

## REVIEWS OF NEW BOOKS AND ARTICLES

**Orazio Petrosillo & Emanuela Marinelli, "The Enigma of the Shroud: A Challenge to Science"**, trans. from the Italian by Louis J. Scerri, Malta, Publishers Enterprises Group, 1996, 258pp., 16pp colour plates

The translation into English of "**La Sindone: Una Enigma all Prova della Scienza**", as published back in 1990, and presented to Pope John Paul II. The translation, by Louis J. Scerri, has been a long time coming, but it is of excellent quality - partly thanks, it would seem, to the additional editorial involvement of Rex Morgan of Australia's Shroud News - and the book retains its freshness as a searching enquiry into the saga of the Shroud radiocarbon dating.

Authors Orazio Petrosillo, a Vaticanologist with the Rome newspaper *Il Messaggero*, and Professoressa Emanuela Marinelli of Rome's *Collegamento pro Sindone*, make the most thorough investigation into the whole set-up of the Shroud radiocarbon dating. They chronicle how highly respected individuals such as Professor Carlos Chagas of Rome's Pontifical Academy of Sciences were ousted from any involvement, and how the chosen radiocarbon dating scientists then bullied and politicked to make sure that theirs would be the only serious 'test' allowed. This thus gave them the maximum limelight, and had the effect of excluding anything that groups such as America's STURP wanted to do.

A point that Petrosillo and Marinelli make particularly well is that because the radiocarbon laboratory scientists wanted to make their testing of the Shroud a showpiece demonstration of their AMS method, any question of the test's possible unreliability or unsuitability for the Shroud became completely downplayed. Because it was well-recognized that it could not be blind (due to the distinctiveness of the Shroud's weave), Dr. Michael Tite's putting of the samples and controls into containers out of sight of cameras, etc., was totally unnecessary and was bound to give rise to every form of suspicion, as indeed proved the case.

For the English edition the book has been brought fully up-to-date, with succinct but well-informed discussion of the findings of Dr. Dmitri Kouznetsov, of Dr. Leonzio Garza-Valdes of San Antonio, also Professor Gino Zaninotto's discovery of the *Codex Vossianus Latinus Q69*.

Although in paperback, the book has been produced to standards well worthy of a major publisher, and is effectively a must for all those with a serious interest in the Shroud. Copies of the book, priced approximately U.S. \$20, can be obtained from Publishers Enterprises Group (PEG) Ltd., P.E.G. Building, UB7 Industrial Estate, San Gwann SGN 09, Malta, Phone: Malta 356 440083; Fax. 356 488908.

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**Thomas W. Case, "The Shroud of Turin and the C-14 Dating Fiasco: A Scientific Detective Story"**, Cincinnati, White Horse Press, 1996, 104pp., 2 colour plates. With Foreword by Fr. Frederick C. Brinkman of the [U.S.] Holy Shroud Guild.

Thomas Case is a respected Washington-based science and religion journalist, and he has dedicated this slim volume to the memory of American chemistry specialist the late Dr. John Heller, who died on 14 December 1995 [see obituary, BSTS Newsletter 42, pp.12 & 13]. With Dr. Alan Adler, Dr. Heller made a special study of the chemistry of the Shroud 'body image' and 'blood image' samples brought back to the States by the STURP team in 1978. Thomas Case's book commences with chapters on the Shroud's body and blood images, followed by an analysis of the 1988 radiocarbon dating test. More than half his book's length is then devoted to a transcript of a tape-recorded interview with Drs. Heller and Adler conducted in Connecticut on July 18, 1994, this thereby being probably the last interview that Dr. Heller gave before he died.

In setting the scene for this interview, Case describes Dr. Heller as already in poor health and confined to a wheelchair, as a result of which 'Dr. Adler quickly took the lead' (This will surprise no-one who knows our Dr. A.A., even had Dr. Heller been in better health!). In fact the interview, in which Dr. Heller plays a lesser, but still highly creditable part, very succinctly and pertinently touches on many of the most up-to-date issues pertaining to the Shroud's image and the radiocarbon dating. And particularly thanks to the interviewees expressing their views in everyday layman's language, scientific issues that have previously sometimes seemed impenetrably technical - for instance, such as why the Shroud 'bloodstains' have such an unexpectedly vivid coloration - have been made much clearer. Highly recommended.

[NOTE: The Editor's copy for review was kindly provided by Paul Maloney, General Projects Director of the U.S. Shroud research group ASSIST. Paul Maloney writes 'Should any readers of the BSTS Newsletter be interested, my office is willing to act as distributor of the publication. They may write to me at the following address: ASSIST Investigations Group, P.O.Box 334, Quakertown, PA 18951, U.S.A. The price is \$9.95 plus \$3.75 shipping and handling.]

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**André Cherpillod, "Le Suaire de Turin, L'Impossible Object"**, edited and published by the author, of F-72320, Cougenard, France, 162 pages, with numerous photographs and text-drawings reproduced by xerox.

For a very modestly-produced, self-published work, this French language volume is of excellent quality, very succinctly written, and brimful of informative diagrams, family-trees, etc. The first two chapters outline the Shroud's history, ancient and modern. The next chapter is devoted to the cloth and its image. There then follows a very full discussion of the radiocarbon dating, with all the different theories carefully set out and considered, along with 22 questions demanding answers. Two chapters are then devoted

to the man of the Shroud, and whether he should be identified with Jesus. Then a final chapter reviews, and discounts, the arguments for the hand of a forger.

As Cherpillod concludes, with all scientific and historical data except the carbon dating indicating the Shroud's authenticity, the radiocarbon dating is an odd-man-out. And in view of all that is now known of how it was carried out, it inspires 'little confidence'.

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**Emanuela Marinelli, "La Sindone Un Immagine 'Impossibile'",** Milan, Edizioni San Paolo, 1996, 160 pages, 24 pages of plates, mostly in full colour, Lire 22,000

Clearly designed to cater for the renewed interest in the Shroud likely to be generated by the expositions in the years 1998 and 2000, Professoressa Emanuela Marinelli's latest book [see right] provides an excellent summary of the subject.

After describing the Shroud's main features, its historical background, the scientific findings concerning the image, the circumstances of the carbon dating, etc., Emanuela Marinelli carefully reviews the various forgery and conspiracy theorists, such as Walter McCrone, Lynn Picknett & Clive Prince, Holger Kersten and Elmar Gruber, only ultimately to reject these. The book includes a good simple chronology; and an equally good simple bibliography. Except for somewhat over-representing the 3D work of the Italian Tamburelli, the colour illustrations are excellent, with some particularly good accompanying line drawings.

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**Dr. Alan Adler, "Updating Recent Studies on the Shroud of Turin"** - comprising chapter 17 of *Archaeological Chemistry: Organic, Inorganic and Biochemical Analysis* ed. Mary Virginia Orna, American Chemical Society Symposium Series no.625, 1996

After describing the Shroud, and summarising the conclusions reached by the STURP testing of 1978, versus those of Dr. Walter McCrone, Dr. Adler addresses the radiocarbon dating as carried out in 1988. He points out that the originally recommended protocol was not followed, and only a single sample was taken from one corner of the cloth for division among the three chosen radiocarbon dating laboratories. The location chosen for this sample was in one corner of the cloth 'in an obviously waterstained area just a few inches from a burn mark', raising the serious question of whether 'such an obviously contaminated sample is truly representative of the rest of the cloth'.

Adler then describes carrying out spectroscopic investigations of sticky-tape samples as taken by STURP in 1978 from Shroud non-image, body image, waterstain, scorch and other areas, as compared with fibres taken from three threads extracted from one of the samples supplied for the radiocarbon dating. His surprise conclusion is that 'the radiocarbon samples are not representative of the non-image samples that comprise the bulk of the cloth.' Furthermore, examination by scanning electron microscope revealed

'gross enrichment of the inorganic mineral elements in the radiocarbon samples, even compared to the waterstain fibres taken from the bulk of the cloth.'

In Adler's opinion the radiocarbon dating samples represented 'an exaggerated composite of the waterstain and scorch fibres, thus confirming the physical location of the suspect radiosample site and demonstrating that it is not typical of the non-image sections of the main cloth.'

The inevitable question, as raised by Adler, is how much these differences in chemical composition may have affected the accuracy of the radiocarbon date. For possible corroboration he points both to Dr.Kouznetsov's findings, and to the possible early kinship of the Shroud to the Cloth of Oviedo (said to be reliably dateable at least as far back as the 7th century).

In an addendum to his earlier work on Shroud 'blood' samples' Adler finds additional indications that the Shroud's blood images 'are blood-derived materials produced from contact of the cloth with clotted wounds on a human body', and are not composed of an artist's applied mineral pigment mixture. Likewise he sees signs that the Shroud's body images 'were produced by some type of non-contact mechanism' the exact nature of which 'at this point in time remains a mystery.'

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**Philip St. Vincent Brennan, "Sancta Sindone: The Shroud of Turin, The Holiest of Relics or the Hoariest of Hoaxes?"** Published by the author. 70 pp. Copies available from Wednesday on the Web, 23121 Boca Club Colony Circle, Boca Raton, Florida 33433, USA, price \$6.95 plus \$1 postage and handling (USA). For orders outside the US, allow extra for postage

Philip Brennan introduces himself as a veteran investigative journalist who wrote the 'From Washington Straight' column for William F. Buckley's National Review magazine during the early 1960s. His modestly-produced booklet on the Shroud is adapted from a ten part series he originally wrote as a special report for Wednesday on the Web, a weekly Internet magazine which he edits. For Internet users, this can be found on <http://www.pacg.com/pvbr/>.

Although those already conversant with the Shroud will find little in Brennan's book that is new - and the reproductions of the Shroud photos leave much to be desired - he writes very vividly and compellingly. As he sums up his approach in a letter to this Editor: 'The overall evidence is so overwhelming that the Shroud is not a fraud that even considering the possibility that it is a fake simply borders on the absurd. That to me is the bottom line...'

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**Dr. Harry E. Gove, "Relic, Icon or Hoax? Carbon Dating the Turin Shroud",** Institute of Physics Publishing (U.K.). 336 pages .Some color photographs.

By the scientist most responsible for the development of the AMS method by which the Shroud was radiocarbon dated, this promises to be a lively contribution to the Shroud debate, and publication was expected around the time of the publication of this Newsletter. The book will certainly be reviewed in the next issue of the Newsletter.

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**Mark Fellows, "The Second Coming: The Holy Shroud in the 20th Century",** Remnant Press of St. Paul, 78 pp.

This was originally published as a series of articles in the Catholic newspaper "The Remnant". The introductory price is to be \$8.00 plus \$1.00 p&h. Enquiries/credit card details to The Remnant Bookstore, 2539 Morrison Ave., St. Paul, MN 55117, USA.

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**Revue Internationale du Linceul de Turin,** published by **CIELT**, Paris. no.1. 24 pages

As notified in the last Newsletter, the French Shroud group **CIELT** were changing from a monthly all-French language Newsletter to a quarterly journal appearing in both French and English.

The first issue of this appeared in July, and is a very fine production indeed. Edited by Daniel Raffard de Brienne of Lille, he states in his Editorial:

The CIELT does not pretend to have a leading role, but hopes to encourage and develop links between the sindonologists and the defenders of the Shroud throughout the continents. Everybody has noticed that a lot goes on regarding the Shroud and that lots of different groups work effectively on it throughout many countries. One will also have noticed that this is not known from one country to the next. We have no other ambition than to publish news and fundamental articles from each country to let them be known to others. We depend on our friends to send us these articles, knowing that we cannot publish texts which are too long or too specialised.

The first issue comprises the following articles:

**(1) Don Luigi Fossati, 'Copies of the Shroud compared to the Original, and their Documentary Value'**. This looks at some 50 lifesize painted copies of the Shroud that were made, particularly during the 16th and 17th centuries, for churches mostly around Spain and Italy. Of these 27 carry the date of their creation, and 23 do not. As may be gauged from the artistic quality of some, they were not necessarily all made by professional painters. For instance, Princess Maria Francesca Apollinia (1594-1656), the

very devout daughter of Duke Charles Emanuel III of Savoy, produced several as gifts for monasteries and churches.

**(2) Daniel Duque Torres, 'The Shroud and the Copy of Las Descalzas'.** The Convent of Las Descalzas Reales, Madrid, founded in the mid-16th century by Juana of Austria, daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, includes a poor Shroud copy very unusually featuring two frontal images head to head. The known historical background to this copy is discussed.

**(3) Ian Dickinson, 'Preliminary details of the image of the umbilicus on the Shroud'.** From the Shroud, is it possible to discern that the man of the Shroud has a navel? Ian Dickinson says yes.

**(4) Prof. Dan Scavone, 'Joseph of Arimathea, the Holy Grail and the Image of Edessa'.** A summary of Professor Dan Scavone's new findings that the Shroud, as a 'vessel' in which Joseph of Arimathea collected the blood of Christ, may be one and the same as the fabled Holy Grail, as well as the Image of Edessa.

The Review's translation into English could be improved. Also it might be better for the English and French texts to appear in separate halves, as often adopted in Canadian publications, rather than side by side (though the latter has the virtue of avoiding duplication of photographic illustrations).

But these are but minor criticisms for a publication that has been produced to a very high standard of printing, and is most warmly welcomed and recommended.

Subscriptions, inclusive of membership of CIELT, are 150 French francs within Europe; 180 French francs outside Europe. All enquiries to CIELT, 50 avenue des Ternes 75017, Paris; tel. 45 72 53 81; fax 45 72 55 90