations of experimental archaeology: how create weaves with reeds, branches and leaves, and daub surface of plaster on the walls of the houses;



E) The bread cycle - From cutting the wheat, to beating, milling, cooking and tasting the final product;



F) Archaeology of flavors - Exhibition on finds and panels about food, along with activities and tastings;



G) Archaeology of wine - The use of fermented beverages through the archaeobotanical evidences;



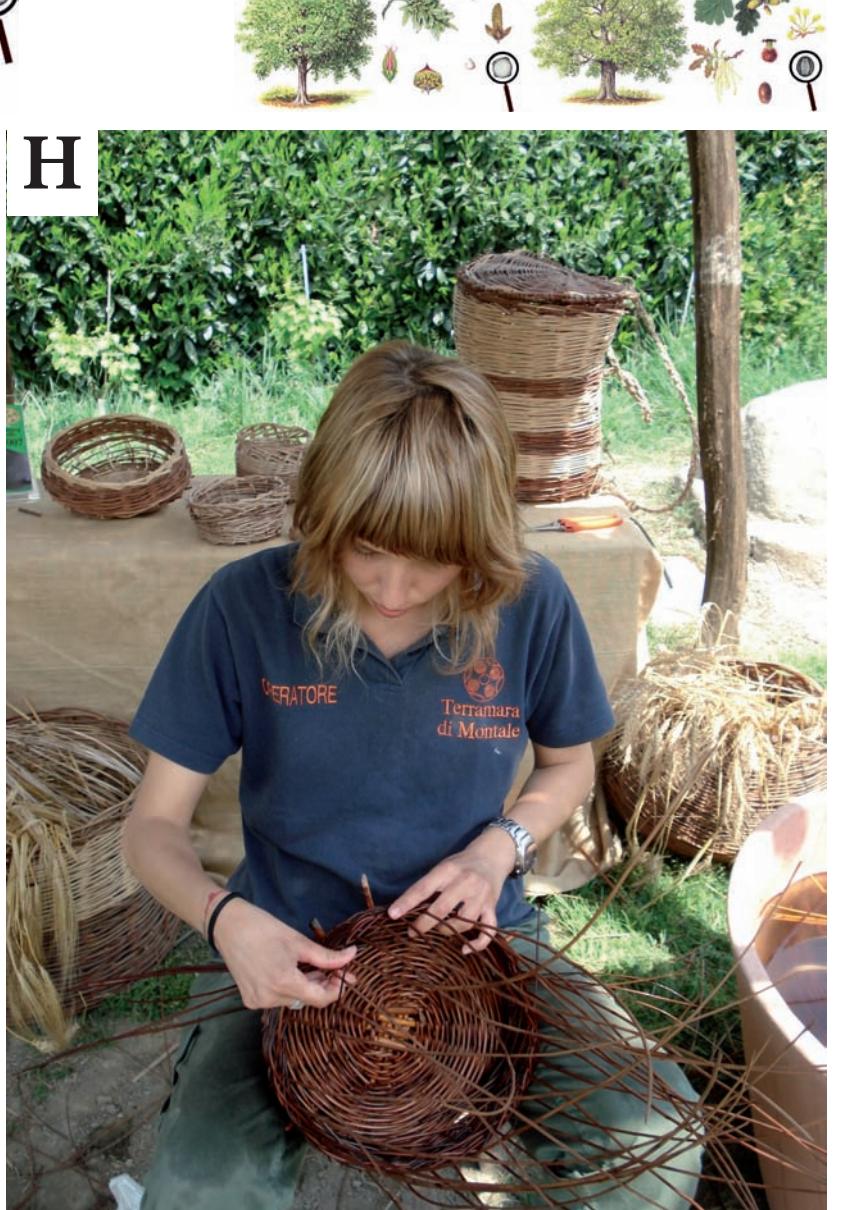
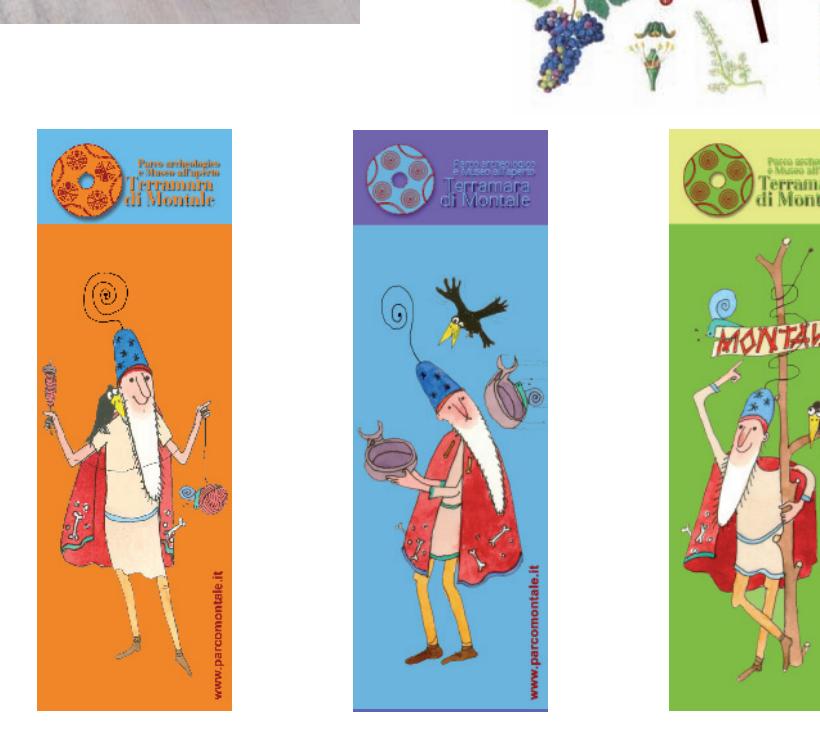
H) Weaves of plant fibers and marsh grasses - Demonstration of processing techniques of vegetal fibers to make baskets, ropes, nets and mats;



I) A thread pull another thread - Observation of the functioning of the reconstructed looms and realization of colored linen bracelets using the Bronze Age techniques;

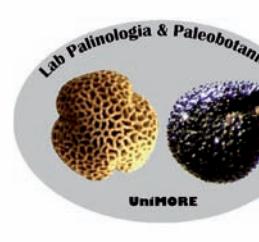


J) The park in blue - The use of indigo, madder and mignonette in dyeing techniques of flax.



References: Mercuri A.M., Accorsi C.A., Bandini Mazzanti M., Bosi G., Cardarelli A., Labate D., Marchesini M., Trevisan Grandi G., 2006a. Economy and environment of Bronze Age settlements – Terramaras – in the Po Plain (Northern Italy): first results of the archaeobotanical research at the Terramara di Montale. *Veg. Hist. Archaeobot.*, 16: 43-60; Mercuri A.M., Accorsi C.A., Bandini Mazzanti M., Bosi G., Trevisan Grandi G., Cardarelli A., Labate D., Marchesini M., Olmi L., Torri P., 2006b. Cereal fields from the Middle-Recent Bronze Age, as found in the Terramara di Montale, in the Po Plain (Emilia Romagna, Northern Italy), based on pollen, seeds/fruits and microcharcoal. In: J.P. Morel, J. Tresserras Juan, J.C. Matamala (eds.) *The Archaeology of crop fields and Gardens*. EDIPUGLIA, Bari, pp. 251-270.

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