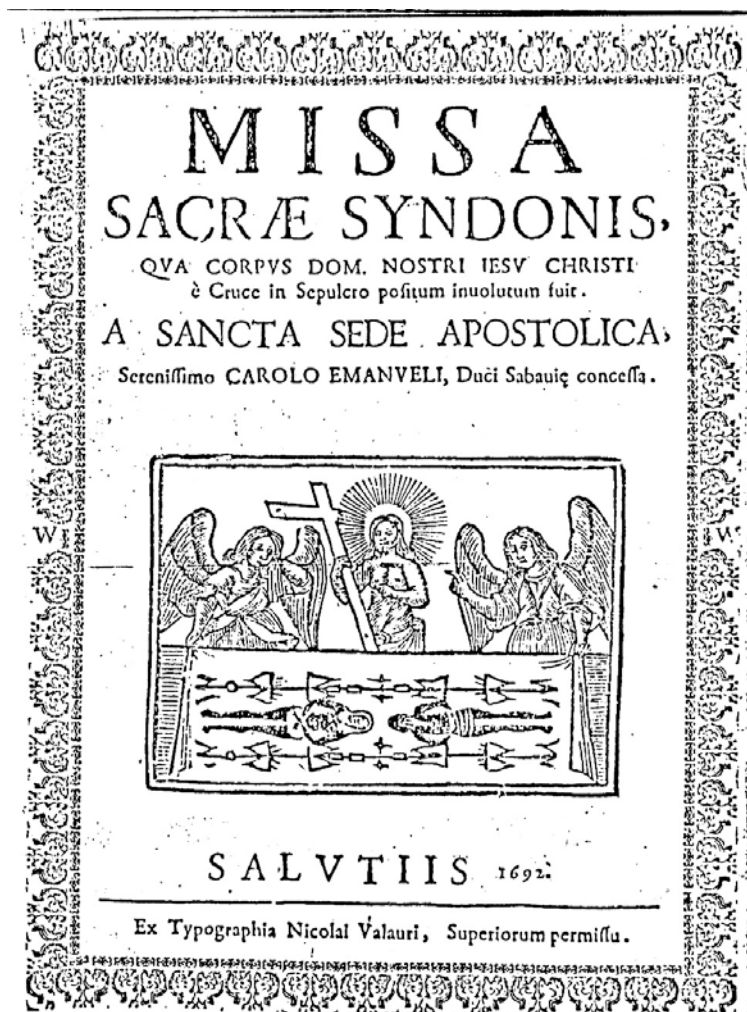


A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN
edited by REX MORGAN
Author of PERPETUAL MIRACLE and SHROUD GUIDE

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REPRODUCTION OF THE COVER PAGE OF A RARE MISSAL PUBLISHED IN 1692 IN CONNECTION WITH A SHOWING OF THE HOLY SHROUD. ORIGINAL IN THE POSSESSION OF PROFESSOR EMANUELA MARINELLI - PAOLICCI OF ROME

EDITORIAL

On the very day I address my typewriter to write this editorial, 5th October 1986, I have just heard on the Australian Broadcasting Commission's news bulletin the announcement from the Cardinal Archbishop of Turin that the Pope (now the nominal owner of the Holy Shroud of Turin) has approved Carbon 14 dating to proceed. I had heard from several sources that a body of experts from all over the world were to meet in Turin a few days ago to consider this matter and make recommendations. I have as yet heard nothing official about the agenda or the composition of the group. We have known for some time that the authorities had given approval for such testing to take place and it will be interesting to receive some kind of official information about just what is planned. Opinion on C14 testing varies widely on account of the difficulty of gaining accuracy and the extremely sensitive nature of total, scrupulous honesty about the results and the interpretation of those results are all matters for the most meticulous planning and caution. Since the world media and the world at large will place a great deal of importance on the results, whatever they are, many will be cliff-hanging during the testing, whenever that will be.

Ian Wilson's new book *THE MYSTERIOUS SHROUD* is published but we have yet to see a copy. It appears that it is available in New York and through a book club. I am told that it abounds in Vernon Miller's photographs and is of large format.

In this issue yet another obituary for one of the Shroud Crowd, Don Piero Coero Borga, regrettably appears.

We have a variety of items in this issue reflecting the wide range of interests in the Shroud including a further report on the recent expedition to Jerusalem from the Environmental Study of the Shroud.

As time and space permits I have about a dozen relatively new books on the Shroud to be reviewed as well as several videotapes and other material which continues to arrive from all over the world.

REX MORGAN

The Late Don PIERO COERO BORGA of TURIN



Don Piero Coero Borga with Pia's original Voigtlander camera.
[© REX MORGAN, 1983]

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Piero Coero Borga". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below a horizontal line.

DON PIERO COERO BORGA

It was announced in the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* on 24th September 1986 that Don Piero Coero Borga had died the day before at the age of 62.

SHROUD NEWS readers and the Shroud world generally will be very familiar with Don Coero's name. He was the Secretary and guiding light behind the CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE DI SINDONOLOGIA (The International Centre for Sindonology) in Turin, since its inception in 1959. Don Coero was the editor and assembler of the very prestigious annual journal *Sindon* which contains articles of substance from every point of view on the Shroud. These are usually published in their original language with summaries in several European languages. Besides this and the publication of numerous pamphlets and several books concerning the Shroud, Father Coero was also the custodian of the Shroud Museum at 28 via S. Domenico in Turin. In this remarkable repository may be found an enormous library of books and documents, much original "Shroudiana", such as Pia's original camera and plates, items used in the various investigations of the Shroud, and masses of photographic and display material.

My first contact with Father Coero was in early 1981 and we had kept up a continuing correspondence since then. We always had to communicate in French since he had no English and I not Italian. On the several occasions I met him we would exchange information and printed material. Many of the early articles appearing in SHROUD NEWS used to be translated into Italian for the archives of the Centre. Don Coero guarded the Centre one would say almost jealously but would always listen to anyone with an interest in the Shroud and his wide circle of correspondents throughout the world kept him up to date with whatever was being said or written about it, no matter what viewpoint was being expressed. In what I found to be typical fashion, when I first visited the Centre he did not even tell me about the existence of the Museum. It was some years later that he proudly showed me through it all and amongst the numerous other items of interest in his church adjacent to it. It was also through him that I had the privilege of meeting with Professor Tamburelli, Professor Baima Bollone and other members of the Turin group.

The world of the Shroud has lost, untimely, a great force in the study and propagation of knowledge about this great mystery.

REX MORGAN



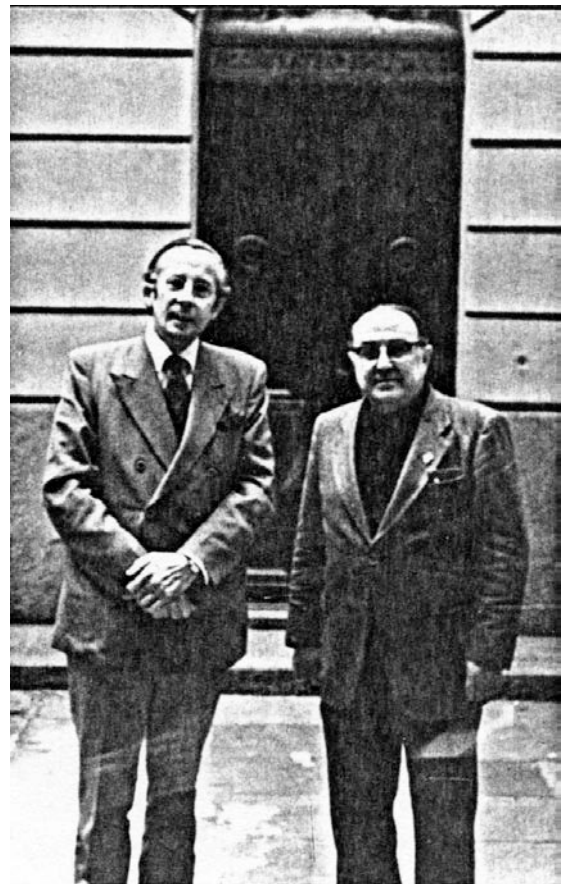
PICTURE SHOWING DON PIERO COERO BORGA (2nd from left) DESCRIBING EXHIBITS AT THE CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE IN 1984 TO H.R.H. PRINCESS MARGARET OF GREAT BRITAIN (4th from left)



PART OF THE READING ROOM AT THE CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE DE SINDONOLOGIA IN TURIN OF WHICH DON PIERO COERO BORGA WAS SECRETARY AND CUSTODIAN



AT LEFT: AN EARLY REPRESENTATION OF THE HOLY SHROUD ON DISPLAY AT THE CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE DI SINDONOLOGIA IN TURIN



AT RIGHT:

REX MORGAN WITH DON PIERO COERO BORGIA ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR FIRST MEETING AT TURIN IN 1982

THE SHROUD IN THE APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS

From the book *Het Gelaat Van Christus - de Lijkwade van Turin* (De Vlijt, Antwerp, Belgium) by REMI VAN HAELST

This article translated from the Flemish by Remi van Haelst and adapted by Rex Morgan

* * * * *

Apart from the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John there exists a number of "apocryphal" gospels about the life of Jesus Christ. In general the term "apocryphal" means that the sources of the text are not trustworthy. In many cases such texts contain much information not given in the four gospels. One may presume that these apocryphal gospels are written following oral tradition amplified by a certain amount of the writer's imagination. The texts of the apocryphal gospels are not always in agreement with each other but they give some indication of what was prevalent in the very first Christian communities.

Bishop Cyrille of Jerusalem was one of the first well-known ecclesiastics: indeed some of his texts serve today for catechism. In 340 AD he was the first to mention that: "in the tomb the burial linen gave testimony to the resurrection."

From the 3rd century comes the tradition that in the old church of Maria di Blachernae in Byzantium a "Face of Christ" was kept as part of the whole series of the "passion objects" collected by Holy Helen, Empress of Byzantium. About the year 440 AD the visits of pilgrims to the Church of Maria di Blachernae became so great that the church was transformed into a basilica.

Historically the Shroud is nominated for the first time in an inventory of the imperial treasures in the year 1007 together with all the "objects of the passion". But on several drawings made long before that date, one can see a shroud draped over an empty cross. Confusion is added by the statement of Bishop Arculf of Perigneux who saw, during a journey to Jerusalem "a shroud about 8 feet long".

During the 5th century a certain Gamaliel wrote (or copied) his gospel. The text is written as if by an eye-witness and Gamaliel pays much attention to the Shroud:

"Pilate had a vision early on Easter morning. He saw Jesus risen from

The Shroud in the Apocryphal Gospels (contd)

the dead. In desperation he called the scribes and elders and explained his dream to them. The Jews laughed at him and repeated the cries of the people, 'his blood flows over us and our children,' and they left Pilate filled with his misgivings.

"Shortly after the departure of the Jews one of the Roman guards at the tomb came to Pilate and told him of the wonderful events about the resurrection of Christ. Pilate ordered the scribes and elders back to his palace, asking them to go to the tomb. The Jews refused but Pilate said to them, 'Let us be sorrowful for ourselves because we have sinned greatly and crucified the Son of God.' The Jews mocked Pilate and he became very angry. Pilate called his guards and obliged the Jews to follow him to the tomb of Jesus Christ where they saw a large crowd. The guards had their hands full to keep the people out of the tomb. Astonished, the scribes and elders saw the heavy rolling stone had been moved away. When the centurion in charge of the tomb saw the governor coming he became very troubled and afraid but Pilate reassured him by saying, 'I am sure that the body which lay in this shroud has risen from the dead.'

"Now the centurion was blind in one eye and disfigured in the face because of some war injuries. By some divine presentiment Pilate said to the centurion, 'This shroud will give you back your eyesight ...' He kissed the shroud and gave it to the centurion who hid his face in the linen. Suddenly he regained his sight and his scars disappeared. The Jews watched all these events from a distance and some of them disappeared in silence but most of them refused to believe what they had witnessed. Pilate asked them, 'Can you not smell the sweet odour emerging from this shroud? It is quite different from the smell of the dead one might expect. It is as royal purple soaked in costly perfume.'

"But the Jews did not give in. They said to Pilate, 'Don't you know that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus used many sweet smelling unguents? They wrapped the body in a shroud together with aloes and myrrh. That is the cause of the sweet smell.' Pilate was not at all pleased with this answer and said, 'This tomb has no smell of death but a kind of perfume as if from crushed nutmeg or some other very expensive ointment.' The Jews pleaded in vain that Pilate could smell only the scents of the garden blown into the tomb by the wind. They even urged the governor not to pay any attention to the strange and wonderful events he had witnessed because as a stranger he could

The Shroud in the Apocryphal Gospels (contd)

not know that all the wondrous works of Jesus were done by Beelzebub, the devil in person.

"Suddenly there was a great clamour amongst the crowd; in a nearby water-well a body had been found, wrapped in a shroud. The scribes were relieved but Pilate and many of the followers of Jesus were astonished by this discovery. The Jews cried out in triumph, 'The deception is proven...' But Pilate kept his composure and ordered them to bring the body before him and unwrap it. He also called Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus and asked them if they could identify the shroud as the one they had bought and used to wrap the crucified body they had taken from the cross. The scribes tried in vain to discourage Joseph and Nicodemus by starting a commotion amongst the crowd. They threatened to throw both men into the well but the Roman guards drove them back. The governor asked Joseph and Nicodemus to identify the dead man and to simulate the burial as they had done before. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus came before Pilate and identified the shroud found in the tomb as the one they had bought for the burial of Christ. They then began to wrap the body of the unknown dead man in the same manner as they had enshrouded Christ's body.

"The rolling stone was placed across the tomb entrance and at the very moment it was closed the whole crowd was astonished to hear a voice issuing from the tomb. Pilate and the scribes and elders stood there speechless. Loud and clear they heard the words: 'Open the grave, Christ gave me back my life.' Many of the crowd ran away afraid of what might happen. The tomb was opened and, indeed, a man emerged praising the Lord. To anyone who wished to hear his story he explained how a bright apparition had woken him from the dead. He also told his story to Pilate and when the governor turned to the scribes to ask them for an explanation it was not possible for they had all disappeared. In anger, Pilate ordered all the scribes and elders to be taken into custody.

"The man risen from the dead asked Pilate, 'Do you not recognise me?' The Roman did not and the man said, 'I am the criminal crucified on his right side where he promised me paradise the sweet scent of which you can smell in this tomb.' Many of the crowd immediately became Christians. In the course of seeking the scribes and the elders the Romans demolished the meeting place of the priests.

The Shroud in the Apocryphal Gospels (contd)

"Pilate went home and described to his wife Procla the events he had witnessed at the tomb of Jesus Christ and showed her both shrouds. But Procla identified without any doubt the genuine one which had been used for the burial of Christ. She took possession of the Shroud and took great care of this precious relic.

"Pilate called for the centurion who had been in charge of the guard. He asked him for a full statement of what had happened that morning. Pilate sent all this information to Herod asking him to overturn all the 'judicial errors' against the crucified Jesus. But Herod, on the advice of the scribes and elders, did not do so. Instead he asked that Pilate send him the centurion, his four companions and the risen criminal. Herod also sent for the Shroud saying that the touching or possession of an 'impure object' was forbidden by the law of Moses. Pilate did as Herod requested but his wife Procla refused to give up the Shroud because Jewish law did not affect a Roman citizen. Procla had had a presentiment of what Herod had planned but Pilate did not believe her when she told him that Herod had malicious plans. Later on Pilate was startled by the apparition of the 'good criminal' who told him how he and the five Roman soldiers had been attacked by bandits. They did not look for booty but only set out to kill. The messenger finished his errand with a sad prediction: Pilate will die also by hired killers...."

The Gospel of Gamaliel is affirmed by some very old documents. According to an account by the Holy Nino (6th century) Procla, the wife of Pilate gave the Shroud to Luke who hid the precious relic so well that no-one ever found it. In the same document it is stated that Pilate also kept the 'sudarium' in his possession. This is possibly the one cited by Holy Antoine the Martyr after his visit to Jerusalem. He wrote: "The sudarium that covered the face of Our Lord Jesus Christ is kept in a monastery on the River Jordan."

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References: van den Oudenryn, R.P., 'Le Temoignage de Gamaliel',
Le Figaro Litteraire (University of Fribourg, 1 April 1957)

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Mr Van Haelst's book, which is a comprehensive coverage of his wide study of little-known historical documents, specially relating to the Shroud in Europe, is published in Flemish and can be obtained through him at: Kerkstraat 66/68, 2008 ANTWERPEN, Belgium.

(Approx price US \$19 plus postage)

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY OF THE SHROUD IN JERUSALEM

In the observer's report in SHROUD NEWS 35 one or two paragraphs from the group's preliminary test result notes were quoted. The July 1986 issue of IMAGE reports the interim research notes of the expedition. These notes raise some interesting issues.

* * * * *

The Environmental Study of the Shroud in Jerusalem has taken an entirely new approach to Shroud studies. It does not begin its work in Turin but rather in Jerusalem where the Shroud would have originated if it is the burial cloth of Christ. The research team is composed of scientists, archaeologists and supporting specialists whose aim has been to study the earliest environment of the Shroud - an ancient tomb - with emphasis on image formation.

On April 18, 1986, ESSJ and official observers began Test 4, the last in a series of image tests to be conducted in a Jerusalem tomb. A specially built medical mannikin was used to simulate a body which had suffered the trauma of crucifixion. The hollow body was filled with heated water to replicate the body's temperature at death (since the human body is 98% water, a mannikin filled with hot water is the closest way to produce the characteristic cooling rate of a body in death). An artificial sweat solution having a pH of 6.63 with blood, which was raised to a pH of 5.70 when myrrh and aloes were added, was applied to the mannikin. A bronze coin from the reign of Pontius Pilate was placed over the right eye. The mannikin was then placed in the tomb wrapped in white herringbone linen. Because of the severe dryness of the tomb due to an unusually hot, dry April, a pure water spray was added to the test chamber to bring the relative humidity up from 75% to 80%. Steam or vapor was observed rising from the body, even before the extra moisture was added.

On April 19, after a period of 27 hours 25 minutes in the tomb, the mannikin was unwrapped showing on the cloth what appeared to be image and blood stains with a darkened area over the eye where the coin had been placed. Because a dark solution of artificial sweat had been sprayed on the mannikin, caution was taken in the identification of the image until the cloth could be checked under the microscope. On the evening of May 1, fibers from various areas of Test Cloth 4 were pulled and examined microscopically which revealed that image has indeed been obtained. We know that the process is correct because all of our work is based on comparative studies with actual samples

Environmental Study of the Shroud in Jerusalem (contd)

taken on Mylar tape from the Shroud in Turin during the 1978 scientific testing.

We now know that the heat of the body is the key to image formation. It has been the one element missing in all other tests, For example, Dr Sebastiano Rodante has worked with cadavers in limestone catacombs, or the experiments of Dr Judica Cordiglia. Both have produced facial images strongly resembling that of the Shroud of Turin by using a mixture of sweat, blood, myrrh and aloes. However, while these images appear to match visually, microscopic examination shows that they are dependent on the coating of the fibers with the additives. ESSJ's process does not involve a coating of the fiber, but microscopically matches the Shroud of Turin in the way the cellulose of the fiber has been affected. The image of the Shroud of Turin is the dehydration of the cellulose of the flax fiber, or a light scorch. We have duplicated that process of dehydration.

Question: If the image on the Shroud of Turin can be traced to a natural mechanism in the tomb, does that destroy evidence for the resurrection?

Answer: The trauma produced in the final events of Christ's life: the bloody sweat (hematidrosis), the lack of rest or sleep, the lack of fluid intake, the scourging accompanied by the crown of thorns and other beatings which culminated in the extreme physical exertion of crucifixion produced a number of physical reactions not documented by researchers previously. First, a rise in the body's temperature that can be medically estimated to reach at least 108°F at the time of death on the cross. At death a second temperature rise occurs called post mortem caloridity (or post mortem fever) causing an increase of between 1° to 110, which being added to 108°F allows a range of 109° to 119°F, which we averaged at about 115°. Second, due to severe trauma, the body's blood and perspiration become acidic. At death lactic acid is released by the body which causes rigor mortis, and in the case of violent death, rigor begins immediately. Rigor mortis causes the skin to become acidic retarding decomposition. When rigor mortis leaves, the body's chemistry changes from acid to alkaline and decomposition begins. Third, of the burial spices used at Christ's initial interment, myrrh and aloes are mild acids. Fourth, the limestone from which ancient tombs in Palestine were cut is alkaline.

The acids of the body, myrrh and aloes, in combination with the alkaline of the tomb (which has a pH of 8.0 to 8.5) produces a reaction which

Environmental Study of the Shroud in Jerusalem (contd)

breaks down the surface of the linen fiber allowing the 115°F temperature of the body to produce a mild scorch of the cellulose.

In relation to the Gospels and the resurrection, the theory of natural image formation can be seen in the following context:

(1) The Gospels indicate that the burial of Christ was rushed. Bodies are cold when they are buried, but a body which is buried at a temperature of 115° (that temperature required to form an image) shows extreme haste.

(2) The complaint by some that Christ was not really dead, but revived later by His disciples is not tenable, since no-one can withstand a temperature of 115° and live. Nor would that level of an acid condition be found on a living person.

(3) Only a human body and its characteristic cooling rates can maintain the types of temperatures required to produce an image on linen. Other materials, as suggested in the hot statue theory, will either hold heat too long and burn the cloth, or drop heat too quickly and produce nothing.

(4) The Shroud of Turin as observed in microscopic samples (the 1978 Mylar tapes) in accord with our theory of image formation shows all the signs of death - it is truly a burial cloth. Chemicals found in abundance on the cloth in conjunction with heat and the types of acids known to be released by the traumatic death clearly indicate that a corpse had been wrapped in the cloth. However, there are no signs of human decomposition.

(5) When death occurs with high body temperature, decomposition will set in rapidly. If the body remained in the cloth for a period beyond three days, the decay of the body would have defaced the cloth and destroyed any image which might have formed. In the New Testament account of the raising of Lazarus, Christ arrived late and Lazarus had been buried four days. The people objected when Christ ordered the tomb to be opened, because the body had already begun to decay (John 11:17, 39). The body which had been wrapped in the Shroud of Turin ceased contact with that cloth in three days.

Question: If the image can be formed naturally, why aren't more in existence?

Answer: The climate of Palestine does not preserve ancient textiles. Bodies are generally buried cold and have been washed thereby removing the acids from the skin surface and cooling the body, both essentials in image formation. Dead bodies usually stay in their shrouds and

Environmental Study of the Shroud in Jerusalem (contd)

the body's decomposition not only defaces the cloth but contributes to the deterioration of the cloth.

There is no disagreement with the Gospels, nor is the belief in the resurrection harmed. The image is of death with the man's body in rigor mortis. If the image had been formed at the moment of resurrection, it should show a portrait of life rather than death.

Additional findings:

(1) Sticky tape samples were taken from the walls of five tombs in Jerusalem and the Galilee, dating between 9th Century BC and 4th Century AD. Each sample contains a resinous substance which we believe to be aloes and possibly myrrh and aloes. This would explain the reference in John 19:39 which states that Nicodemus brought a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes for the burial. First, the tomb was new and had never been used. The rubbing of burial spices into the walls could be part of the typical preparation of new tombs. Since the tombs of the ancient Jews were large and meant to be used by families for centuries, the combination of myrrh and aloes would help mask any unpleasant effects of previous burials when the tomb had to be re-entered. Second, it acted as a preservative (because of its acidity) when packed around the body, since Nicodemus knew they could not return to complete the burial until Sunday morning.

(2) Through comparative examination of the Mylar tapes from the Shroud of Turin, ESSJ has found the presence of myrrh and aloes on the Shroud, something not documented previously by American scientists.

(3) Limestone (calcium) samples were collected from as far south as 30 miles from Jerusalem to as far north as the Galilee and Mt Carmel. As previously reported, Kohlbeck and Damian had matched a heavy calcium concentration from the foot area on the Shroud of Turin to samples collected in Jerusalem. This evidence was called into question so sampling around Israel was performed to ascertain if such a test was valid. From as close as 30 miles from Jerusalem, the limestone changes and does not match either Jerusalem or the Shroud of Turin. Therefore the match between Jerusalem and the Shroud is a valid one. The Shroud of Turin was indeed in Jerusalem at one time during its history.

Sr Damian of the Cross, OCD
(Dr Eugenia Nitowski)

THE SHROUD REPORTED IN SOVIET RUSSIA

An article appeared in AVVENIRE, a Catholic newspaper of Milan, in April 1986 which describes an account of the Shroud in a Soviet journal SCIENCE AND RELIGION. The article in AVVENIRE was written by MARA QUADRI, subsequently repeated in COLLEGAMENTO PRO SINDONE for May-June 1986 and translated into English by NEREO MASINI and adapted for SHROUD NEWS by REX MORGAN



USSR - AN OBJECTIVE ARTICLE ON THE TURIN RELIC PROPOSES THE QUESTION OF CHRISTENDOM IN UNUSUAL TERMS WITH REGARD TO SCIENTIFIC MARXIST PROPAGANDA.

THE SHROUD AMONG ATHEISTS

There is, in the Soviet Union, a widely circulated journal entitled "Science and Religion". It deals, as it is easy to argue, with atheistic propaganda. On the occasion of its 25th Anniversary the journal published a leading article re-stating its essential aims:

The Shroud Reported in Soviet Russia (contd)

"Since our early issue our journal propagandized firmly Marxist-Leninist ideology and scientific materialism, organizing atheistic work ..."

In the same issue appears an article devoted to the Shroud that, strangely, does not seem to agree with these essential aims.

Entitled "Turin Shroud: impression of a body or an artist's work?" the article is signed by two top historians, Arutjunov an established professor in historic sciences and Zukovskaja a student in historic sciences. The article alone and the fact that it is placed in this particular journal gives rise to a series of meaningful comments.

Firstly, in the short introductory preamble, it is said that the article wants to answer the "numerous subscribers' letters who wish to have explanations about the so-called Turin Shroud..." By direct acknowledgement of its editorial staff, therefore, the argument stirs up a lively interest amongst readers to the extent that they have been compelled to publish an intervention. This fact does not concern the Shroud by itself, but the more general interest towards anything having a connection with religion. Besides, it is well-known that many atheistic publications are read for the information that, in spite of themselves, they provide in religious matters. In the case of the Shroud, for instance, the article under discussion is indeed a valuable source of information and it even includes photographs.

And here is another noteworthy fact: the two Soviet historians give an ultimately correct and accurate enough exposition of all the historic and scientific data available today with regard to the Shroud. After a short historical introduction the authors give an abstract of the research carried out by the Shroud of Turin Research Project.

The general line, necessarily anti-religious, is easily perceived in the overstressed contraposition between upholders and deniers of Shroud authenticity. In fact such a contraposition is destroyed since all the hypotheses expressed by science about the possibility that the image has been obtained artificially (coloured pigments, impressions from a mould, hot statues, etc) fall down one after another because of specific scientific analyses. The two Soviet historians never mention this fact and they expound the artificial image hypothesis as still valid.

The Shroud Reported in Soviet Russia (contd)

It ought to be said, however, that the authors give greater space to the theories of scientists who maintain the Shroud image is authentic (even if its origin is inexplicable). The fairness of their attitude is clearly visible in this short extract regarding the historical vicissitudes of the Shroud earlier than the XIV century:

"It is to be acknowledged, however, that in several instances the unexpected discovery of objects has occurred which have been believed to be missing for many centuries and whose very existence was unknown. Therefore the absence of definite information about the Shroud for thirteen centuries does not in any way mean that it did not exist in that period."

The general tone of the article is correct and such a fact is astonishing enough, given the general standard of the journal and the crude deceptions usually resorted to by atheistic publications. The tone of the article appears even more astonishing if we take into account that it has not been published at a high scientific level for restricted consumption by academics but in a popular atheistic propaganda magazine with wide circulation. It should be said that official atheistic propaganda goes on quietly asserting that the Shroud is a common forgery (for example in an article by Krivelov in the Ukraine journal "Ljudina i svit").

It is as if, in Soviet atheistic propaganda, there exists two levels very different from each other and non-interchangeable. The one that we would call traditional is coarse and oversimplified and grinds out from year to year the same slogans often based on a kind of 19th century materialism. This line takes no notice of history at all nor of scientific progress in the study of Christendom and it avoids taking into account any of those events which show evident and incontrovertible truths. To cite only one example, following the discovery in 1947 of the manuscripts at Qumran which described a rabbi, Soviet historians avoided the subject for years since many occidental scholars had concluded unilaterally that this bore on the question of Jesus Christ. When after subsequent studies it had been ascertained that they were pre-Christian manuscripts even Soviet scholars suddenly started quoting the Qumran texts (in 1956).

But there is a second level of atheistic propaganda which developed in the fifties. According to this line some religious themes are dealt with on an authentically scientific basis rather than on an

The Shroud Reported in Soviet Russia (contd)

atheistic propagandist basis, although only sporadically. They came, for example, to acknowledge as authentic the witnessing of Christ's crucifixion we find in the Annals of Tacitus (M. Kublanov : "Jesus Christ: God, a man or a myth?").

The article on the Shroud, to give another example, advances the hypothesis that the image has been left not by Christ himself but by one of his early followers, whom they call "minor Christ", who became in turn a charismatic leader and caused himself to be crucified in order to imitate his master. It is obvious that accepting the historical existence of this "minor Christ" implies the historical existence of his master, the Christ of the gospels. On the other hand the very Kublanov we cited supposes that "Christendom" has its origin in a group forming around the personality of some preacher.

Here we are a long way from traditional propaganda that goes relentless along its way ignoring all solicitation.

There must surely be a reason for this two-fold and essentially double-faced attitude. Owing to spiritual intervention through a complex series of causes there has occurred in the last few years a certain "Christianisation" (although in a broad sense) of Soviet intelligentsia. It is rumoured that many converted scholars are seeking to transmit their faith by means of historical or literary researches unacceptable from the scientific viewpoint, in which it is not necessary to make any explicit statement of principles since the matter "speaks by itself". In any event interest in Christianity is enormous nowadays, at least amongst intellectuals, and there no longer exists, as it used to, total ignorance and aggressive denial. Be it nationalism, curiosity or a taste for the esoteric, it is a matter of fact that today polemic and negative tone with regard to religion has at least been overcome in an intellectual environment.

From this standpoint, therefore, it cannot be regarded as other than astonishing that the conclusions reached by the authors of this article are not so distant from those that might be reached by a Christian:

"In conclusion, we will point out that the Shroud is but the witness of a man's death, whose details coincide with those of Jesus's crucifixion and burial, described in John's gospel. If it is right,

The Shroud Reported in Soviet Russia (contd)

in the final analysis, and the man of the image is the evangelic Jesus Christ, it is not a question concerning science, but faith, and it is not among those mysteries science can work out."

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A remarkable revelation about Soviet writing today. One is reminded of the enormous interest in the Shroud exhibition in Hong Kong where thousands of Chinese are escaping from Red China all the time and are seeking Christianity. I also have a friend in Hong Kong whose major business is selling bibles by the million to the Red Chinese. (Ed)

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COLLEGAMENTO PRO SINDONE

The Collegamento Pro Sindone group in Rome continues to produce its remarkable bi-monthly newsletter and must surely be the most enterprising publication on the current Shroud scene. The Editor, Prof Emanuela Marinelli publishes often more than sixty pages in a similar format to SHROUD NEWS. Her July/August edition contains a major article by Don Luigi Fossati on St CHARLES BORROMEO IN TURIN and another by Dr Werner Bulst of Germany: WHO IS THE MAN ON THE SHROUD? There is also the Italian version of the article by DUBARLE of France which we published in SN 36. There are, in addition, reviews and notes on current sindonological events. Any of our readers who have fluent Italian would benefit greatly from taking a subscription. Address: Via dei Brusati, 84, ROME, 00163, Italy.

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"The best things on the Shroud have yet to be told. We are only scratching the surface of this incredible mystery."

- Dr PIERRE BARBET at the Shroud Symposium in
Turin on 14th October 1933 as reported in
Fr Peter Rinaldi's diary

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"The Holy Shroud is a unique sign which Heaven has sent for our times of the presence of Jesus in our midst."

- Pope John Paul II

SHROUD NEWS

SHROUD NEWS began in 1980 when Rex Morgan, author of PERPETUAL MIRACLE-SECRETS OF THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN started putting together a few notes about current developments in sindonology (the study of the Shroud of Turin) for a small circle of interested people in Australia. He didn't expect it to go beyond a few issues.

The bulletin now reaches subscribers all over the world and because of its relatively simple method of production it can be written and produced and the information disseminated more quickly than most news-sheets of a similar kind. It contains information, news, articles and illustrations gathered from sources of Shroud study worldwide through Rex Morgan's extensive personal connections with what has been described as the "Shroud Crowd".

Morgan is a frequent overseas traveller and thus has the opportunity to keep abreast of latest developments in Shroud study and research. He was present at the world media preview of the Shroud itself in August 1978 in Turin, Italy and has since met with numerous Shroud researchers in many countries. His quest for information about the Shroud has become, as he describes it, a "passionate hobby" and he has since written the best-selling SHROUD GUIDE (December 1983) and is working on another major book about the Shroud. He is currently Honorary Director of the Brooks Institute Photographic Exhibition on the Shroud which is touring Australia, New Zealand and parts of the Far East. Morgan has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the USA based Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin (ASSIST).

Our list of SHROUD NEWS subscribers continues to increase. We request a subscription in Australia of \$6 for six issues posted. SHROUD NEWS comes out approximately 6 times per year. USA subscription for 6 issues is \$US 6 (posted surface mail) or \$US 12 (posted airmail). Postage to other countries varies. All back issues are available at \$1 (US or AUS) each plus postage charges.

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All information and opinion published in this newsletter is given in good faith. It is edited (and mainly written) by Rex Morgan and published by

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