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

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News:

The experience of Beryl and her dream for Chinese Christians

This past 14 December a new volunteer arrived from far-away Hong Kong: Beryl Chan. The young woman, who is Christian, has always had a great interest in studying the Bible; a passion which two years ago led her to begin a Masters Degree in *Biblical studies, geography, history and archaeology* at Jerusalem University College (JUC), an academic institution from which she is now a graduate.



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Along with her study of biblical texts she participated in numerous excavations and archaeological expeditions, in collaboration with Hebrew University of Jerusalem, to Tiberias, in biblical Hazor and among the ruins of ancient *Ir David*, gaining much experience in studying archaeological finds

dating from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age.

After completing her studies, shortly before her departure for her native land, Beryl decided to visit the Museum of the Studium Biblicum and was immediately impressed by the materials on exhibit, particularly since she was able to see many of the objects she had studied in books. She decided to ask the director of the museum, Father Eugenio Alliato, if she could return and help out, making use of her knowledge.



During the first three months of her collaboration Beryl has been occupied in introducing pictures of the finds into the multimedia data base, and then reorganizing this. During this period she has been able to further explore Jerusalem, a city that she enjoys for both its historical and religious importance. Living and

studying here has strengthened her understanding of the evangelical texts: her intellectual studies have become transformed into a visual understanding of the places and realities in which Jesus preached.

Beryl's story brings attention to lands far away from the Mediterranean where it is not always easy to live openly as Christians. Her joint love for this land and for her native country has led her to imagine a program of studies, here in Jerusalem, specifically designed for Chinese, a program in their own language to strengthen their understanding and identity as Christians.

We hope that this may serve as an important stimulus for a greater interest regarding Christians in China; a reality that, as attested by the flow of pilgrims coming from this land, above all during Lent, is growing rapidly.

Scientific Activities:

“The Treasure of the Holy Sepulchre”: an important exhibition at Versailles

A large number of objects from the historical and artistic collections of the Custody of the Holy Land, exhibited in the Museum of the Studium Biblicum, have been selected by a team of experts from the Custody to form part of an exhibition to be held this year in France.

Among the objects selected, highlights include nineteen jars from the rich collection of the ancient Pharmacy at St. Saviour's, finds from the Treasure of Bethlehem, and a model of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The pieces were identified and inventoried by those in charge of the exhibition, expertly coordinated by Béatrix Saule, the Director of the Museum

of the Château de Versailles and by the head of the exhibition, Silvia Roman. They were then carefully packaged by a specialist company.

On March 11, along with the selected artistic works preserved at St. Saviour's Monastery, the materials departed directly for France. The exhibition, entitled "*The Treasure of the Holy Sepulchre*", will be held at the Château de Versailles between 16 April and 14 July 2013. The aim of the exhibition is to make known these precious objects, many of which originally came from the Catholic European nations. These countries, over the course of the centuries from the Crusader period to the present time, have made gifts of such works to the Franciscan Custody as a symbol of their devotion and as a manifestation of their protection of the Holy Places. Also represented will be gifts from popes and pilgrims who have come to visit this land of fundamental importance for the Gospel account.



Sara's doctorate: a journey amongst miniatures in liturgical codices

Sara Cibin has returned to Jerusalem to carry out studies and research on the ancient miniatures contained within the liturgical codices preserved in the Museum of the Flagellation. Sara, a graduate in history of art at the University of Turin, has begun a research doctorate in "Cultural Heritage and Territory" at the University of Verona.

Her subject involves iconographic research of individual miniatures contained in the manuscripts, among which are numerous antiphonaries, psalters and choir books used in liturgical functions over the centuries the

Franciscan friars have been in the Holy Land.

Among the works in the collection, the oldest missal comes from the monastery on Mount Zion, dating from the second half of the 13th century and representing the only significant evidence documenting the ancient presence of the Franciscans at this site. A particularly interesting group of codices are those donated by Henry IV of England, in honor of his father John of Gaunt, first Duke of Lancaster, perhaps acquired in Venice where they were produced. Other manuscript books were produced in the modern period as they document the activities of the "Lombard Group" - attributed to a friar artist, Giacomo da Monza, dating from 1600 - as well as those more recent than 1700 that are preserved in St. Saviour's Monastery.



The aim of her research is to understand the origin, evolution and possible relationships of the individual miniatures and iconological reflections with the biblical scenes represented, and above all with contemporary European models, seeking to reconstruct the events surrounding the individual codices.

Specifically, the project calls for investigating all of the illuminated manuscripts owned by the Custody of the Holy Land, in this manner reconstituting the complete heritage of these objects present in individual Franciscan monasteries. This research activity will serve as a preparatory input into

the new museum arrangement to be carried out in the artistic-historical section of the new Terra Sancta Museum.