

Palace of Baldu

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Islamic lamps

During the digs carried out in 2001-2002, in the three rooms (η , θ , ι) located to the south of the Palace of Baldu, some glassy fragments have been found which may be linked to Syrian or Egyptian lamp production (fig. 1).

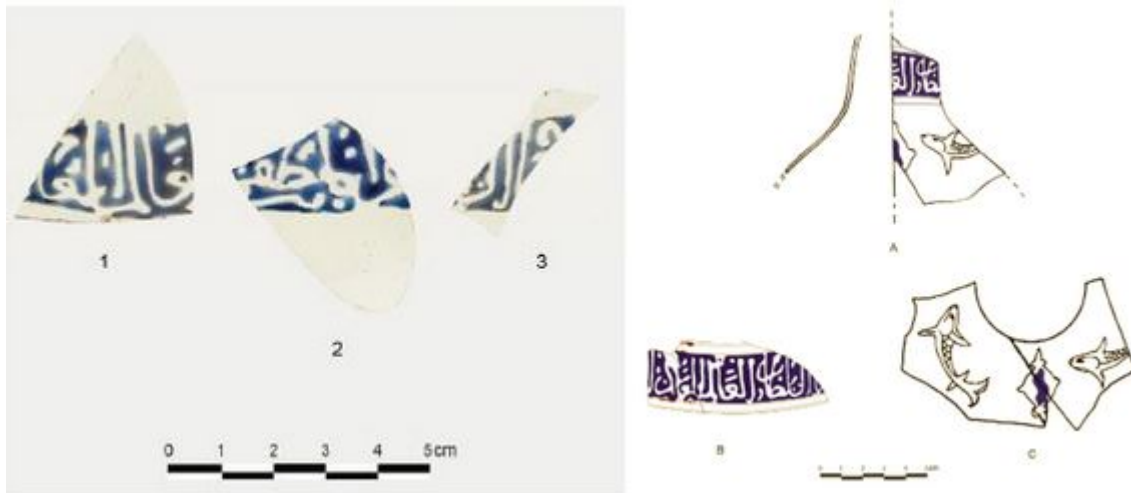


Fig. 1 - Luogosanto, Palace of Baldu: graphic reconstruction of the fragments found (from Pinna, Musio 2012, p. 322, figs. 10-11).

Some of these were recomposed and this allowed three bands of Arabic inscriptions in blue enamel and decorations that are sometimes red, sometimes gold to be read that may refer to the same item or different examples; two fish are engraved below the epigraphic band of two matching fragments.

The three texts have been translated with:

"[...] and the victorious [...]"

"Defender of the ribāṭ" (fig. 1.1)

"[...] The Sultan, the wise, the righteous, the [I ...]" (Fig. 2).

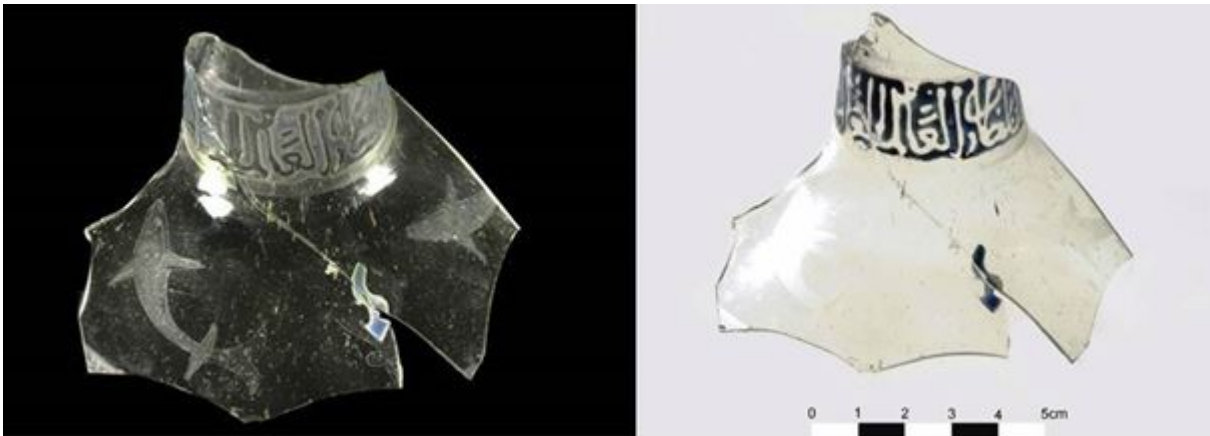


Fig. 2 - Luogosanto, Palace of Baldu: fragments decorated with glazed inscriptions and engraved fish (from Pinna, Musio 2012, p. 322, fig. 12).

These are titles, like the sultan's, that refer to important people whose name is not known: they are part of the official protocol and are interpreted as formulas with a dedicatory (fig. 3) and formal tone.

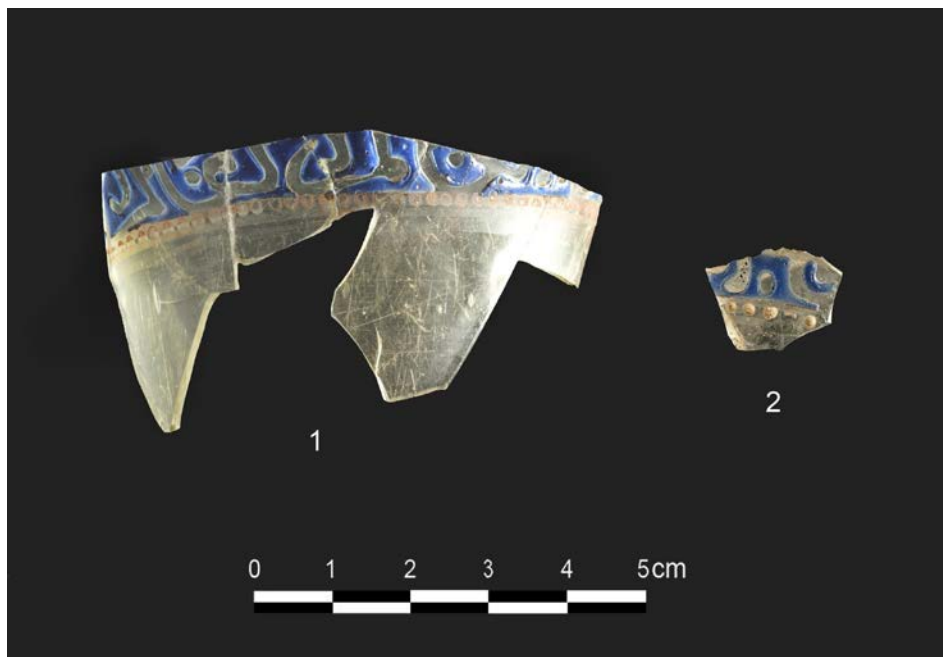


Fig. 3 - Luogosanto, Baldu Palace: glass fragments with glazed enamelled decorations (from Pinna, Musio 2012, p. 321, fig. 9).

With current research, the non-recognition of the shape of these items made it necessary to find similarities with Arabic glass items: in other Italian regions thirteenth century cups and glasses that carry Islamic enamel, well-wishing formulas and decorative motifs that

make one think of a similarity with the ones found in the Palace of Luogosanto, while mosque lamps and Syrian-Egyptian enamel containers, in which words in Arabic characters appear that are datable between the 13th and 15th century, are on show in several European and American museums (figs 4-5).



Fig. 4 - London, British Museum: beaker with red and gold enamelled decorations produced in Egypt (from http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_image.aspx?image=ps230209.jpg&retpage=18750).



Fig. 5 - Berlin, Islamic Art Museum, Pergamon Museum: mosque lamp (from http://www.discoverislamicart.org/exhibitions/ISL/the_mamluks%20/exhibition.php?theme=2&page=2).

All items referring to this realm have been interpreted as niche productions created to satisfy the needs of the highest social classes.

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Claudia Cocco and Dr. Francesca Collu

■ Bibliographic abbreviations

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