

IN MEMORIAM

Bearing a Swiss stamp, a black-lined envelope brought us very sad news: on January 14, the generous heart of Max Frei-Sulzer failed after a good recovery from an illness. If sorrow is proportionate to loss, then our sorrow is great indeed, for the loss of this erudite scientist, this cordial gentleman of good will, this eager Friend—goes beyond common measure.

Graduated from the University of Zurich, where he later became professor, Max Frei was founder and director of the Scientific Service of the Criminal Police of Zurich, and science editor of *Kriminalistik*. A specialist in microtraces, he was a criminologist of European renown, whose most famous case, perhaps, was his investigation, as ONU expert, in the death of the Sec. Gen. Dag Hammerskjöld (1961).

His discovery of ancient pollens on the Shroud was a major breakthrough in sindonology, opening an entirely new, unique and unassailable approach in Shroud research. On the occasion of the Shroud's debut on television, 23 November 1973, he was called to authenticate the photographs made by Giovanni-Baptista Judica Cordiglia (son of Dr. Giovanni Judica Cordiglia) during the exams of 1969. As he scrutinized the Cloth with his microscope, he noticed the presence of atmospheric dust.

Who else would have given heed to that? Who else would have guessed that invisible specks of dust were the elements of history? Obtaining permission to apply a special adhesive tape to the threads, he caught some of the debris from 1-2A and 1-4D outside the image area (see map on pg 2). Examination under the electron microscope revealed pollen fossils, and so began the patient work to identify each species by comparison with specimens already dated and classified. Frei visited the botanical gardens of Europe and the Mideast in all those countries where the Shroud might have been. Further explorations involved the retrieval of ancient pollens buried in the miry depths of the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee as well as samples from the crumbles of ancient Anatolian temples, gathered by Prof. Aurelio Ghio.

Thus these infinitesimal witnesses enabled him to trace the chronological and geographical itinerary of the Shroud from Jerusalem to Turin, corroborating written history and casting into doubt some hypotheses of the Shroud's sojourn in other localities. Convinced that the Shroud had been in Palestine early in the first millennium, Max Frei was outspoken in his belief in the Shroud's authenticity.

At the II International Congress of Sindonology, held in Turin in 1978, he reported his findings, addressing the members and answering their questions in perfect Italian. His command of English is evident in the article he wrote for *Shroud Spectrum* (#3, June '82), for he was thoroughly proficient in five languages.

In only a few weeks (on March 8) he would have celebrated his 70th

birthday. But the Wisdom of God must have decided that Max Frei had completed his earthly task. The work which he began must be continued by others.

Uniting with sindonologists around the world, we extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, children and grandchildren.

D.C.