

A clay tobacco pipe from the Citadel, Gozo (Malta).

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In July 1997 George Azzopardi, Curator at the Ethnology museum, drew my attention to a clay tobacco pipe (Fig. 1) in the reserve collection of the Archaeological museum in the Gozitan Citadel. The pipe was taken, together with other artifacts ranging in date from the late medieval period to the 19th century, when the National museum intervened in operations on privately owned property on Triq il-Fosos (shaded area Fig. 2) in the early 1990's. The director of the rescue was Nathaniel Cutajar of the National museum of Archaeology in Valletta, Malta.

Triq il-Fosos is in an area known as the Jewish quarter. In Aragonese times (1283-1410) Jewish bankers, dyers and pharmacists were permitted to live and work there. In 1241 it is recorded that eight Jewish families were resident in Gozo¹, presumably in the city centre. At that time the Cathedral did not cover such an extensive area and therefore the quarter was not in such close proximity.

Interestingly Karmenu Mercieca (tal-Buga), who was 92 years old in 1966 and resided at that property, was known to smoke a variety of pipes including the *pipa tal-qasba* (reed pipe) of which this is an example (personal communication Rev. Dr. Joseph Bezzina).

Fig.1 Museum reference PU097, no catalogue number. Very pale terracotta, in comparison with other everyday artifacts in the museum it is reminiscent of the colour that *tafal* the local blue clay fires. The rim is lightly burnished. Sooty deposit inside. The shank end is broken and the rim damaged on the outside. The rounded bowl is gadrooned, with rouletting and incised horizontal lines at the base of the rim. The shape of the keel is accentuated by rouletted lines and what remains of the termination also has rouletted decoration. Probably 18th-early 19th century.

¹Dr. Anthony Lutterel (1975). *Medieval Malta*.



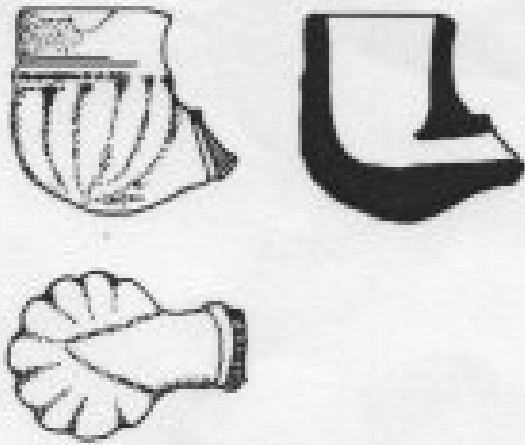


Figure 1  cm

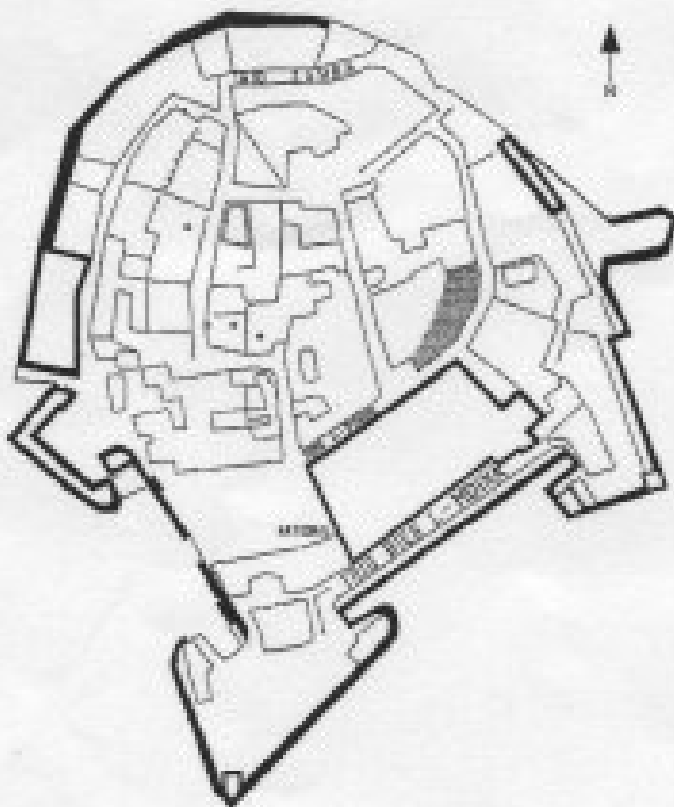


Figure 2