

# SHROUD NEWS

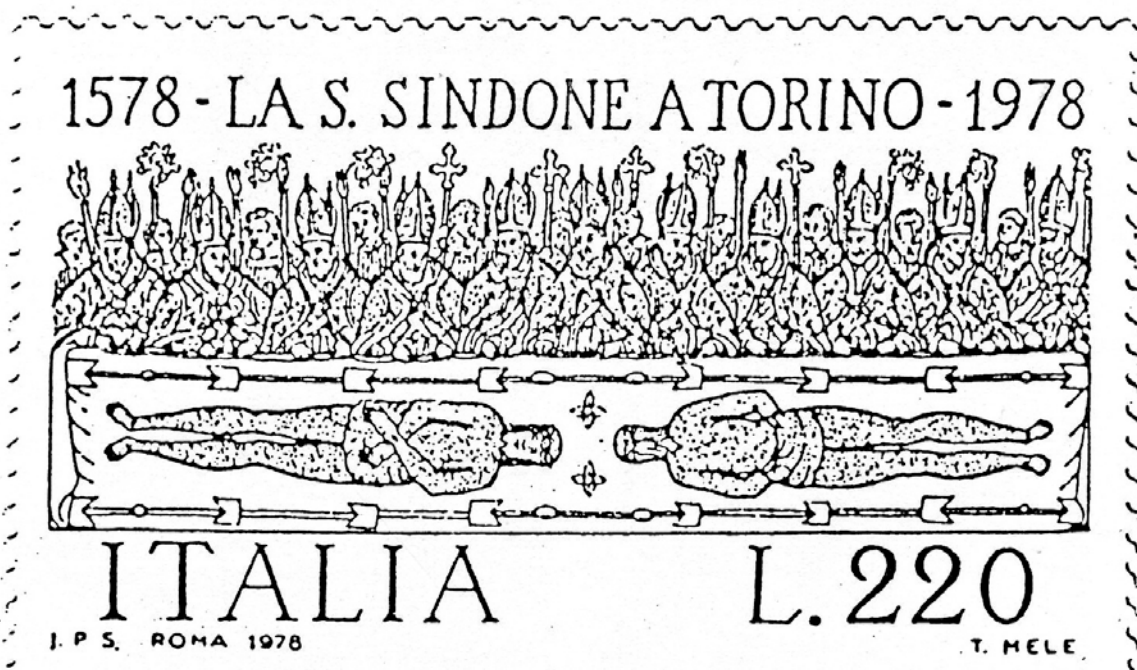
A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN

edited by REX MORGAN

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THE POSTAGE STAMP ISSUED IN ITALY DURING THE LAST EXPOSITION OF THE HOLY SHROUD IN 1978. DURING A PERIOD OF FORTY DAYS MORE THAN THREE AND A HALF MILLION PEOPLE FILED THROUGH ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL TO SEE THE SHROUD ITSELF, DISPLAYED UNDER FLOODLIGHTS IN A BULLETPROOF, TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY CONTROLLED FRAME.

### EDITORIAL

As we reach the end of another year in the modern history of the Holy Shroud and face, incidentally, the beginning of the ninth calendar year of publication of this modest newsletter I cannot help but reflect on the extraordinary development of the discipline of the Shroud, Sindonology as it has been named, in the decade since the Shroud itself was last shown to the people. The wide attention it received in 1978; the comparatively few hours of scientific study allowed in the Royal Palace at Turin which revealed so much; the current availability of photographs to researchers the world over, whether they have seen the original object or not, has led to hundreds of books, thousands of papers and articles and millions of hours of study and discussion and debate and lecture.

What is it about this piece of linen which has caused so much speculation and interest when we live in a civilisation which already has so many problems to solve and so many other interesting things to do in a world whose pace of life and, in many places, whose standard of living has been stepped up so high in the latter part of the twentieth century?

Why is it that busy scientists and technologists, art historians and photographers, journalists and clerics, medicos and engineers, archaeologists and lawyers, men and women of all ages and nations, of all religions and of no religion, devote their time and energy and money to pursuing relentlessly the intrigue of this abiding mystery? Why do we not simply take it for granted or listen to what the experts say as we might with any other policy announcement or artifact or historical object discovered in any other circumstances?

What is it that drives the sindonologist, like a terminal disease-sufferer, to complete his work and to leave no new stone unturned in the quest for more and more information about this famed object?

It is, I suppose, very simply, because the Holy Shroud has an addictive fascination for almost anyone who learns much about it and more so for those who have actually seen it. What, one might ask, is the difference, then, between having witnessed the almost imperceptible image itself, hanging in Turin Cathedral under floodlight, or being given the far more convenient opportunity

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to study at length and in close proximity highly specialised photographs of every square millimetre of it showing far greater detail than can ever be seen by the naked eye on a brief, if privileged, march through a cathedral in 1978? That there is a presence, an aura, a field of energy, an influence, an almost tangible impression upon the senses of all those who have stood before it, is not only undeniable but has been openly reported by so many observers and writers.

It is this indefinable force which inspires us to continue our search for the truth of it, whether or not knowing the truth will make any difference to our beliefs or our lives. It is the pursuit of a branch of human knowledge which has led us to undreamed-of friendships and collaborations in every corner of the globe; it is the sharing of a common pursuit worldwide which transcends all mere material considerations like the cost of travel, or buying books or paying postage or the other mundane necessities of research.

This year I have had the opportunity of reaching several more milestones in my own journey with the Shroud. We took the Brooks Photographic Exhibit to Perth, Western Australia, early in the year; I went to Somerset to make a discovery about the connection of the Shroud with the Templecombe painting which led to the publication of my proposal that the Shroud itself might once have been in England; I saw the garment of Argenteuil in France, covered with bloodstains which match those on the Shroud and further research might well reveal that the two items once clad the same body thus adding to the possibility of authenticity of them both.

Also this year we have heard more details of the proposed carbon 14 dating of the Shroud. We have also gleaned that all is not proceeding as quickly or as efficiently with the dating arrangements as was promised at the October 1986 conference in Turin. Whatever the reasons for this, if the dating does not proceed, or if it were to be delayed unduly, immense damage will be done in the eyes of the world to the cause of the Shroud and the authorities will leave themselves open to ridicule and innuendo.

Although it is perfectly true to say that the mere fact of carbon dating part of the cloth will not end the matter, it will, for many

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millions of people who know very little about it, and only from what are generally unreliable media sources, give them something they rightly or wrongly, want to know: Is the piece of cloth medieval and therefore the cleverest forgery in existence or is it of antiquity? If it is reliably dated at about the time of Christ then it will prove no more than we already believe we know but it will lead a large number of doubtful people to support the vast body of other evidence, scientific and historical, in favour of the possibility of authenticity. If it dates to the middle ages then better, perhaps, that we should all know now and we can discard the work and interest of thousands of researchers over hundreds of years who have concluded otherwise. But will we do this? I think not.

And so, as new Shroud study groups are springing up all over the world, moved with that same force which has moved me for ten years, and as more and more people, expert and lay alike, come to share the compelling fascination evoked by this remarkable relic, we, in Australia, look towards 1988 knowing that the photographic exhibition which we now own will, in all probability, be going to Canada for a season, and that at this time next year I shall be writing, God willing, the 50th edition of SHROUD NEWS, a sobering thought indeed.

As one's family and friends begin to gather and as one reflects upon the meaning of Christmas for Christians and non-Christians alike and upon the Shroud's unique representation of the man it celebrates revealed to us only by the techniques of science, the very branch of knowledge which exists to explain all without the intervention of the Deity, I wish all my readers and friends of the Shroud circle throughout the world a very happy Christmas season and a joyful New Year.

REX MORGAN

## THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF CHRIST AND OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

by ALEXANDER METHERELL, M.D.

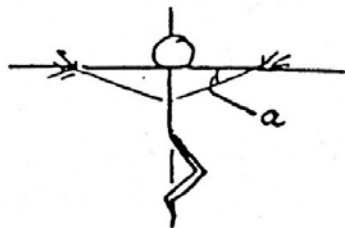
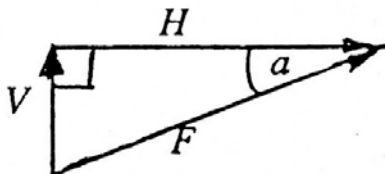
*During 1987 a discussion took place between the editor of SHROUD NEWS and Dr Metherell particularly in relation to the apparently abnormally long arms of the man in the Shroud about which several theories are extant. Dr Metherell, of Santa Ana, California, holds doctorates in both medicine and engineering science and also has considerable biblical knowledge. This article resulted.*

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The force pulling on the arms can be analysed by simple vector analysis which shows that in a crucifixion with nails the tension force pulling the arms will be so great that not only are the shoulders (and probably the elbows) dislocated, but they are actually torn out of their sockets so that the arms become lengthened (much like being torn apart on the rack). This lengthening can be as much as 6 inches or more.

Vector analysis says that a force  $F$  can be represented by a line whose length is proportional to the force and direction represents the direction of the force. Any force can also be represented by two other forces (components) acting at right angles to each other by drawing a so-called "triangle of forces" as shown below. The force  $F$  pulling the arm in tension will have both a vertical  $V$  and a horizontal  $H$  component. If the arms make an angle  $a$  with the horizontal then:

$$\text{or} \quad \frac{\sin a}{F} = \frac{V/F}{V/\sin a}$$



The vertical force holding up the body must be the whole weight of the body carried by each arm. If Jesus weighed 100 kilos (220 lbs) then the vertical force  $V$  would be 50 kilos.

Crucifixion and Death of Christ and Old Testament Prophecy (cont'd)

If the arms are horizontal with the wrists and shoulders in line with each other then:

$$\text{and} \quad \begin{array}{l} a = 0 \\ F = 50/0 \end{array} = \text{infinity!}$$

$$\text{If then} \quad \begin{array}{l} a = 5 \text{ degrees (slight angle with the horizontal)} \\ F = 50/0.0872 \end{array} = 573\text{kg (1;261 lbs)}$$

$$\text{If then} \quad \begin{array}{l} a = 30 \text{ degrees (probable final angle at death)} \\ F = 50/0.5 \end{array} = 100\text{kg (220 lbs)}$$

$$\text{If then} \quad \begin{array}{l} a = 90 \text{ degrees (arms straight up)} \\ F = 50/1.0 \end{array} = 50\text{kg (110 lbs)}$$

If the normal length ( $n$ ) of his arms were 1 meter, we can also compute the stretching ( $s$ ) of the arms that must take place if Jesus was initially nailed to the cross lying on the ground with the arms initially outstretched horizontally ( $a = 0$ ). The lengthened arm ( $L$ ) is:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{And} \quad L = n/\cos a \\ \quad \quad s = L-n \end{array}$$

| Angle of arms<br>$a$ degrees | Force pulling on arms<br>$F$ kg | Arm length<br>$L$ cm | Stretching<br>$s$ cm |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 0                            | infinite                        | 100                  | 0                    |
| 5                            | 573                             | 100.38               | 0.38                 |
| 10                           | 288                             | 101.54               | 1.54                 |
| 20                           | 146                             | 106.42               | 6.42                 |
| 30                           | 100                             | 115.5                | 15.5                 |
| 45                           | 71                              | 141.42               | 41.4                 |

What these numbers show is that when crucified by nailing to the cross beam with the arms initially horizontal, the initial load in the arms pulling on the shoulder sockets would be enormous such that the arms would be stretched and dislocated. This stretching

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Crucifixion and Death of Christ and Old Testament Prophecy (cont'd)

allows the body to move downwards so that the arms make an angle with the horizontal beam. As this angle increases the load pulling on the arms decreases while at the same time the arms become increasingly stretched. Notice that at 5 degrees the load is equivalent to bearing the full weight of 12 men the weight of Jesus; 6 on each arm. At this point the arms will have stretched only 4 mm. As the arms stretch further and the rotator cuff and joint capsule around the shoulder tear away, the humeral head becomes displaced from the glenoid fossa. As the arms stretch to 1.5 cm. the angle increases to 20 degrees and the enormous load on the arms decreases to the equivalent of the weight of 6 men; 3 men on each arm. By now the elasticity of the arms has increased (less stiff) because of the tearing of the joint capsule and rotator cuff which under this load causes further stretching of the arm length.

The stretching process is slowed down by the victim decreasing the load on the arms by pushing up with the feet and thus transferring some of the load to the feet. The nails in the feet are placed in the fore foot between the metatarsals with the plantar surface of the feet flat against the vertical beam. To place the feet flat on the beam the Roman soldiers had to bend the knees in the half knee bent position. As the nails are hammered in in this position, the heels would be bruised against the vertical post of the cross. Thus the first (oldest) Messianic prophesy in the bible was fulfilled from God's curse on the serpent in Eden (Gen 3: 14-16) where He said: " ... and You (the seed of the serpent) will bruise Him (the Seed of the Woman, i.e. the Messiah) on the heel ...."

Note that death is hastened by preventing the victim from pushing up on his legs. This was typically done by breaking the legs of the person being crucified , as was done to the two thieves and hence the Roman Centurion did not do this to Jesus thus fulfilling the prophesy that "no bone in His body would be broken."

Unlike the nail in the feet which was placed between the distal ends of the metatarsals, the nails in the "hands" were not in the palms between the metacarpal phalangeal joints (knuckles). Instead these nails were placed either between the distal ends of the radius and ulnar, or in the radio-carpal joint space. This allows any tearing

### Crucifixion and Death of Christ and Old Testament Prophecy (cont'd)

motion distally to be stopped by the carpal wrist bones which are held together with strong ligaments. The Shroud confirms these nail positions.

When -thus nailed to the cross while the cross is laid flat, the cross is then raised in the erect position. As it does so the base falls into a narrow hole which is then packed with stones to hold the cross upright. As it falls into this hole the jolt causes the excruciating pain of the initial dislocation and tearing of the joints. This pain far exceeds the pain of the initial nailing. To overcome this pain Jesus pushes up on His feet causing the nail in the feet to tear the flesh between the metatarsals towards the hind foot causing excruciating pain in this location. At this point Jesus is in a half knees bent position which, as anyone who has tried to maintain a half knee bent position knows, cannot be maintained beyond a minute or so. The tearing of the nail in the feet continues until the nail moves up and locks against the tarsal bony structures in the mid foot which, like the carpal bony structures in the wrist, are bound together with strong ligaments.

As the knees give out and the half knee bend position cannot be maintained, the load is then taken by the arms again, which continues the process of dislocation and stretching. Breathing becomes very difficult in this position because the stretching of the arms causes stretching of the musculature in the chest and back. Breathing can only be done by the diaphragm and since He is suspended by the arms each breath requires the movement up and down of a good portion of the body weight. As the diaphragm becomes weaker from all of this effort the movement of air in the lungs diminishes and death by slow suffocation begins. This causes the retention of carbon dioxide which is held in the blood serum as carbonic acid thus causing acidosis to occur. To fight this suffocation He pushes up on His feet again, having allowed His legs to regain strength and begins to breathe a little easier. The knees give out a little sooner this time and the cycle repeats itself.

The stretching of the arms continues fairly rapidly until the decreasing load is just balanced by the elasticity of the disjointed arms. I would estimate that this would occur at a load in each arm equivalent to about one full body weight which would have the arms make an angle with the horizontal of about 30 degrees which is



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Crucifixion and Death of Christ and Old Testament Prophecy (contd)

confirmed by most artistic renditions of the crucifixion. At this point the arms have been elongated by about 15 cm (6 inches) which most artistic renditions do not show but which the Shroud image does show.

As the cycle continues the amount of time spent pushing up on the feet becomes shorter and the time hanging on the arms becomes longer and longer as His strength is dried up. The retention of carbon dioxide now accelerates as the blood becomes more and more acidotic. The heart rate increases as the heart tries to pump a greater blood flow through the lung to blow off the carbon dioxide. All this is going on while fighting a falling blood oxygen level. This falling blood oxygen slowly starves the heart of vital oxygen causing the cardiac output to greatly diminish. Hours are passing. The heart is becoming exhausted and failing. Fluid begins to seep out into the pericardial space between the heart and pericardium (the sac surrounding the heart) to form a pericardial effusion. This fluid later pours out through the spear hole made in His side after He is dead. As the blood acidosis increases the heart beat becomes dangerously irregular as cardiac arrhythmias ensue. These irregular heartbeats warn Jesus that death is imminent allowing Him to struggle for one last breath to say: "Father, into Thy hands I commit My Spirit." The heart then degenerates into an arrhythmia of ventricular fibrillation and cardiac output drops to zero resulting in immediate death. Thus ends an ordeal of excruciating physical suffering and death by slow suffocation.

And so is fulfilled the prophecy of the 22nd Psalm which Jesus drew attention to while hanging on the cross when He quoted the first verse: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" This same Psalm goes on to give a graphic description of the scene of crucifixion (not invented until 900 years after David wrote the Psalm, which states among other things: 6. But I am a worm, and not a man, a reproach of men, and despised by the people. 7. All who see me sneer at me (see Luke 23:35); they separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, 8. commit thyself to the Lord; let Him deliver him; let Him rescue him, because He delights in him (see Luke 23:35,37). ... 14. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in me, 15. My strength is dried up, like a potsherd, and

Crucifixion and Death of Christ and Old Testament Prophecy (cont'd)

my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and Thou dost lay me in the dust of death. 16. for dogs (Hebrew for gentiles, Romans) have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. 17. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; 18. they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

So much did He love us.

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AUTHOR REX MORGAN EXAMINING THE PAINTING OF CHRIST IN TEMPLECOMBE CHURCH, SOMERSET, ENGLAND IN AUGUST THIS YEAR. IAN WILSON FIRST CONNECTED THE PAINTING WITH THE HOLY SHROUD MANY YEARS AGO. THIS YEAR MORGAN PUBLISHED HIS THEORY THAT THIS ARTIFACT IS THE LID OF A BOX WHICH MIGHT HAVE CONTAINED THE SHROUD ITSELF IN ENGLAND IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

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DID I SEE THE LORD? by REMI VAN HAELST

*This article by Belgian researcher, Remi Van Haelst, was inspired by his reading of Rex Morgan 's THE HOLY SHROUD AND THE EARLIEST PAINTINGS OF CHRIST (Runciman 1986)*

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Visiting Rome is paying tribute to the catacombs, the legendary labyrinth, deep in the underground and scene of many dramatic filmscripts and books...

During my stay in Rome my wife and I visited the Catacomb di S. Domitilla along the Appian Way. Our group gathered in the "capella" a few meters below the surface. I was very impressed with the dimensions of the capella but this is probably due to restorations executed much later than the days of the first Christians in Rome.

We were fortunate to be guided by a Filipino monk who told us many fascinating things about the catacombs. Burial in catacombs was never exclusively Christian; pagans and Jews also buried their dead in this way once the choice between cremation or burial had been made. Our guide, speaking fluent English, made it clear that the catacombs of Rome were never used as hiding or gathering places for large groups of Christians. During persecutions, the catacombs, duly registered in the cadastre and known by the authorities, were confiscated and sealed. In spite of the cruel persecutions, Romans never violated the catacombs because for them every funeral place remains sacred always.

When I told our guide that I was very interested in the matter and in making notes for my book ("Het gelaat van Kristus-De lijkwade van Turin - The Face of Christ on the Turin Shroud") the monk took me by the hand and guided me to one of the many graves cut from the volcanic soil. He told me that here were the very first Christian graves of ancient Rome. The dead, buried in this place, were contemporaries of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. The grave was not far away from the capella, the place where burial services were held in the first days of Christianity. We were the first of the large group entering the small galleries. The weak light of the electric illumination could not drive away the darkness and

Did I See the Lord? (cont'd)

the deep silence ... the group became strangely still. Two thousand years of history could be felt upon us.

Our guide, using his flashlight, lit both sides of the small passages where the graves were excavated, sometimes three above each other. All the graves were empty for back in the 8th century the Pope had ordered all objects removed from the catacombs which were afterwards forgotten.

The guide called me and together we looked closely into one of the countless graves. I felt like a bodysnatcher desecrating the eternal rest of this ancient tomb. On the sepulchral vault, in the light of his flashlamp, the guide showed me a very vague painting. In a kind of circular inset on the ceiling of the chamber I saw the figure of a human bust, looking from the left side. With a kind of sepulchral voice the monk told me: "This is the oldest representation of the Lord, made by an unknown artist, probably based on descriptions or perhaps a sketch or painting by someone who had know Jesus or his disciples."

Although I must admit that I could not make out much of the very vague, indefinite figure, for me part of a perished fresco, I was very impressed with what I saw: "The Face of the Lord Jesus" as represented by one of his first Roman followers. The monk gave a very detailed description of the figure on the ceiling made some 1900 years ago. The painting was certainly no great work of art but only a natural representation of the Lord Jesus Christ. No symbols, no nimbus, only the stern countenance of a long-haired and bearded man with a moustache, a sharp nose and a fixed look. The Lord, not as seen on the beautiful mosaics in the ancient churches of Rome, Ravenna, Constantinople. Not as the Pantocrator, not as the Good Shepherd, not as Apollo, but in his human form, the way his contemporaries had seen him alive and dead. The guide explained the burial customs to the group: by painting the ceiling with the face of Christ the deceased were able to look forever into the face of their saviour. Another custom was to place a sudarium, painted with the face of the Lord (as a Veronica) upon the face of the dead.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was never honoured with a statue in Jerusalem. No state portrait of Him was ever made. In spite of this, most

Did I See the Lord? (cont'd)

Christians have a certain picture of Jesus Christ burned into their heart or soul. Many artists gave their vision of the likeness of the Lord, some as the Pantocrator, some as the Good Shepherd or even as an Apollo-like young man without long hair or beard. The earliest artists, not necessarily Christian, found their inspiration in descriptions or drawings originating from men who had seen Jesus Christ, dead or alive.

In Chimay (Belgium) the treasury of the church of St Peter and St Paul contains an icon claimed to be made before Jesus was born. This icon follows the Abgarus model with long hair and full beard. One of the earliest representations of Christ was made on a silver vase, found in Homs (formerly Emesa) in Syria and now kept in the Louvre Museum, Paris. The Lord is represented with long hair and full beard in the same way as He is shown on several of the oldest sarcophagi such as in the Lateran Museum (No 151), St Sebastian Church, Rome and the Musee Lapidaire (Arles, France).

Again, the same likeness is found on a statue in the ruins of a forgotten monastery in Vaison-la-Romaine (Vaucluse, France) dating from the 3rd century. Another very old relic, the "El Cristo de Burgos", is venerated in the Capilla del S. Cristo (Burgos, Spain). This strange crucifix is attributed to Nicodemus who, with Joseph of Arimathea, buried the Lord. It shows the figure of Christ aged with time and is dressed with a red garment. There are many legends about this miraculous crucifix.

The first Christians wore, hidden under their clothing, an emblem painted with the likeness of the Lord. From this custom came the term "Christophorus" or "Theophorus" which means a bearer of Christ. During the very first years of Christianity these emblems were embellished on a "veronica". Upon the death of the owner the veronica was placed as a "sudarium" or sweatcloth over the face of the deceased. In this way the person was always looking at the Lord and the same tradition was maintained in the graves on the ceilings or the walls in the Roman catacombs. Most of these frescoes or mosaics of the Lord, the apostles or other saints have been damaged by time and are now so faded that identification is very difficult. Visitors to the S. Domitilla Catacomb see only vague figures. But by the discovery of forgotten catacombs in the 16th

Did I See the Lord? (cont'd)

century by Bosio some reproductions and descriptions were made. In the 19th century de Rossi and Heaphy again searched the catacombs. Heaphy wrote a book about it and made many drawings of the frescoes and wall paintings he found. His original work is now in the British Museum but Rex Morgan has reproduced many of them in colour in his book.

Later Roman Christians represented Christ more as the Good Shepherd and a beardless young man. Some of the most beautiful mosaics represent Jesus in this way. The bible prescribes "that priests should not let their hair grow freely" (Ezekiel 44:20). The Talmud (Ta'anith 17a) states: "that the hair of a priest should be cut each 30 days". Sanhedrin 22b states: "the hair should be worn in the Julian way". The main argument against representations of Christ with a full beard, long hair and a moustache is the epistle of St Paul where he declares "that to wear his hair long, is a shame." Should St Paul write such a thing if the Lord was, in fact, long haired? (I Cor 11:14) But in spite of all this some of the Jews did wear their hair long, certainly Sephardic Jews.

During their research de Rossi and Heaphy could date the frescoes very precisely as mostly first century. For this, the place in the catacombs, the nature of symbols on the paintings, the spelling of Greek or Hebrew proper names and the style of clothing were good indications. The graves of Nereo and Achilleo (St Domitilla) are certainly dated second half of the first century. Scientifically the dating is correct. The fact that in the first Christian catacombs only fragments out of the gospel of St John were represented supports the dating of de Rossi and Heaphy. From this it is clear that the first Christians did not follow the Roman way of representing Christ as the Good Shepherd or Apollo. Only later, because of the Roman tradition of manliness was the Lord painted in that way as we can still see on some of the beautiful mosaics of Ravenna.

The French researcher Paul Vignon found that most ancient pictures of the Lord have about 15 main characteristics in common. Any representation dated before the 5th century, showing some 8 to 10 of these characteristics, is supposed to have been made after the same model: an *acheiropoietos* representation left to us by Christ

Did I See the Lord? (cont'd)

himself, the genuine model seen and remembered by those who lived with him. The little group of his disciples and followers did not know that, in a very short time, the word of the Lord would be spread all over the Roman empire and the rest of the world. Thus one can be sure that the way Jesus Christ was represented by the first Christians is authentic.

But only one of the old likenesses of Christ satisfies all the requirements to be the original model after which all others have been made: it is the Holy Shroud kept in the Cathedral of St John in Turin. There, the 15 characteristics of Vignon are evident. Modern science has done all kinds of research to discover how the image on the Shroud was made. In spite of all the tests no one can yet explain how this figure, showing us Jesus Christ in the glory of His victory over death, still exists. The only explanation is that this Shroud of Turin is truly the *acheiropoietos*.



Reproduction of the sketch of Thomas Heaphy, after a painting found by him in the Catacomb of St Domitilla, Rome. I cannot be certain that the painting I saw in that catacomb, described above, and this painting of Heaphy are the same, but they are very alike. This sketch is reproduced in black and white and in colour in **THE HOLY SHROUD AND THE EARLIEST PAINTINGS OF CHRIST** by Morgan.

- REMI VAN HAELST

"SHROUD - A PROBLEM" VITTORIO MESSORI

This article first appeared in "Pastoral Life", Milan religious magazine, written by Vittorio Messori, an Italian newspaperman and author of the bestseller HYPOTHESIS ABOUT JESUS. The article was translated by NEREO MASINI and edited by REX MORGAN

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Trust me, who because of personal interest and even of professional duty, am watching day by day what is fermenting in a religious hotchpotch: the Turin Shroud is becoming a problem, scientific and even pastoral, ever bigger and urgent.

I am trying to make it clear and to avoid looking like someone who is choosing, coldly, one theme or another. As everyone knows, Shroud credibility rested only on devotion until Turin attorney, Secondo Pia, saw appearing, in the dark of his photographic laboratory, that face no other man had discovered until then. Pia ran the risk of a heart attack but his plate, showing the Shroud image to be a perfect photographic negative, entered history. Since then a scientific Catherine-wheel has continued to turn which has created quite a new science, sindonology, so that during this time we see even computers coming onto the stage giving the finishing stroke to the last skeptics (often because of their prejudice, or out of pique, or voluntary refusal to enquire) of this object, unique in the world, with utmost seriousness.

Computers show us the image in 3-D and they always point out on the eyes the presence of two coins minted by Pontius Pilate; by identifying pollens they reconstruct, or confirm, the movements of the relic around the Mediterranean sea; they are analysing blood traces and stating it is always the same rare group of the Lanciano eucharistic miracle ...

Since 1978, the date of the last display of the Shroud, discoveries have followed one another with a quickened tempo. And not only through the expertise of scientists but also for historians who are scouring ancient archival sources (often untouched and unexplored) of Easter countries to fill in the holes of Shroud history. Until the late middle ages there was an absence of sources upon which the authenticity skeptics relied. Now, in foreign countries, piles of references have appeared that put missing pieces into the puzzle.



"Shroud - a Problem" (cont'd)

There is, in this, something mysterious, something providential: the Shroud came out from silence just when man believed he could bury Christian faith in the name of science, the new divinity which would have redeemed us and throw open before us the "counting tomorrow". It occurred instead that science, by means of its secular arm, technology, brought us to the verge of ruin, surviving only because of the balance of terror. But that very science, that very technology which was to have dissolved anachronistic streams of Christian myth, came to confirm authenticity of what was even more disdained: a "relic"! Sheer fancy! Middle Ages nonsense... And yet here are computers producing shocking data about this Middle Ages nonsense.

A finding which causes reflection.

I am not spending more words allowing myself to point out - as a synthesis of what is coming from that repository plenty of continuous surprises, as Professor Baima Bollone of Turin University said on "Jesus" in August 1985.

Let us come rather to the question I hinted at while beginning and what I dared to define as urgent, even on the pastoral level. Before the stately increasing of "proofs" coming from unexpected sources; before people's flooding interest (there is no place where I have spoken publicly from Germany to Spain, to North America in which someone in debate did not mention questions about this Shroud; there is no newspaper in which I have worked without seeing letters arriving on this subject); before the power of this finding, if not to convert - God only searches minds and hearts - surely to cause serious reflection; in the light of this situation, therefore, have we the right to keep the Shroud wrapped on a woodstock under Guarini's cupola in Turin Cathedral? On another occasion whilst turning the pages of a very non-religious American magazine and finding in it (it occurs even more frequently) a long, incredulous reportage on that Object, I was asking myself whether, for instance, we are not putting our light under a bushel or burying a talent in the earth.

Be quiet, please, if in the light of these words it should occur to you to have a first reaction of refusal.

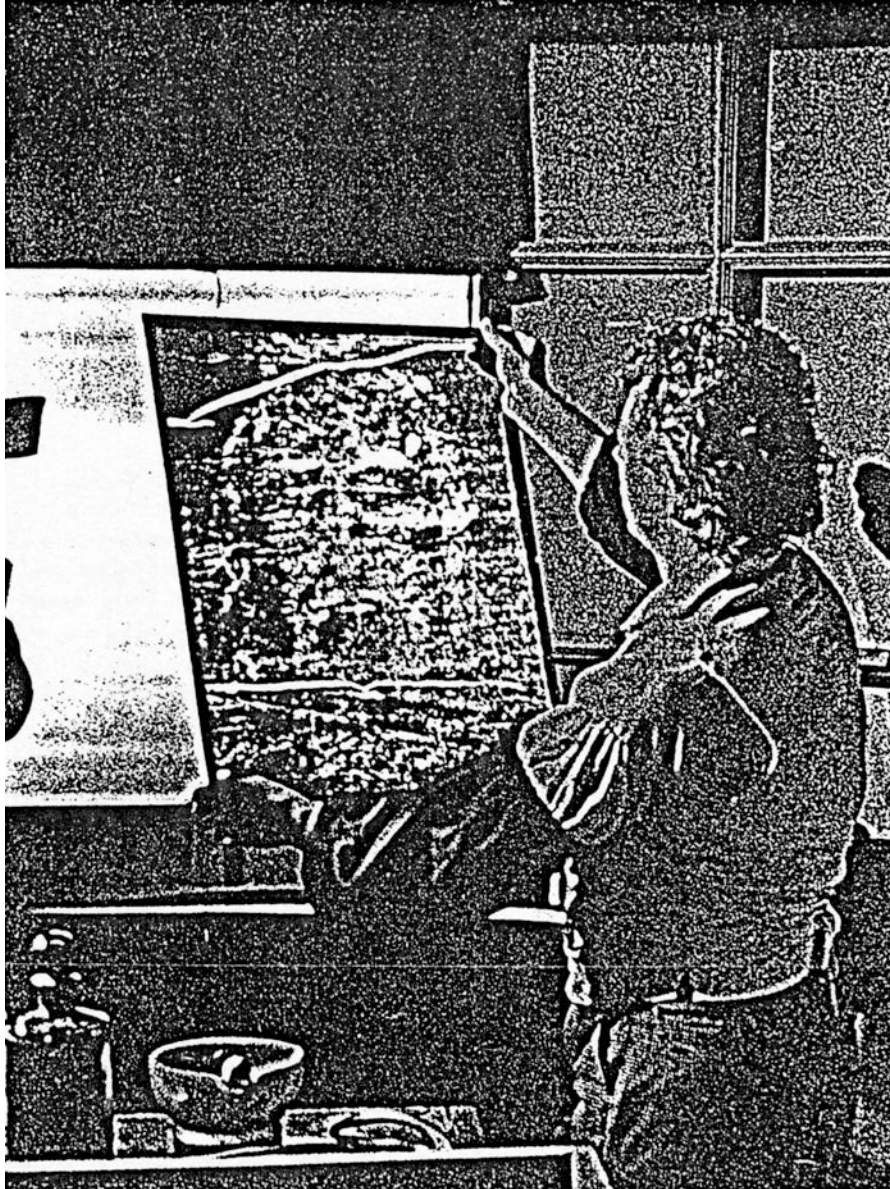
"Shroud - A Problem" (cont'd)

Be quiet and reflect, so that, for instance, you will not be contaminated by that strange virus circulating in the past twenty years in a clerical environment: only here, as now, appears to be surviving, remains of 19th century positivism, rationalism and scientism. Whilst agnostic, atheistic and non-Christian scientists (many of them Hebrew) stand thoughtful before the Shroud and its mystery, it occurs to priests and friars, so often sitting on their chairs, shaking their shoulders as if it were a matter of "alienating religiosity". Beware, please, of that typical "sacristy cultural delay", on which basis the French philosopher Jean Guitton foresees that the last announcers of "Progress", of Science", of "Secular City enlightened by Knowledge" shall be some old, mountain parish priests.

I am not worried about scandalizing some vestals of neo-clericalism, preaching "it is time to stop with relics". I am saying it is time to stop the wholly catholic vice of collecting remnants of secularism that true secularists throw away. And I am launching my smallest stone into the pond. Umberto II, dying, gave the Pope the Shroud which was Savoy property. And, being in Turin as a newspaperman myself, I saw, in 1978 on his knees before the Shroud a certain Cracow Archbishop who, a few months later, took up domicile in the Vatican.... Everyone knows the ancient devotion of John Paul II.

It is to this linen the care of which he entrusted to the Turin Archbishop. The question involves not only Turin, but the whole of Christianity, Orthodox and so many Protestants included: thousands of them arrived for the last exposition.

Experts say modern techniques should now warrant a permanent exhibit without any risk to the cloth and its image. Is it not time to start talking about it? Are we entitled to keep concealed and locked up that face whose name Therese of Lisieux wished to bear and, seeing it, Paul Claudel cried for the first time?



IN MAY 1898 TURIN LAWYER AND AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER SECONDO PIA OPENS THE MODERN HISTORY OF THE HOLY SHROUD AS HE DEVELOPS HIS FIRST PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATE OF THE IMAGE TO SHOW IT AS A POSITIVE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MAN. [Pic from THE SILENT WITNESS, David Rolfe's British Academy Award winning documentary film

SHROUD NEWS began in 1980 when Rex Morgan, author of three books on the subject of the Holy Shroud (PERPETUAL MIRACLE -SECRETS OF THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN, SHROUD GUIDE and THE HOLY SHROUD AND THE EARLIEST PAINTINGS OF CHRIST) started putting together a few notes about current developments in sindonology (the study of the Shroud of Turin) for a small circle of interested people in his home country of Australia. He didn't expect it to go beyond a few issues.

The bulletin now reaches subscribers all over the world and because of its relatively simple method of production it can be written and produced and the information disseminated more quickly than most news-sheets of a similar kind or the more prestigious journals. It contains information, news, articles and illustrations gathered from sources of Shroud study worldwide through Rex Morgan's extensive personal connections with what has been described as the "Shroud Crowd".

Rex Morgan is a frequent traveller overseas and thus has the opportunity to keep abreast of latest developments in Shroud study and research. He was present at the world media preview of the Shroud itself in August 1978 in Turin, Italy and has met with numerous Shroud researchers in many countries. His quest for information about the Shroud has become, as he describes it, a "passionate hobby". He brought the world-famous Photographic Exhibition created by Brooks Institute, California, to Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Macau and during its tour it attracted more than half a million visitors. The exhibit has now been given to the non-profit making organisation, The South East Asia Research Centre for the Holy Shroud (SEARCH) of which Morgan is President. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the USA based Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin (ASSIST) and was a member of the scientific team which conducted environmental experiments in a Jerusalem tomb in 1986 (The Environmental Study of the Shroud in Jerusalem).

Our list of SHROUD NEWS subscribers continues to increase. We request a subscription in Australia of \$6 for six issues posted. SHROUD NEWS comes out six times per year. The USA subscription for 6 issues is \$US 6 (posted surface mail) or \$US 12 (posted airmail). Postage to other countries varies. ALL back issues are available at \$1 (US or Aust) each plus postage charges.

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All information and opinion in this newsletter is published in good faith. It is edited (and mainly written) by Rex Morgan and published by:

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