

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

PIER LUIGI BAIMA BOLLONE: *Sindone o no* (Shroud or not), Società Editrice Internazionale, Turin 1990. Hardback, 333 pp., pen sketches, color section in center. No index.

This is Dr. Baima Bollone's third book. In 1978, with Pier Paolo Benedetto, he published *Alla ricerca dell'Uomo della Sindone*; and in 1985 *Alla ricerca delle reliquie di Cristo; L'impronta di Dio*: books punctuating a steady progression of scientific articles about the Shroud. *Spectrum* recalls his contributions in numbers 6, 11 and 13.

Sindone o no is addressed to a public desirous of more comprehensive information after the results of radiocarbon dating. It is intended as a complete overview of all the scientific knowledge so far acquired, both for and against authenticity. But the text is not so much a pro/contra discussion as it is a compendium of every bit of information that the Author has garnered and could reasonably present. With cool objectivity he plays it all in low key while he lays the groundwork through 19 chapters.

At first sight, one is surprised that a description of the Image, the wounds and cause of death, is kept until the last chapter. But having traversed the centuries in history, archaeology, iconography, exegetics, and scientific research — in sum, all the many aspects of this multidisciplinary study we call sindonology — the reader is prepared to understand and believe. Each chapter is complemented by ample references: "To know more about it". Here we find not only sources, but also extensive quotations from important texts, lists of the programs of various congresses and other useful information.

We are intrigued by the sidestrip. Baima Bollone's explanation is original and plausible: In order to "center" the Image on the sheet — centering being one of the reasons given for the presence of the sidestrip — an unknown width of the cloth was cut out longitudinally about 8 cm inside the selvage. Then the outside strip was reattached, so that a selvage edge runs lengthwise on both sides of the Shroud. While this assumes that the sidestrip had been an integral part of the fabric — and indeed it is said that the thread-lines seem to match from the main body to the strip — identity cannot be verified for, as Baima points out, there is a difference in the thread count of the two sections, and the sidestrip is a lighter color. Enigma today that future examination may start to unravel.

Proper editorial grooming should be respected even in a book presented to that amorphous being, the general public. The illustrations are meagerly identified and not called out in the text.

There is no Table of Abbreviations, so in the reference sections we are accosted with LSSF, CPS, SSRM, LSLs, LSNSR, PUSC, LSRM.... At least we recognize STURP, maybe JAMA, possibly even SSI....

LASZLÓ VIZ: *A torinói halotti lepel és korának meghatározása* (The Shroud of Turin and the Estimation of the Time of its Origin), Ecclesia, Budapest 1990. 273 pp. Illustrations, some in color, gathered in center.

One must doff his hat to any book that, like this one, reaches a ninth edition in a span of six years. It is a tribute to the dedication of Author and publisher, and witness to Hungary's continuing interest in the Shroud.

The major section of the book does not depart from the previous editions, where one finds the customary background information. Science is equally balanced with the Gospel accounts, and there the Author is well-grounded, having studied theology before choosing a career in economics. After a brief Epilogue, Viz adds almost 100 pages of recent events, beginning with the C14 affair. In this section, we see quotations from German, English, Italian and French publications, no small accomplishment for a man whose urge to know more about the Shroud impelled him to study these and other languages.

What I missed here was any reference to the Paris Symposium of 1989, the first to assess the radiocarbon date in an international forum. With every expectation of a tenth edition, I am confident that the Paris and other recent congresses will be mentioned for their contributions to sindonic studies.

(Many thanks to Judit Horwath, of the Uralic and Alpaic Studies Department, Indiana University, for translating the Hungarian.)

MICHAEL MINOR is the author of an article that he named "A Lawyer Argues for Authenticity of the Shroud of Turin". Published in *The Manuscript Society News*, vol. xi #4, Fall 1990, this title was usurped by a heading that reads: "Shroud of Turin Manuscript Discovered By Texas Member". Since the *News* is offered only to Society members, the deviation of emphasis is perhaps pardonable.

An illustration of the discovery shows it to be an illuminated vellum leaf from a 1506 French Book of Hours. Only the recto is reproduced, and there we see two *Oremus* prayers, one to St. Claude and one to St. Anthony of Padua, bordered on the right by a martyr scene, Christ's Descent into Hell, Samson and the lion. A miniature inserted in the

left of the Latin text portrays St. Anthony, and along the bottom are two prophets and the Cumean Sibyl. On the border's upper right hand corner, Veronica displays the Veil with the Holy Face.

The *Veronica* was the point of departure for this article that leads from the familiar formula of what the Shroud is to a brief account of the radiocarbon dating countered by the mass of evidence from other scientific fields. STURP research figures prominently and that is understandable for Michael Minor speaks from several years' experience as General Counsel for The Shroud of Turin Research Project, Inc.

Whether the Shroud is a "forgery" or the true burial cloth of Christ might hinge on the question, How was the Image made?

At this juncture, the advocate for the defense clears his throat, so to speak, and launches into a skilfully constructed demonstration of everything that a fourteenth century "artist/forgery" would need to know and be able to accomplish in order to produce this Image. In terse, pungent sentences as chiseled as tangible facts, he lays out evidence so plain that to deny it is to disclaim reason: the medical chart, the clinical autopsy, archeological data, the witness of palynology, the telltale blood and serum....

In his closing statement, the lawyer/author affirms that the circumstantial evidence in support of authenticity would be accepted in a court of law "Beyond a reasonable doubt".

The Manuscript Society News gave this article a generous six pages, including the one with the illustration, and put the negative Shroud Face on the back cover: but found it necessary to omit the bibliography of a list of STURP publications and ten other scientific papers.

In the editor's brief introduction to Michael Minor's article, members of the international Society are informed that this issue of *The Manuscript Society News* has been accepted into the Vatican Library.

Humbler homes need not be deprived. A few copies of the *News* are available from: Mr. Michael Minor; 1614 Anthony St.; Kaufman TX 75142.