

soudarion, ikon and several others. However a brief mention of the contentious idea that the Image of Edessa was the foundation of an alleged conventional likeness of Christ is insufficient to be convincing.

Whether the actual Image of Edessa survived the sack of Constantinople, turned up in Paris or Lirey, or can be identified with any of the various Veronicas/Mandylions still extant, the object itself became completely divorced from its legend, which grew and spread in popular culture, appearing in amulets, icons, military banners, and more recently on stamps, coins and banknotes. Guscin's exploration of the use of the Abgar legend as a magic charm is fascinating.

Apart from a few minor points of contention, this is a truly scholarly work and an essential addition to the library of those who want to study the possible antecedents of the Shroud in detail and from primary sources. It is not a polemic, and will be disappointing to anyone hoping to 'prove' the authenticity or not of the Shroud. It is not an adventure story, and does not excitingly describe "one man's search for truth". It is a historian's book for historians, and all the better for it.

Hugh Farey

Editor's Note:

Mark Guscin, like his reviewer, Hugh, is a former editor of this Newsletter. He is not only a linguist and scholar but also runs a very successful translation agency. www.markguscin.com. His other publications can be seen here: shorturl.at/pzBY9. They include the definitive study of the Sudarium of Oviedo and a very popular novel.



“HITLER'S NOTEBOOKS” and MAX FREI-SULZER

by Pierre de Riedmatten

Certain authors have sought to impugn the reputation of Max Frei-Sulzer, and consequently his work on the pollens of the Shroud of Turin, because he

authenticated the infamous "diaries of Adolph Hitler." These were later shown to be forgeries. Although the case is only indirectly related to the Shroud of Turin, understanding its main elements will help us to judge the apparent stain on Frei-Sulzer's reputation. What follows is an extract of a seemingly well-documented article on Hitler's "diaries," available on Wikipedia, with my commentary in conclusion.

A real event at the origin of the case

In April 1945, Hitler evacuated the members of his personal entourage as well as official and personal documents from Berlin. It was a secret operation known as Seraglio, now known to historians. One of the planes crashed and exploded south of Dresden. Upon hearing the bad news, the Führer reportedly exclaimed to his personal pilot: *"In this plane were all my personal archives, the testimony of my acts before posterity and before justice! This is a catastrophe."* By his own words, Hitler appeared to have consigned any diary or personal notebooks to oblivion.

A talented forger

Born in Saxony (in 1938), Konrad Kujau moved in 1957 to the West, where he became a petty thief, with several condemnations for forgery. Later, he took the alias Peter Fischer and began to work as an artist. Fascinated by the Nazi period, Kujau/Fischer specialised in painting his customers into World War II military scenes. As a sideline, he sold World War II military memorabilia purchased in East Germany and smuggled across the border. Combining his talents, he began to counterfeit and sell documents attributed to Hitler and other Nazi leaders to a circle of collectors. He produced paintings that he claimed had been made by Hitler during the Führer's brief career as an artist from 1907-1913.

Kujau found a faithful buyer in Fritz Stiefel. Stiefel was an uncritical consumer of Nazi memorabilia, and his avidity was an inspiration to Kujau. The first "Hitler notebooks" were written in 1978, on ordinary new notebooks dyed with tea leaves in an imitation of the Führer's handwriting. The four-volume "Speeches and Proclamations" of Hitler, compiled and edited (in 1962) by the historian Max Domarus provided content for Kujau's ersatz diaries.

After much pleading, Stiefel was allowed to borrow a notebook. He added it his collection and a year later had the plethora of objects appraised by a specialist, himself a former member of the Nazi Party. Particularly impressed by "Hitler's notebook," the expert pronounced the entire collection of unparalleled historic significance and contacted a leading historian. Eberhard Jaeckel, professor of

contemporary history at Stuttgart University, published seventy-six documents from the Stiefel collection in 1980. All turned out to be forgeries.

An unscrupulous journalist

Born in 1931, Gerd Heidemann was an award-winning investigative journalist with the German magazine "Stern." In his own remarkable way, he was also a collector of Nazi memorabilia. In 1973, he had purchased a yacht that had belonged to Hermann Göring. He had also started an affair with Göring's daughter Edda. The debts he contracted to buy and renovate the yacht were his undoing. To settle them, he negotiated with Grüner & Jahr, owners of "Stern," to write up anecdotes about the Third Reich from former Nazis he entertained aboard the yacht. In 1976, he also put up for sale the Göring memorabilia he had acquired for the yacht, and in doing so he encountered Fritz Stiefel and another collector, Jacob Tiefenthaler.

Three years later, Kujau/Fischer showed Tiefenthaler his first "Hitler's notebook," hinting that twenty-seven more notebooks covering the period 1933-1945 had been found after the Operation Seraglio plane crash. Alerted by Tiefenthaler, Heidemann finally met with Kujau in 1981, only to be told that the documents were in East Germany, and not only difficult but expensive to acquire.

Newspapers in search of the scoop of the century

Heidemann offered Kujau two million Deutschemarks on behalf of "Stern", promising absolute secrecy until all the documents had been brought from East Germany. A senior manager of *Grüner & Jahr* provided the funding and the guarantee that there would be no investigative expertise without Kujau's consent. Starting in February 1981, Kujau began to deliver "Hitler's notebooks" to Heidemann. The press group eventually paid more than nine million Deutschemarks for 60 notebooks, the last of which was manufactured by Kujau in 1983.

Publication and expertise

Meanwhile, news of the secret trove of Hitler documents had begun to surface. In December 1982, the English historian David Irving had accused "Stern" of refusing to publish documents showing that Hitler was unaware of the extermination of the Jews. The press group decided to publish the first notebooks in May 1983. They chose two experts to authenticate their scoop: Swiss criminologist Max Frei-Sulzer, former member of the Zurich forensic police, and Ordway Hilton, handwriting and document expert, author of the definitive

textbook, Scientific Examination of Questioned Documents. Max Frei died only a few days after validating the notebooks, on 14 January 1983 ;

In a misguided attempt to protect their scoop, "Stern" made several mortal blunders when presenting their evidence for authentication:

- the documents were not identified as "Hitler's diary," but only as "unpublished historical documents" ;
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- the experts had access only to photocopies, not the physical documents themselves. They could not verify the nature and age of the actual artifacts;
- two of the handwriting samples given to the experts for comparison with the notebooks came from Kujau's trove of forgeries; naturally, the graphology of the notebooks matched the samples.

Determined to shore up the credibility of "Hitler's diary," "Stern" invited the distinguished historian Hugh Trevor-Roper, author of The Last Days of Hitler, to review 56 of the notebooks, as well as stacks of letters, minutes of meetings, poems, and dozens of paintings attributed to Hitler. Duly impressed by the evidence, Professor Trevor-Roper gave his seal of approval, following up with an approving article in the "Sunday Times." Other reputable historians followed suit, including Gerhard Weinberg, specialist in Nazi Germany and World War II at the University of North Carolina.

The magnitude of the scandal

On April 22, 1983, "Stern" published its scoop, revealing the existence of "Hitler's diary." But doubts were growing. Trevor-Roper had by now observed factual inconsistencies in the copies of notebooks provided by "Stern." At the official press conference given by the magazine in Hamburg on 25 April, he concluded : *"I regret that the normal method of historical verification has been sacrificed to the perhaps necessary requirements of a journalistic scoop."*

Further, David Irving brandished before reporters a photocopied page of "the so-called Hitler's diary," supposed to have been written on July 20, 1944, when Hitler was surely unable to write normally because his right arm had been badly burned.

Not until May 6 did comprehensive scientific expertise confirm that the notebooks had been written just a few years earlier. Heidemann and Kujau/Fischer were tried for fraud. They went to prison in 1985. Two editors of "Stern" resigned.

Chancellor Kohl issued a public apology. And the Stern's reputation came into question.

Conclusions

During the first studies of "Hitler's notebooks," the obstacles imposed by "Stern" allowed Max Frei only to compare their graphology with other false documents and did not permit a physical analysis. Nor was he the only expert deceived by Kujau's forgeries.

Unfortunately, the detractors of the antiquity of the Shroud of Turin have used Frei's mistaken testimony in this case to discredit his work on pollens found on the Shroud. Most notably, these skeptics include the Zetetic writer Henri Broch and the American Joe Nickell who, in 1980, claimed to show how to realise the image of the Man of the Shroud by moulding, on a bas-relief, a wet cloth tinted with ochre bound by collagen.

Let us not forget, however, that by the time genuine scientific expertise had been allowed to demonstrate the forgery of "Hitler's notebooks," Max Frei had been dead for several months. His reputation for scientific accuracy cannot be damaged by this case. And while Ordway Hilton was temporarily embarrassed by the case, he went on to pursue an undiminished and distinguished career as a document's expert.

Pierre de Riedmatten

President of the association

"Montre-nous Ton Visage" ("Show us Your Face") - France



Editor's Notes: Max Frei (L) is seen here in a conflict with John Jackson (R), co-leader of STuRP, and being "mediated" by (The Late) Prof. Luigi Gonella. This was the long-awaited opportunity to examine and to take samples from the Shroud. Max was included in the team as having the unique distinction of being the only person to already have that experience. Pierre's article above is a welcome additional "epitaph" to Max. (Cont. over leaf.)

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Max was a frequent visitor to Turin Police Department as he was often consulted on forensic matters. He had earned international recognition already having been part of the team to investigate the plane crash in which the UN Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjöld, was killed. In the early 70s Turin decided the time was right to take some new colour photographs of the Shroud. Max was asked to be present as one of several respected professionals who could authenticate the process. On the spur of the moment Max requested permission to take some dust samples from the cloth. As a criminologist, he knew the potential value such dust from a suspect might reveal. His methodology was very simple: Scotch tape pressed firmly into the fabric and then examined under the microscope. He did not go anywhere without a roll of this tape in his pocket.

No doubt taken a little aback but not seeing any reason why they could reasonably object to such a request from their guest, the Cardinal agreed. Eventually, back home in his study overlooking Lake Zurich, Max got round to examining these tape samples. Among the microscopic detritus of the centuries he found pollens. Some of them were not native to Europe - indeed, they were from the Holy Lands and Anatolia. A report of this find appeared in a short article in the Huston Post sent to me by an acquaintance who knew I was just embarking on a film about the Shroud. The new film was triggered by Ian Wilson and his linking of the Shroud of Turin with the Mandylion which had a fabled provenance in the Holy Lands and Anatolia. I immediately flew out to meet Max and signed him up for the film. (*The Silent Witness 1978.*) I got to know him well in our several recesses and filming trips.

STuRP, for all the right reasons, were determined that their investigation would be totally non-invasive. Indeed, that was their agreement with Turin. To this end, a special scotch-tape dispenser had been commissioned which limited the pressure that could be applied to the cloth to avoid any potential damage. Max, unaware of this plan, knew that only *vigorous* pressure was ever likely to unstick recalcitrant pollen exines from fabric and duly set about the task only to be stopped in his tracks. The STuRP report did not acknowledge that the only expert on pollen sampling was not allowed to carry out his task as he wished. They only reported that they could not back up his earlier findings. The STuRP investigation found no pollens and Max's reputation and claims were called into question. Mmm...

My most vivid memory of Max is of him grinning broadly while all around him were diving for cover. Our base in Istanbul for filming was the Intercontinental Hotel in Taksim Square. One evening as we were gathered in the bar it was riddled with bullets in a drive-by terrorist attack. When I asked Max afterwards why the apparent pleasure he replied: "*I always arrive on the scene after the event. This is the first time I have ever been present.*" As I write this I understand that a home is being sought for Max's pollen collection. It could very well have potential value for sindonology.