

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

ORAZIO PETROSILLO & EMANUELA MARINELLI, *La Sindone, Un Enigma alla Prova della Scienza*, Rizzoli, May 1990, 259 text pages, 16 colour plates, & Index. 34,000 L.

This book, already mentioned earlier in this letter, carries an Introduction by Vittorio Messori arguing against the view that the Roman Catholic Church effectively wrote off the authenticity of the Shroud at the time of the announcement of the carbon dating results. The earlier chapters are devoted to a minutely detailed account of the events and procedures surrounding the carbon dating, and without supporting or resorting to the extremist claims of Bonnet-Eymard, the authors utilise a great deal of English language scientific literature (and occasionally the BSTS Newsletter!), to coolly demolish the idea that the Shroud radiocarbon dating was as ideally conducted as the media have conveyed. They also point out the numerous archaeological examples, such as Lindow Man and the Thera eruption, in which carbon dating has given readings demonstrably wide of the narrow margins of accuracy claimed. In the concluding part of the book the authors succinctly summarise the now well-worn historical and scientific arguments in favour of the Shroud's authenticity. These carry the added authority of Professor Emanuela Marinelli's wide travels to known and hypothesised Shroud locations, including Israel and Urfa (Edessa). The book well deserves translation into English to make it more accessible to British, Commonwealth and American readers.

WERNER BULST, *Betrug am Turiner Grabtuch. Der manipulierte Carbondatentest*, Verlag Josef Knecht, 1990, 63 pages, with numerous black & white illustrations and pull-out full-length photographs of the Shroud.

Professor Dr. Werner Bulst of Darmstadt is a Jesuit scholar who has been a leading authority on the Shroud for over forty years. Only three years ago he coauthored with Heinrich Pfeiffer a well-illustrated hardback *Das Turiner Grabtuch und das Christusbild*, and this latest paperback publication, also by Knecht, is designed as a counter-blast to the carbon dating results. Bulst follows an almost identical structure to that of Petrosillo and Marinelli, first describing the carbon dating, then following with evidence for the Shroud's authenticity. But he has most unwisely and unjustifiably chosen to allege outright underhand tactics on the part of the British Museum coordinator Dr. Michael Tite, making a great deal of the third (St. Louis d'Anjou cope) control sample, and claiming that the existence of this was deliberately concealed by Dr. Tite. He also unduly stresses discrepancies in the weights of the samples, the Zurich sample apparently having been different in weight on its arrival in Zurich, compared with the measurement in Turin. Could this not be rather more simply explained by variations in the weighing scales?

SHROUD SPECTRUM INTERNATIONAL, quarterly publication of the Indiana Center for Shroud Studies, issue no. 34

Still the Rolls Royce among Shroud Journals and newsletters, this latest issue of *Shroud Spectrum* is yet another fine production from editor Dorothy Crispino. It is almost totally devoted to a lengthy, definitive and challenging article by Dr. John Jackson 'Is the image on the Shroud due to a process heretofore unknown to modern science?' After setting out the various image characteristics which must be explained simultaneously by any successful

theory of the Shroud's image formation, Jackson goes on to develop the hypothesis that the image is the result of the cloth collapsing into and through an underlying human body at a time of that body emitting radiation from all points within and on its surface. In Jackson's words 'As the top part of the Shroud fell into the mechanically transparent body, the radiation began to interact with the cloth so as to produce a time integrated record of the cloth's passage through the body region. This time record is what is commonly referred to as the "body image"'. Jackson's hypothesis is all the more compelling for coming from a professional physicist, and is amply illustrated with photographs and diagrams.

GABRIEL VIAL, 'Le Linceul de Turin - Étude Technique', *Centre International d'Étude des Textiles Anciens*, Bulletin 67, 1989, pp. 11-24.

Gabriel Vial was one of the two textile specialists who examined the Shroud at the time of the taking of the carbon dating samples in April 1988, and this is an excellent technical study by him of the Shroud's 3.1 chevron twill weave, with comparisons with ancient textiles such as those of Holborough, Palmyra, Dura-Europos, etc. Of the Shroud he notes how faults in the preparation of the shafts point to a specifically ancient twill weave manufacturing method, and how the unusual Z-twist of the threads has been found in several Near Eastern textiles. He also points out that the two selvages show an unusual structure, requiring further study. Like Raes before him (and the Precision Textiles laboratory - see p.7 of this Newsletter), Vial notes the presence of traces of cotton, but suggests these might be accidental accretions, along with so much other microscopic debris on the Shroud's surface. He points out that the only European 3.1 chevron twill in linen that stands some comparison to the Shroud is the canvas of a late 16th. century 'Last Supper' painting attributed to Martin de Vos - and even so its weave is much simpler than that of the Shroud. In effect, he concludes, the Shroud weave is 'incomparable'.

DONALD KING, 'A Parallel for the Linen of the Turin Shroud', *Centre International d'Étude des Textiles Anciens*, Bulletin 67, 1989, pp. 25-6

In a short article published immediately following that of Vial (above), Donald King of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London takes up Vial's challenge that the Shroud weave is 'incomparable'. He remarks:

I can offer a possible candidate. In 1860 and 1863 Franz Bock sold to the Victoria and Albert Museum two pieces of a stole and/or maniple of printed linen, museum numbers 7027-1860, 8615-1863; probably, following his usual practice, he sold other pieces of the same to other museums. The pattern of foliage and birds appears, in reserve [? - misprint for 'reverse' - Ed], on a background printed in black from a block measuring about 18 x 10.5 cm; some details of the reserved [? reversed] pattern are tinted with yellow pigment. Bock did not reveal where he obtained the pieces; he attributed them to Italy, which is possible, though an origin in northern Europe is also conceivable. The design is inspired by the patterns of woven silks of the second half of the 14th. century and the textile is presumably of about that period, nearly contemporary with the dates assigned to the Turin shroud by radiocarbon tests and documentary evidence.

As in the Shroud, the warp and the weft of these pieces are of undyed linen threads, spun Z, as is usual in European linens. The cloth is coarser than that of the Shroud, with thread counts of about 22 per cm in one direction, presumably the warp, and about 12 per cm. in the other direction, presumably the weft. The weave is 3.1 chevron twill, as in the Shroud, but the chevrons are narrower, with 17 threads in the straight series, and 15 in the return series, making 32 in all. Brief examination failed to reveal any trace of a selvage, or of the weaving faults found in the Shroud. Thus the linen cloth of these pieces, though not identical with that of the shroud, is of similar material, similar weave, and probably of about the same period. Can other CIETA members produce closer parallels?"

King's observation is most interesting, though both Vial and our own John Tyrer seem unconvinced that he has found sufficiently exact a parallel. Whatever, it appears that there remain huge gaps in present-day specialists' knowledge of early textile technology, and that there is a great need for further inter-comparison between the Shroud and surviving textiles of firmly established antiquity.

CÉSAR TORT, 'The Turin Shroud: A Case of Retrocognitive Thoughtography?', *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, January 1990, pp.71-81

César Tort is a Mexican atheist who has 100% accepted the carbon dating result on the Shroud, but nonetheless believes (a) that the image is genuinely that of someone crucified in the manner of Jesus; and (b) that 'thoughtography' (the purported projection of mental images onto material objects, as popularly associated with Ted Serios) could be a valid phenomenon. Tort's suggestion therefore is that the Shroud began as a plain unfigured piece of cloth in fourteenth century Lirey, then: 'Sometime after the disastrous battle of Poitiers... the collective and necromaniac hysteria projected towards the putative burial garment by relic worshippers, penitents and pilgrims resulted in a mass-PK [psychokinesis - movement by psychic agency] effect inspired by the centuries-old acheiropoietos tradition, and invigorated by the recent Veronica veil expositions (1350 AD). An emotionally-charged group of pious French living in an age of unclouded faith unconsciously catalyzed a MTA ['macrothoughtographic appearance'] (of the dead Yeshu in the tomb?...)'. Written up in the impenetrable jargon so beloved of psychic researchers, Tort's hypothesis has achieved publication in the highly respected *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*. But it leaves one with the inescapable thought: would it not be a lot simpler to postulate that some as yet unknown something just might have caused an anomaly in the carbon dating?

H.E. GOVE, 'Dating the Turin Shroud - An Assessment', *Radiocarbon*, vol. 32, no. 1, 1990, pp. 87-92

This article gives an assessment of the Shroud radiocarbon dating from the viewpoint of the main developer of the accelerator mass spectrometry technique used by the Arizona, Oxford and Zurich laboratories, Professor Harry Gove. Professor Gove rejects some of the contamination and other hypotheses that have been advanced to question the validity of the radiocarbon dating, and argues that although the procedures as followed differed substantially from the recommendations made at the workshop arranged by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, the results should be regarded as credible. In his last paragraph he claims them as a triumph for his accelerator mass spectrometry technique:

Accelerator mass spectrometry, first developed at the University of Rochester's Nuclear Structure Research Laboratory [Gove's own facility - Ed.] in 1977 ... has achieved its greatest public success to date in establishing that the Turin shroud is of medieval origin and certainly not the burial cloth of Christ. Although few would rejoice in this particular result, it is an impressive example of the power of the accelerator-based technique.

The inevitable implication of this is that while most of the world has simplistically assumed that the AMS method of carbon dating was being used to test the Shroud, Gove and his fellow nuclear physicists thought the Shroud was being provided for them to test their AMS method! One can only wonder if the Church authorities would ever have agreed to the testing if they had realised that this was the deal they were consenting to?

An interesting incidental piece of information from Gove's paper is that the noted British scholar Elspeth Kennedy of Oxford University is at present working on a translation of the 'Livre Messire Geoffroi de Charny' - the poetic book on chivalry written by the still so mysterious first certain owner of the Shroud, Geoffrey de Charny. Although this work by Geoffrey is thought not to contain any direct reference to the Shroud, it has never before been available in English, and should at the very least enable a better understanding of the mind of the Shroud's first known owner. Members will be notified when this translation becomes available.