

# Tarxien temple – discovered in 1914

- The Tarxien Temples consist of three separate, but attached, temple structures. The first temple has been dated to approximately 3100 BC and is the most elaborately decorated of the temples of Malta. The middle temple dates to about 3000 BC, and is unique in that, unlike the rest of the Maltese temples, it has three pairs of apses instead of the usual two. The east temple is dated at around 3100 BC



# Tarxien Temple



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- Excavation of the site reveals that it was used extensively for rituals, which probably involved animal sacrifice. Especially interesting is that Tarxien provides rare insight into how the megaliths were constructed: stone rollers were left outside the South temple.

# Tarxien temple now covered





- The entrance to the two top apses of the Tarxien Temples.

# Tarxien Temple

- Of particular interest at the temple site is the rich and intricate stonework, which includes depictions of domestic animals carved in relief, altars, and screens decorated with spiral designs and other patterns.



# Sculptures at tarxien



- The fat lady. This figure has been dated to 3000 BCE, and is thought to have once been over 2 metres in height.
- the "fat lady" statue is sexless, and could represent either a man or a woman

# Altars in Tarxien temple



# Other important archaeological sites

- Ħal Saflieni Hypogeum
- St Pauls catacombs
- Għar Dalam
- Domvs Romana
- Mdina
- Clapham junction
- Bugibba temple
- Valletta



Hal Saflieni Hypogeum -one of Europe's only known Neolithic necropolises,



# Hal Saflieni Hypogeum

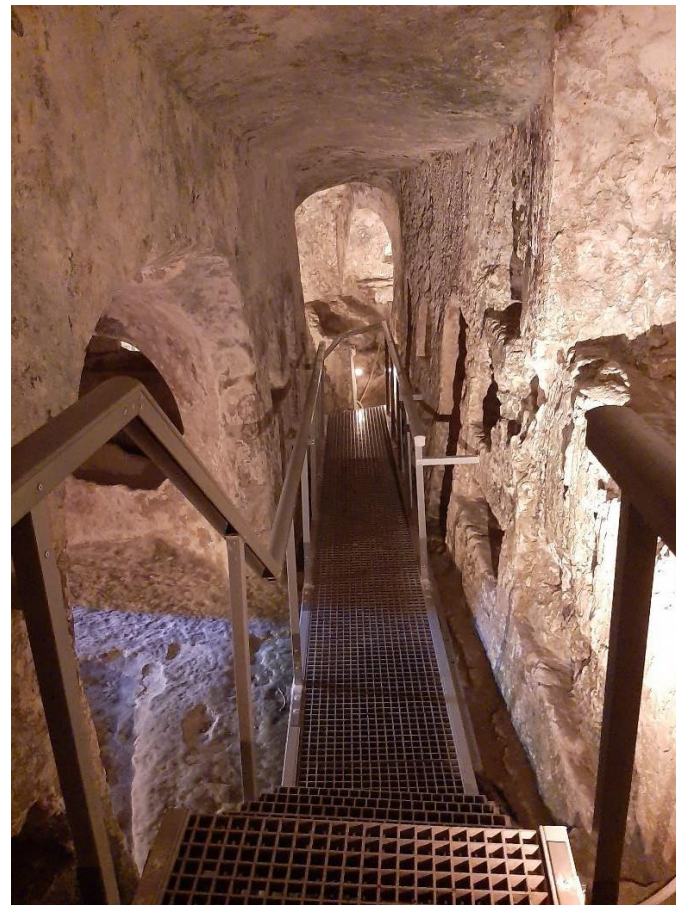
- The Hypogeum of Hal Saflieni is a Neolithic subterranean structure dating to the Saflieni phase (3300 – 3000 BC) in Maltese prehistory, located in Paola, Malta. It is often simply referred to as the Hypogeum literally meaning "underground" in Greek. The Hypogeum is thought to have been a sanctuary and necropolis, with the remains of more than 7,000 people documented by archaeologists,

# Hal Saflieni Hypogeum

- The Hypogeum was discovered by accident in 1902 when workers cutting cisterns for a new housing development broke through its roof. The workers tried to hide the temple at first, but eventually it was found. The study of the structure was first conducted by Manuel Magri, who directed the excavations on behalf of the Museums Committee, starting from November 1903. During the excavations, a portion of the contents of the Hypogeum, including grave goods and human remains, were emptied out and discarded without being properly catalogued. To confound things further, Magri died in 1907 while conducting missionary work in Tunisia and his report on the Hypogeum was lost.

- The Hypogeum's oldest and uppermost level consists of a passageway, access to a cistern below, a courtyard-like space dug into the promontory and five low-roofed burial chambers carved out of pre-existing caves. Archaeologists believe this is where funerary processions likely began

# Hal Saflieni Hypogeum





# The middle tier



- One of the main chambers, called "The Holy of Holies", appears to be oriented such that light from the winter solstice illuminated its facade from the original opening above

# the Oracle Room in the middle tier,

- A resonance niche cut in the middle chamber was possibly designed to project chanting or drumming throughout the rest of the Hypogeum. This is roughly rectangular and one of the smallest side chambers. It has the peculiarity of producing a powerful acoustic resonance from any vocalization made inside it. This room has an elaborately painted ceiling, consisting of spirals in red ochre with circular spots and spirals.



# Mass graves in third tier

- The third tier reaches 10 metres into the earth and consists of five spaces, each less than five metres in diameter, that give access to smaller rooms that served as mass graves. Note the extended cranial skull which is similar to early Egyptians



# St Pauls catacombs

- St. Paul's Catacombs are some of the most prominent features of Malta's early Christianity archaeology. The archaeological clearing of the site has revealed an extensive system of underground galleries and tombs dating from the third to the eighth centuries.
- The catacombs were in use till the seventh, possibly eighth century. Some of the catacombs were used again during the re-Christianisation of the Island around the 13th century
- The presence of these catacombs was now about in the mid 17th century. However they were only started to be cleared in 1894. further excavations continued in 2010 when hundreds of artefacts were discovered.

# St. Paul's Catacombs – located near Mdina



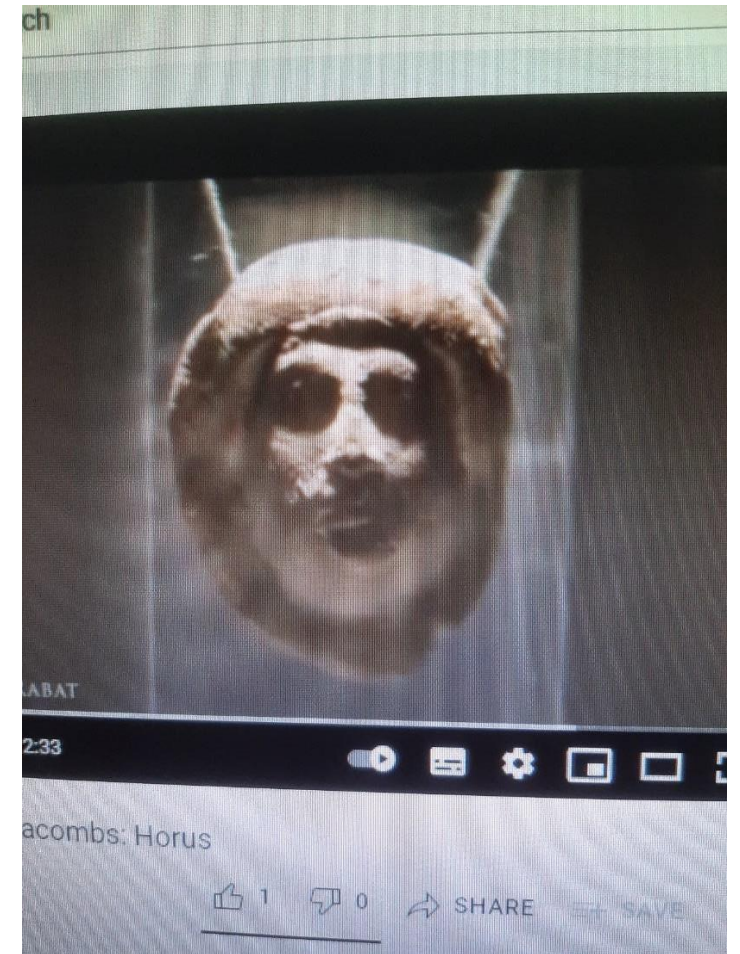
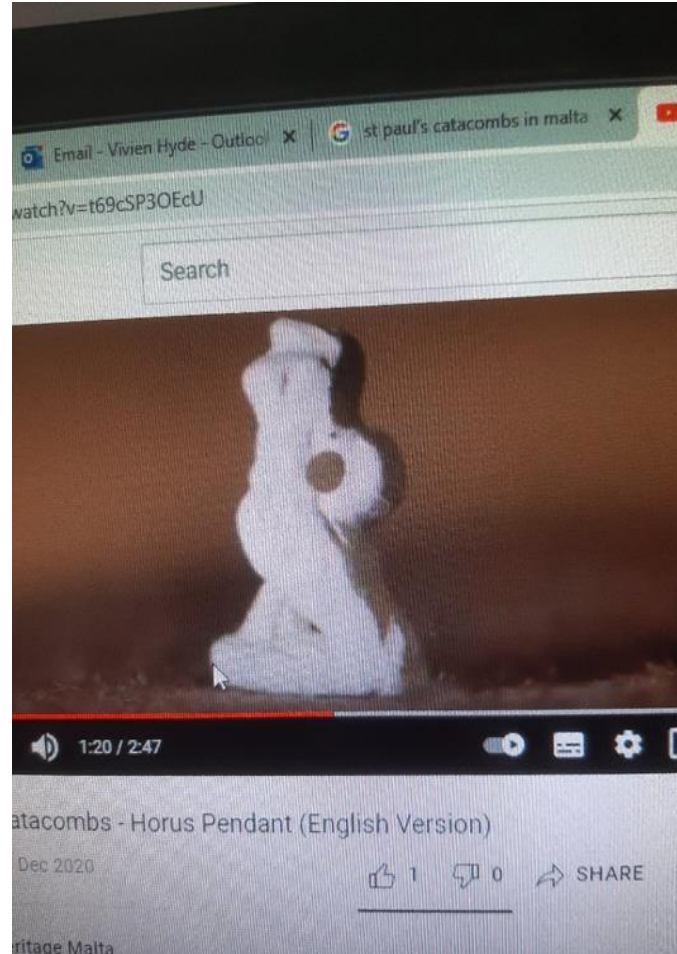
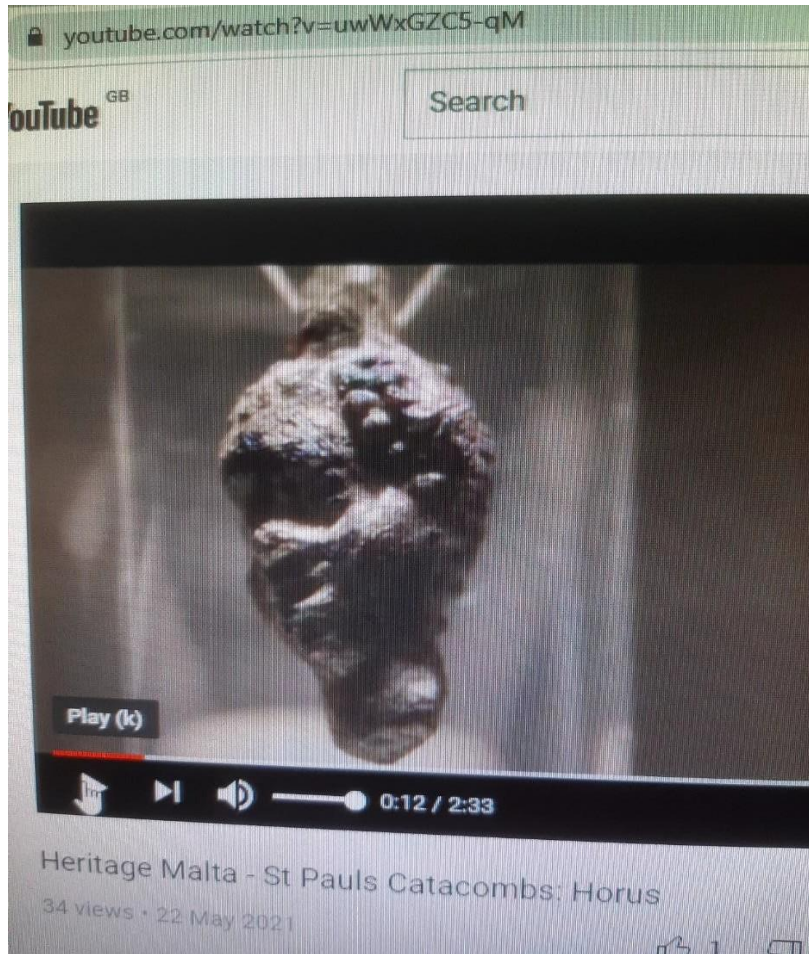
- Menorah indicating the presence of Jewish burials but the 24 catacombs show evidence of Christian, Pagan and Jewish burials side-by-side and no visible divisions.

# Catacombs - baldacchino tombs

- Although the complex contains almost all of the burial types found in the Maltese repertoire, the best represented are so-called baldacchino tombs. These free-standing, canopied burials dominate the main corridors of the complex; they consist of four elegant arches and supporting pillars. Other decorations within this catacomb include illustrations and written messages in red paint.



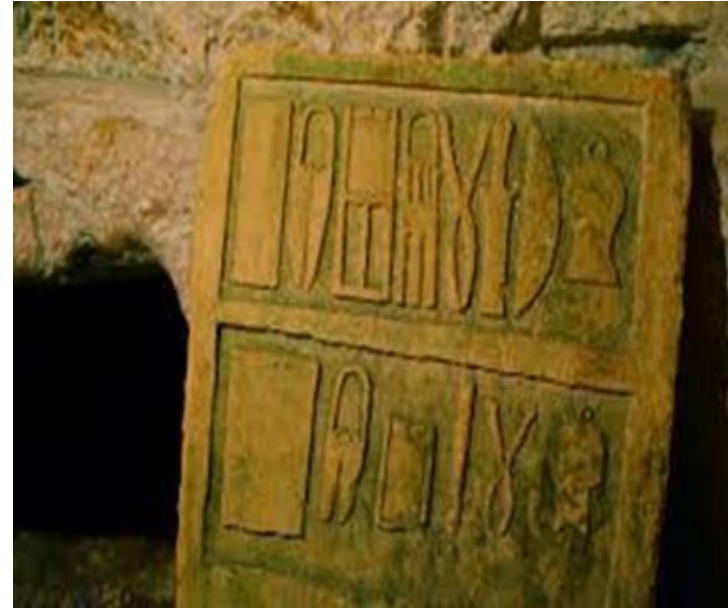
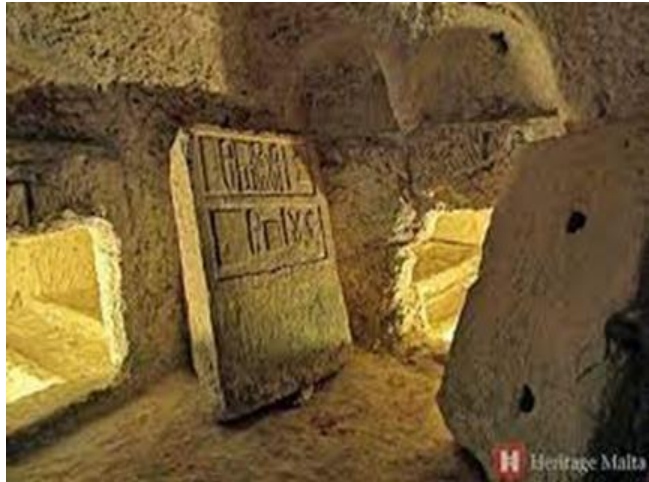
# Artefacts at St Pauls Catacombs These include 2 pendants showing human faces and Statue of Horus



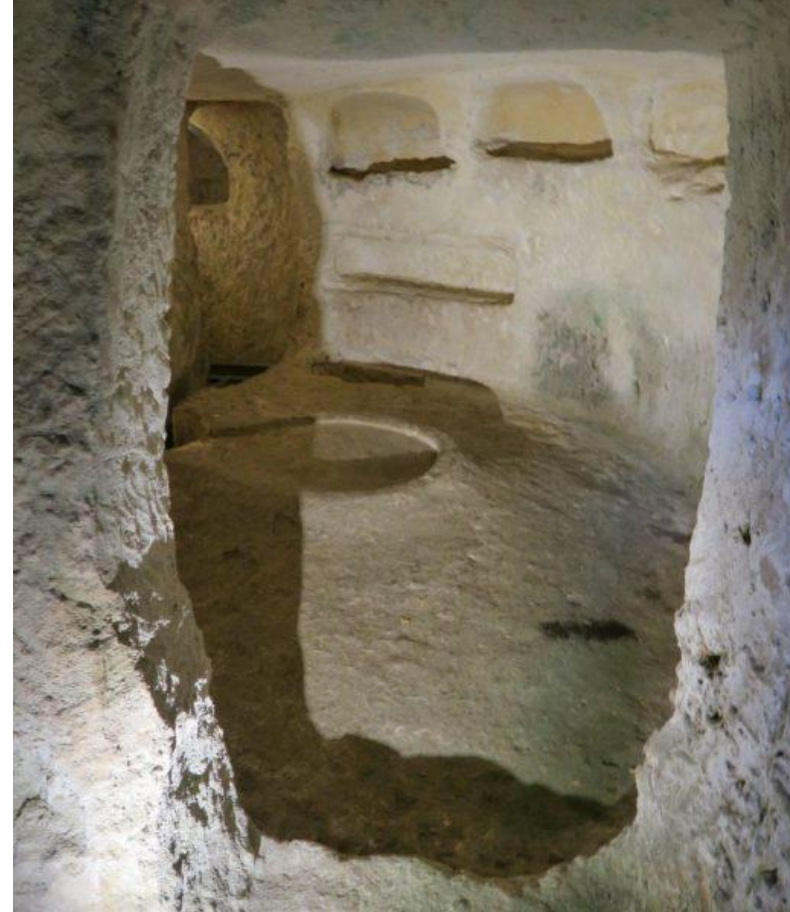
A collection of ceramic pieces, among which are amphorae, plates, bowls, cups, a feeding bottle, flasks, and oil lamps;



# A tablet with reliefs of surgical instrument



- Apsidal recesses with circular tables carved from the stone;



- Parts of the catacombs decorated in places with faded murals,



Engraved blocking stones (for sealing the tombs), one with a Doric frieze motif. (frieze composed of

