



Fig. 1. Fresco of Moses in the synagogue of Dura-Europas.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT ANSWERS

The search for the iconographic source of the "traditional" Face of Christ tends to aim at establishing the Face on the Shroud as the prototype. Now that the true Face has been revealed by photography, we can eliminate the Roman Good Shepherd type; the Syrian Serapis, so faithfully depicted for instance, in the apse mosaic of Rome's church of SS. Cosmas and Damian; the Zeus type head of Gerasa, a model still copied as late as the XV century. Types theologically symbolic, not intended to be portraits. If the prototype is indeed the Shroud Face, then we shall have to re-examine the hypothesis that the Shroud was hidden during the early centuries, for there are many examples dated III and IV centuries, which have all the characteristics of what we accept as the "traditional" Face; ascetic, large eyes, long hair, beard ...

Has anyone explored the possibility of a Jewish model? Does not Figure 1 answer the description? It is the young Moses, a fresco in the synagogue of Dura-Europas (245-256 A.D.). The pose, of course, is standard: the Greek Philosopher reading from a scroll is readily transposed to represent Jesus the Teacher (Fig. 2) as in countless early examples. The sandals and the position of the feet, the turn of the body and drape of the garments, and particularly the face, are so similar to those of Jesus in the Ravenna mosaics that if this young Moses had been found there, in the proper context, he would have been taken for the Lord.

The figure of Moses, Fig. 1, is from: André Neher, *Moïse et la vocation juive*, Editions du Seuil, Paris 1957. Source of the illustration was not given. Figure 2, a scene on a IV c. ivory casket, is in the Museo Civico, Brescia.



Fig. 2. Christ-Teacher on a IV century ivory casket.



Pia's photograph



The Vera Effigies of the Vatican.

Way back in 1916, a photographer of Angers, a Monsieur Bierre, stayed right at home to convince himself that art had copied the Shroud. He had a picture of the Holy Face distributed by Leon Dupont, the Holy Man of Tours; it is the Veronica of Rome. And he had a copy of Secondo Pia's Shroud Face. Making film negatives of each, he laid them together and exposed them onto sensitized paper. To his amazement, the two faces "fit" exactly. Objections were raised as to the value of this experiment. As we know, clear areas and light tones of a negative will print proportionately dark; the negative image on the Shroud shows rather sharp contrast whereas the Veronica negative is in rather flat gradations of gray. Therefore, in an overlay of the two negatives, the Shroud Face will cancel out some features of the Veronica and complete other features. The resulting print will be a confusion of elements dominated by the stronger contrasts contributed from the Shroud negative. Mons. Adolfo Barberis remarked that "it is enough to make a negative of the resulting print to see how far it is from the [original] Shroud image."

Bierre's print is reproduced in *La Santa Sindone*, Acts of Turin 1939 and Rome & Turin 1950, Marietti 1980. It is flanked on one side by Pia's photo of the Face and on the other by the Veronica. The pictures were too small and indistinct to be reproduced here. In his article, "Le Altri Sindoni", Mons. Barberis refers only briefly to the Bierre experiment.