

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

THE CATHOLIC COUNTER- REFORMATION IN THE XXth CENTURY, issues 237 and 238, March and April 1991, edited by the Abbé Georges de Nantes. English language edition published by the Centre de Renaissance Catholique des Laurentides (Inc.), 255 Chemin de la Réserve, Shawinigan, RR2 P.Q., Canada, G9N 6T6.

The two issues of this monthly publication have been reprinted in a single booklet 'The Holy Shroud "It's the Standard of our Salvation"', and the colour photographs, both of the Shroud and of related works of art, etc., are unreservedly excellent. For instance, the Lirey medallion, as reproduced on p.22, can be studied in far better detail than is possible even from first hand viewing of the tiny black original in its showcase in the Musée de Cluny, Paris. Also I know of no previous publication to show Grimaldi's early '17th century drawing of the purported 'John VII' *umbella* in its natural colour.

This makes all the more regrettable the very serious deficiencies of the text-matter. The March 1991 edition is principally devoted to the Shroud's early history, and in this Brother Bruno Bonnet-Eymard remarks that at the Bologna Symposium held in 1989 he presented a paper proving 'the presence of Christ's burial sheet in Constantinople at the beginning of the 8th, century" based on 'John VII's *umbella*' By this he means a Byzantine liturgical embroidery probably no longer extant, but sketched by 'Vatican archivist Jacopo Grimaldi in the early 17th century when Grimaldi was recording the destruction of' old St. Peter's, Rome. The drawing is of undoubted interest because it shows the body of Christ in characteristic Shroud-like pose, and according to Bonnet-Eymard, since the old St. Peter's chapel in which the *umbella* was kept was built by the Greek Pope John VII between the years 705-7, that *umbella* must date from this same time. He argues that it thereby 'proves' that the Shroud was around in the Byzantine world at least as early as the 8th century.

Bonnet-Eymard cites as his authority on the *umbella* a mid-19th century French savant E. Muntz, and quotes as the sole present-day objectors to his dating the Benedictine Joseph Croquison (who attributes the *umbella* to the 12th century), Greek-born Byzantine textile specialist Mme Theocharis (who gave a paper on her subject at Bologna), and this Editor. Bonnet-Eymard dismisses Mme Theocharis because she was 'concerned to coincide with the carbon dating', Croquison because he had not seen the original Grimaldi.

The fascinating *umbella*, with its Shroud-Ike representation of the body of Christ, from a 17th century drawing, However tempting it might be to date the original to circa 705, this cannot be justified from the iconography drawing, and myself because apparently I 'followed Croquison'.

For the record, Mme Theocharis was not influenced by the carbon dating. And until reading Bonnet-Eymard's statement, I had never even heard of Croquison. In fact, the most ironic twist is that when Bonnet-Eymard first made his presentation in Bologna, he illustrated it with Muntz's crude 19th century copy-of-a-copy drawing of the *umbella*. It was myself who on that occasion directed him to the fine original Grimaldi drawing (opposite, & now reproduced by him), as preserved in Florence. At this same time I urged him, from my own researches, and from enquiries with Byzantine scholars of repute, to disregard Muntz's outdated attribution of the *umbella* to the time of John VII. From any reasonable 'appraisal of iconography, including comparison with the mosaics from the old

John VII chapel, the *umbrella's* likeliest dates are 12th to 14th century. Indefensibly, Bonnet-Eymard has omitted to mention this exchange between us, indeed, affected to the very contrary.

Yet this is the man (of the cloth) who, in the April issue of *The Catholic Counter-Reformation* would have us believe that Professor Michael Tite and others perpetrated heinous frauds in respect of the 1988 carbon dating. Page after page of headlines tell it all: 'In Pursuit of the Forgers'; 'Game of hide-and-seek at Tucson'; 'Paul Damon's Admissions'; 'Dr. Tite a Smooth Operator'; not least, a graphic demonstration of 'The Fraud Reconstituted and Proved.' An English acolyte, David Boyce, joins this fray with 'The Intrigues of the British Museum', followed by the Abbé Georges de Nantes 'Doctor Tite's Three Substitutions'. To enumerate the errors, omissions, over-statement, fallacies and outright fantasies would be wearisome beyond belief. Suffice it to say that it is a conspiracy theory after conspiracy theory, glossily packaged with impressive-seeming graphics and undeniably excellent colour photographs, but with not the slightest serious evidence to back it up.

If the Shroud carbon dating is to be refuted (and we must never forget that 'if'), this can never be by the recklessness of the Bonnet-Eymard approach, but only by the coolest and most hard-headed of scientific and historical arguments - even if such arguments may take much time and patience to assemble. This Editor fervently supports freedom of speech for anyone, but he urges all in the Shroud field to think extremely carefully before giving space and/or a conference platform to the Bonnet-Eymard school of argument. The hurling of wild and libellous allegations against well-accredited scientists (their Britishness notwithstanding), contributes not a scintilla of credit to Shroud studies. Rather, it is the surest way Shroud supporters to be deservedly relegated to the realms of the Flat-Earthers ...

*Symposium Proceedings: History, Science, Theology and the Shroud*, St. Louis, Missouri, USA, June 22-23, 1991. ed. Aram Berard, S.J., The Man in the Shroud Committee of Amarillo, 209 South Jackson, Amarillo, Texas 79101, 357 pp inclusive of many b & w photographs and other illustrations.

Those responsible in St. Louis and Amarillo are deserving of the highest praise for the prompt publication of these proceedings, and for their excellent standard of presentation. With the exception of the Bonnet-Eymard contribution (of which now enough said), and of the occasional other of a questionable nature, in general the published papers provide most useful and interesting additions to Shroud studies.

Some of the papers are broadly familiar from earlier Symposia, as in the case of Dr. Daniel Scavone's 'The History of the Shroud to the 14th Century'; also Dr. John Jackson's 'An Unconventional Hypothesis to Explain all Image Characteristics found on the Shroud Image'. This latter is a development of Dr. Jackson's fascinating and compelling hypothesis that the Shroud image derives from the cloth collapsing into a radiating body. It concludes with the most pertinent remark that the Shroud, rather than being explained away by science, may represent a case for modern science rethinking certain of its concepts.

Other contributions gratifyingly can be studied in print for the first time, as in the case of Isabel Piczek's 'Is the Turin Shroud Painting?' , here (for copyright reasons outside Isabel

Piczek's control), Rex Morgan's reconstruction of the original appearance of the Templecombe panel printed as yet only in summary, but giving at least the first glimpse of her painstaking and pioneering reconstructions of the Man of the Shroud's burial attitude, also Rex Morgan's reconstruction (above) illustrating his hypothesis that the Templecombe panel-painting once formed the lid of a box used to house the Shroud.

Another fascinating paper by Isabel Piczek within the same Proceedings is 'Physics and Theology? The true function of the Shroud Deciphered', setting forward an intriguing hypothesis for the Shroud as a product of time reversal. There are also thoughtful contributions by Fr. Kim Dreisbach, Dr. David Mayschak, Frank Tribbe, Kenneth Stevenson and numismatist Mario Moroni.

*Collegamento Pro Sindone*. Issues Nov-Dec 1991; Jan-Feb 1992; March-Apr 1992. Publication of the Rome Shroud group Collegamento Pro Sindone, Via Dei Brusati, 84 00163 Roma, Italy. Review of this dedicated and astonishingly frequently published journal has not previously been forthcoming from this Newsletter, mainly because of this Editor's limited Italian.

But these three latest issues are of particular interest for their inclusion of excellent articles by Don Luigi Fossati on a well-documented, but hitherto little published period of the Shroud's history, the expositions of the 17th and 18th centuries, Don Fossati's researches, illustrated with numerous reproductions of old engravings, fill in what had previously been a gap in much of the English language chronicling of the Shroud's known history.