



Bulletin of the Archaeological Museum of the “Studium Biblicum Franciscanum”

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News:

New museum project

The architects from the bureau “Giovanni Tortelli e Roberto Franzoni”, commissioned by the Custody of the Holy Land to design the project to restructure the Archaeological Museum, have carried out further studies and surveys in Jerusalem. At the moment their primary focus is on defining the spaces to be occupied. Their visit was also aimed at developing an increased mutual understanding, and identifying additional details of their commission and the materials to be exhibited. Their visit was enriched by excursions to a number of archaeological sites and local museums, in relation to which our museum offers both similarities and differences.



Fig.1 The architects with the director Father Alliata and the engineer Ettore Soranzo

Scientific Activities:

Sculptural decorations from the Herodian period

Of particular importance have been the observations and study of the proposed interpretations of two stone blocks carved in a Herodian style that were found during the construction of the Sanctuary of the Condemnation and the Convent of the Flagellation. The pieces belonged to the internal decoration of the edifices of the Second Temple and were probably part of the double door. Their importance is indicated by the fact that a similar, albeit somewhat larger, fragment is preserved in the Tower of David (or Citadel) Museum.



Fig.2 Fragments of sculptural decoration from the Second Temple; in the lower right-hand corner are two pieces preserved in the Archaeological Museum of the SBF.

Thesis on Aegean ceramic from the tomb at Dominus Flevit

This month saw the defense of an honor's thesis at the l'Università degli Studi di Firenze entitled "New reflections on the Jebusite Burial Place", prepared by Francesco Pollastri under the guidance of Prof. Anna Margherita Jasink. It involved a reexamination of material of considerable importance, part of which is on exhibit in our Archaeological Museum, the remainder being preserved in the museum's storage facility. The "juglets" (i.e., small jugs), details of which were published fifty years ago by Father Sylvester Saller, were redrawn, rephotographed and reevaluated in terms of their role as a connecting link created by commercial relations among the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age (15th-13th centuries BC). The Jebusites, who lived in Jerusalem prior to the Davidic conquest, showed themselves to be a people with a high level of culture who were integrated into the overall network of regional cultures, among which were the insular ones of Cyprus and Crete and the more general Helladic [mainland Bronze-Age Greece].



Fig.3 An archaeological find studied in the thesis: DF 684, Juglet Base-Ring I, profile (design and photo by Francesco Pollastri)

Restoration works

The month of June also marked the beginning of a collaborative effort between the restorers Pierluigi Miranda and Fernando Harris Reyes to restore a number of archaeological objects preserved in the museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. The two scholars between them have many years' experience carrying out restoration works, notably in the countries of the Middle East where they began their collaboration with Father Michele Piccirillo as instructors at the Madaba Mosaic School; careers that were subsequently enriched as a result of work carried out in Jordan, Syria and Turkey, before proceeding to the restoration of the mosaics in the Dome of the Rock. At the museum they will be occupied with repairing and cleaning an impressive ossuary made from local stone, coming from Jerusalem, dating from the first century AD.



Fig. 4 Restores at work.