

THE TEXTILE SAID TO BE SIMILAR IN WEAVE TO THE SHROUD A REPORT BY JOHN TYRER

Dr. Donald King has examined a portion of cloth housed in the Victoria & Albert Museum [ref. no. No. 7027-1860], and concluded it bore similarities to the fabric of the Turin Shroud. The age of this sample is reputed to be circa the second half of the fourteenth century. I found this cloth to be a herringbone or reverse twill fabric, woven from 'Z' twist yarns and described as linen. It had a design of foliage and birds.

An examination of the printed areas, under low power magnification, indicated that the edge of the design, particularly on the warp yarn floats, is not as crisp and clear as is sometimes achieved with textile prints. This, and the fact that the cloth had been dyed, suggested that the material had been printed with a substance that had resisted the dye penetration in those appropriate parts of the design. This means of design production known as the resist (French 'réserve') is referred to by Agnes Geijer¹, and was employed in the mediaeval period in Europe for the production of cheap imitations of the woven designs found in Persian silk cloths.

The cloth was found to contain approximately 22 threads per centimetre in the warp, and 12 per cm. weftway. This differed considerably from the Turin Shroud which, according to Prof. Raes, contains 38.6 warpway and 25.7 weftway, making the Turin Shroud a much finer structure². Also, although it was not permissible to dissect the cloth in the Museum to determine the linear density of the yarns, using low power magnification I concluded that the yarns in this specimen were coarser than those in the Shroud fabric.

Fortunately I was able to compare Specimen no. 7027-1860 with a replica that had been manufactured by the famous Shirley Institute of Manchester according to the quality particulars of Prof. Raes structural analysis. I have a small cutting of this in my possession.

In summary I am of the opinion that the sample of fabric No. 7027-1860 housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, is not a candidate for a parallel to the fabric of the Turin Shroud.

REFERENCES

- 1 Agnes Geijer, *A History of the Textile Art*, Stockholm, 1979, Pasold Research Fund, Sotherby Parke Bernet, Russell Chambers, Covent Garden, London; Sotherby Parke Publications, c/o Biblio Distribution Center, 81 Adams Drive, Totowa, New Jersey 47512 U.S.A.
- 2 Ian Wilson, *The Turin Shroud*, London, Gollancz, 1978.