



Commentary Illustration for The Sixth Seal, Revelation 6:12. Gulbenkian Apocalypse. Reproduced by kind permission of the Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London.

AFTERTHOUGHT

Rebecca Jackson brought up a very interesting observation in her paper, "Hasadeen Hakadosh": a) The Man of the Shroud has the typical features of the full-blooded Jewish people; he would not stand out in a crowd of Jews; b) Christian iconography has always depicted Jesus with distinctly European features.

The correspondence is gravid with unknown possibilities, better left to come to term. However, it reminded me of some old notes in my Spectrum scrapbook.

In the XIIth century, a portrait of Jesus' ideal beauty was written by John of Damascus: the Lord has rosy cheeks, etc., and his hair is "the color of ripe corn". The apocryphal "Letter of Lentulus" gives Jesus blue eyes and hair "the color of a ripe hazel nut". Now and again throughout art history, the fair-haired Jesus departs from traditional Mediterranean types.

Jews, on the contrary, are often grossly caricatured. There is perhaps no example more perfervid than the Gulbenkian Apocalypse, a XIIIth century English manuscript conserved in the Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon.

A fascinating article published in 1986 by Suzanne Lewis of Stanford University, "*Tractatus Adversus Judaeos in the Gulbenkian Apocalypse*", a manuscript that propagates anti-Semitism by depicting Jews as perfidious enemies. What is interesting to us is how the author links the Veronica legend to the destruction of Jerusalem.

The illumination reproduced above portrays a bust of Christ, with head and shoulders, painted on a crimson banner, heavily fringed. Dr. Lewis suggests that the representation may be based on a description of the Veronica given to the Vatican by Gervase of Tilbury: *Est ergo Veronica pictura Domini vera secundum carnem representans effigiem a pectora superius in basilica S. Petri.*