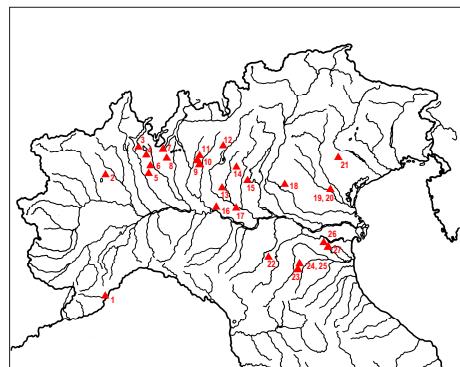


Plant offerings from Roman cremations in Northern Italy: a review

This study presents a review of plant products (cereals, pulses, fruits and bread) used as offerings in Roman cremation graves in Northern Italy necropolis. We considered cemeteries and single graves from 27 sites, all but one located in the Po Plain and in the Prealps; one necropolis is situated along the coast of the Ligurian Sea. We studied about 400 structures (busta, ustrina, pits), dating from the 1st century BC up to the 3rd century AD; a total of more than 6.500 carpological remains have been considered.



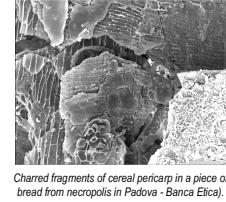
site	century	n. graves	carpological remains	broad*	references		
1 Alb	1 st -BC-2 nd AD	4	> 2500	—	G. Massabò, 1998; Castiglioni, Rottoli unpub.		
2 Cer	1 st -BC-2 nd AD	93	1899	3543 fr.	Castiglioni, Cottini, Rottoli in press		
3 Ang	1 st -BC-2 nd AD	64	> 15	x	Castellini 1985; Negri unpub.		
4 Ars	1 st -BC	3	2	x	Motella 1990		
5 Inv	1 st -BC	1	—	x	Cottini, Rottoli 2000		
6 Leg	1 st -BC-2 nd AD	1	—	x	Castellini, Motella 1990		
7 COben	1 st -3 rd AD	10	59	x	Castiglioni, Rottoli 2008		
8 Mar	Marino Comense-via T. Grossi	(Como)	7	39	x	Castiglioni, Cottini, Rottoli 1999	
9 Ver	Veredolo-loc. Colabiolo	(Bergamo)	1 st -BC-2 nd AD	1	—	Castiglioni, Cottini, Rottoli 1998	
10 Lev	Levate-via Roggia Colleenesca	(Bergamo)	1 st -BC-2 nd AD	9	> 50	x	Negri unpub.
11 BGort	Bergamo-via degli Orti	(Bergamo)	1 st -BC	1	13	x	Castiglioni, Cottini, Rottoli 2007
12 Lov	Lovere-via Martolini	(Bergamo)	1 st -2 nd AD	9	> 3	x	Cottini 1998
13 Man	Manerbio-Cascina Trebeschi	(Brescia)	1 st -3 rd AD	15	334	x	Castiglioni, Rottoli 2010
14 Nav	Nave	(Brescia)	1 st -3 rd AD	44	> 235	x	Rottoli 1987
15 Des	Dessenzano-loc. Faustinella-S. Cipriano	(Brescia)	1 st -2 nd AD	1	—	3	Castiglioni, Rottoli 2007
16 CRsl	Cremeno-San Lorenzo	(Cremona)	Roman	1	33	—	Rottoli unpub.
17 Pia	Piadena-San Paolo Ripa d'Aglio	(Cremona)	1 st -BC	1	8	—	cf. Rottoli 1987
18 VRppsp	Vernon-Porta Pria e Spianà	(Verona)	Roman	15	156	37 fr.	Castiglioni unpub.
19 PDbe	Padova-Banca Etica	(Padova)	1 st -BC	12	156	x	Castiglioni, Rottoli unpub.
20 PDbor	Padova-BorgoBorgognone	(Padova)	Roman	11	376	13 fr.	(Castiglioni, Rottoli unpub.)
21 Mon	Montebelluna-fondo Sermaglia	(Treviso)	Roman	1	1	—	Motella De Carlo 2000
22 MOfer	Modena-Ferrovia Modena-Sassuolo	(Modena)	1 st -BC-2 nd AD	45	> 102	—	Marchesani, Marcelli 2006
23 Cas	Casalecchio di Reno	(Bologna)	1 st -3 rd AD	25	> 5	—	Marchesani, Marcelli 2006
24 BOint	Bologna-Fiera Internazionale	(Bologna)	1 st -BC-1 st AD	8	3-13	—	Marchesani, Marcelli 2006
25 BOnsav	Bologna-Nuova Stazione AV	(Bologna)	1 st -2 nd AD	12	5-7	—	Marchesani, Marcelli 2006
26 Vog	Voghera	(Ferrara)	1 st -3 rd AD	2	11	—	Frofani, Bandini Mazzanti 1984
27 Por	Portomaggiore-Gambulaga	(Ferrara)	1 st -3 rd AD	5	> 61	—	Marchesani, Marcelli 2006

cereals	millet	pulses	fruits and vegetables	"bread"	other plants
1 Alb	X		(X)	X	X
2 Cer	X	X	X	X	X
3 Ang			X	X	
4 Ars			X	X	
5 Inv				X	
6 Leg			X		
7 COben	X		X	X	X
8 Mar	X	X	X	X	X
9 Ver	X				
10 Lev	X		X	X	
11 BGort		X	X	X	
12 Lov	X		X	X	
13 Man	X	X	(X)	X	X
14 Nav	X		X	X	
15 Des			X		
16 CRsl			X		
17 Pia			X		
18 VRppsp	X	X	(X)	X	X
19 PDbe	X		X	X	
20 PDbor		X	X	X	X
21 Mon			X		
22 MOfer	X	X	X		
23 Cas			X		
24 BOint	X		X		
25 BOnsav	X		X		
26 Vog			X		
27 Por			X		

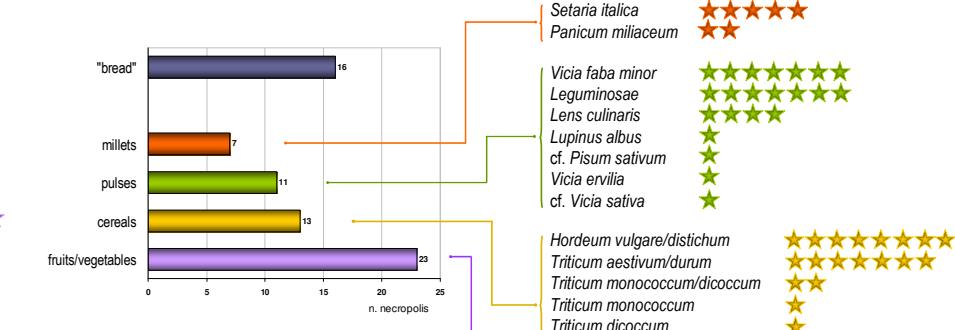


All categories are represented: cereals, millets, pulses, cultivated and gathered fruits, vegetables and bread or other kinds of processed food. Few wild taxa from arable fields and disturbed places are present and their numbers are usually low. A distinct predominance of fruits is mostly observed, pulses (and mainly *Vicia faba minor*) are sometimes abundant; cereals and millets are often present with a few remains. Bread, cake or other processed food are frequent findings in the necropolis north of the Po River.

The different necropolis and even the single graves belonging to the same necropolis differ both as to the amount and the kind of plant offerings. Such differences are probably related both to cremation's types (busta or secondary deposits) and to individual, social, ritual and economic aspects. A careful and systematic comparison between archaeobotanical and anthropological/archaeological data is needed to understand each factor's impact and will help to define their importance.



Charred fragments of cereal pericarp in a piece of bread from necropolis in Padova - Banca Etica.



	Olea europaea	Phoenix dactylifera	Pinus pinea	Prunus persica	Ziziphus jujuba
1 Alb			X		X
2 Cer				X	
3 Ang		X	X	X	X
7 COben	X	X	X	X	
8 Mar			X		
11 BGort	X			X	
13 Man				X	
14 Nav	X				
16 CRsl				X	
17 Pia			X		
19 PDbe	X	X	X	X	X
20 PDbor			X		
21 Mon			X		
22 MOfer	X	X			X
23 Cas				X	
25 BOnsav			X		
26 Vog				X	
27 Por				X	

