

SHROUD NEWS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN
By REX MORGAN - Author of PERPETUAL MIRACLE

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At Santa Barbara, California, NASA scientist Dr JOHN JACKSON demonstrates the use of a VP8 Image Analyzer to produce a three-dimensional representation of the face image on the Holy Shroud.

Photo Credit: JOHN LEWIS, Brooks Institute of Photography, California.

EDITORIAL

Since the last issue of SHROUD NEWS my correspondence reads like a Who's Who of those involved in the Holy Shroud around the world.

From New York, the President of the Holy Shroud Guild writes that a possible series of important television programmes is being planned in the United States and that Walter McCrone has conducted a workshop on how the Shroud was created by an artist and that Joe Nickell, another anti-Shrouder is to publish a book shortly.

Also from the USA Fr Peter Rinaldi has sent a copy of his paper ON DISPROVING THE SHROUD OF TURIN in which he answers some of the recent criticisms of the scientists. I expect to have an article covering this paper and some allied information in the next issue of SHROUD NEWS.

Correspondence has opened with the Revd Albert Dreisbach, President of the Atlanta Center for Continuing Study of The Shroud of Turin which is an organisation attempting to set up a comprehensive library of all references to the Shroud. He is also involved in the bringing of the Brooks photographic exhibition to Atlanta and this due to open there in October.

We have heard from Dorothy Crispino whose Indiana Center for Shroud Studies produces the excellent SHROUD SPECTRUM INTERNATIONAL and Don Coero Borga of Turin has written again from the International Centre for Sindonology in Turin, Italy.

Dr Jean Volckringer has written from Paris and sent a copy of his earlier work on the transference of plant images which has been noted by many Shroud authors.

William Yarbrough, the numismatic consultant to Dr Eric Jumper has sent me much useful information and Joy Pagano of the British Society for the Turin Shroud has sent a copy of her fascinating work THE SHROUD THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE which I shall review in due course.

Much is happening on the discussion front all over the world as the results of 1978 are being studied from all sides. SHROUD NEWS will continue to bring as much of this information as possible to its readers.

REX MORGAN

MORE ABOUT THE FILAS COIN THEORY

The debate about the coins over the eyes in the Shroud image continues in the United States. SHROUD NEWS has recently received several items from William Yarbrough who, as well as being Secretary/Treasurer to the Atlanta Center for the Continuing Study of the Shroud of Turin, has been numismatic consultant to Dr Eric Jumper since 1978.

Father Francis Filas of Chicago has produced much interesting and impressive evidence and argument for the existence and nature of the coins apparently placed over the eyes of the man in the Shroud and most of his writings concerning his theories as to their dating and type have been published in SHROUD NEWS. (See SHROUD NEWS issues No. 3, 4, 8, 13 and 14).

We have, in addition, found a great interest in our reproduction of Filas's updated monograph THE DATING OF THE TURIN SHROUD FROM COINS OF PONTIUS PILATE (Chicago 1982) (Runciman Press Reprint 1982).

Filas has received a good deal of sceptical opposition to his theory, particularly when his first publication occurred. Since that time he has refined several of his original propositions with the advantage of further research by himself and others and the discovery of more examples of actual coins to support his contentions.

Yarbrough has provided us with several articles which, in the main, dispute the conclusiveness of Filas's work, mainly on the grounds that there are other coins of other periods which could possibly fit the image marks and could thus be identified as the coins which made the marks.

Biblical numismatic expert and editor of THE AUGUR, Journal of the Biblical Numismatic Society, Beverley Hills, California, Mel Wacks, has contributed several pieces to the Filas discussion. In two of these, published in The Augur in 1980 and 1982, he maintained that the letters C A on the Filas superimposition are in the wrong position in relation to the lituus or astrologer's staff on the Pilate coin.

Wacks argues further that having studied highly magnified photographs of Filas's coin, "the actual inscription is quite normal for the coin and bears no similarity to Filas's findings. The visible letters are simply the bottom two-thirds of the inscription 'IBEP' a portion of the Emperor's name - 'TIBEPUOY' (Tiberius). Both the location

More About the Filas Coin Theory (contd)

of the letters and their shape make this conclusion certain."

This seems to boil down to a dispute over what the letters on the ancient coin used for comparison with the marks on the Shroud image really are. (I have to interpolate that my observations as a mere amateur looking at the photographs suggest that Filas's opinion is more credible than that of Wacks -- RM)

There is further academic argument about dating and misspelling. Until September 1981 Filas agreed with the critics that the apparent misspelling of C for K on the coin in his possession and the other known examples meant that a real example of such a misspelling would have to be found in order to prove that the possibility in minting had actually occurred. At that time it was simply assumed, quite reasonably, that misspelling often did occur in the relatively primitive minting conditions of Roman coin production two thousand years ago. In that September, however, Filas claimed that a greatly enlarged black and white photograph of his coin prepared for a television programme visual in fact showed that the coin bore not a K but a C and that hitherto this had not been properly discernible in colour photographs or in physical examination of the original worn coin supplied to him by Yarbrough. This appeared to provide concrete proof of such misspelling. (It also supported the widely held view that black and white photography often yields far better resolution of detail than colour.)

Then in November, after Filas had searched many known collections of coins of the period he discovered another example in the Rare Coin Department of Marshall Field. This led Wacks to concede that the second coin did indeed have the misspelling but he still claimed that the positioning of the letters did not agree with the Filas enlargements of the Shroud image marks. It seems to be a matter of academic argument whether the positioning is right or wrong and the Filas camp has been strongly supported by the work of Whanger (see elsewhere this issue) in overlaying images to prove it.

Whether the Pontius Pilate coin was minted before or after the crucifixion of Christ is, of course, vital to the argument and the date of the crucifixion is itself a matter of some conjecture depending upon which authority you accept as the most probable.

More About the Filas Coin Theory (contd)

Obviously, if the images were proved to coincide with a coin minted later than the accepted date of crucifixion it could hardly be claimed that such coins were placed over the eyes of the dead Jesus ' Christ.

In 1980 Wacks argued as follows:

"It is generally agreed that Jesus died in 30 A.D. This date is typically computed in the Encyclopaedia Judaica: 'According to Luke's date, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist either in 27/28 or 28/29 C.E., when he was about the age of 30. On the evidence in the first three Gospels, the period between his baptism and crucifixion comprised no more than one year, although according to John it ran to two or even three years. It seems that on the point of duration of Jesus's public ministry the Synoptic Gospels are to be trusted. Most probably, then, Jesus was baptized in 28/29 and died in the year 30 C.E.'

"We can date the events surrounding the crucifixion to the day, since the 'last supper' was actually the ritual Jewish Passover Seder, and the exact date of Passover in 30 A.D. can be computed. According to the Bible Study Helps in the Holy Bible, World Publishing Company, the Last Supper (Passover Seder) took place on Friday April 7, and the crucifixion occurred later that same day. In those times the day was defined from sunset to sunset.

"The coins of Pontius Pilate were dated according to the regnal year of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, as was the custom. Tiberius, adopted son of Augustus Caesar, assumed the throne on the death of Augustus in August, 14 A.D. Thus the years of Tiberius would have to be reckoned from August, rather than the normal beginning of the Julian calendar in January. So the first year of Tiberius ran from August 14 A.D. through July 15 A.D.; the second year from August 15 A.D. through July 16 A.D.; and so on. The time of the crucifixion would have fallen within the latter half of the 16th year of Tiberius's rule.

"The first coin issued by Pilate is dated 'LIS' representing the 16th regnal year. This small bronze 'mite' features three ears of barley and a 'simpulum' (ceremonial ladle). The inscription surrounding the simpulum is identical to the legend around the augur's wand (lituus) on the coins issued in the following two years. The reverse inscription honors the Emperor's mother, Julia, and this issue likely came to an abrupt end with her death in the year 29 A.D. The first year of Pilate's

More About the Filas Coin Theory (contd)

coins with the augur's wand is dated 'LIZ' (year 17) and must have appeared some time after the start of Tiberius's 17th regnal year in August 30 A.D., well after the crucifixion in April."

The date of April 7, 30 A.D. for the crucifixion is also accepted by the Jerusalem Bible (1966) and most other references. However, other dates are also supported ranging from 28 A.D. (Outline Studies in Biblical Facts and History by DePuy and Davis 1906); 31 A.D. (Seventh Day Adventists, 1844 to present); April 3, 33 A.D. (Archbishop Usher, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others); to 36 A.D. (The Passover Plot by Schonfield, 1965). Thus the problem of the date on the Pontius Pilate lituus coins should be considered but is not necessarily insurmountable, Wacks concludes.

When Wacks later considered the computer generated three dimensional images of the Shroud eye enlargements he agreed that the pattern formed the letters C A. He argues that the following I could just as easily be a portion of another letter such as P and the preceding letter U could indeed be I. The sequence ICAP is part of the word KAICAP meaning Caesar and is found on the coins of several procurators, one example being of the period Felix 52 to 60 A.D.

Additionally the coins of Coponius (6 to 9 A.D.) and Ambibulus (9 to 12 AD) have a curved ear of barley "that is somewhat similar to the shape of the lituus". Wacks claims that these coins fit the image marks just as well as Filas's coin and agrees that if the image were made by such coins this would not preclude their use around the year 30 as they would still have been in circulation. Only if it was a Felix coin could it not have been used around the time of the crucifixion.

Although our reading of the Wacks objections indicate a closing position between Wacks and Filas as the arguments proceed, Wacks still said in THE AUGUR No 35 (1982) "It is impossible to determine precisely the Judaeian coin that might have caused the image on the Shroud since no one coin design - inscription, motif, and their relative positions - exactly matches the Shroud coin image. It is this third vital factor positioning - that Filas neglected to take into account when he computed the mathematical probability of the coin image being the lituus coin of Pontius Pilate. If it is taken into account the probability becomes infinitesimal. To prove his case, Filas must prove

More about the Filas Coin Theory (contd)

the existence of a lituus coin of Pontius Pilate with an error in spelling and an entirely new positioning of the inscription."

Yarbrough himself seems to agree with Wacks and in an article in World Coin News (March 1982) he states that yet another coin alternative is one of the time of Valerius Gratus in 17 A.D. He also states that a number of good numismatists disagree with Filas's opinion.

It seems that these other numismatists would need to produce a paper as substantial and fully researched as Filas's to offer a convincing contrary opinion. It would be equally interesting to know the views of Yarbrough and Wacks on the Whanger work.

SHROUD NEWS is most grateful to William Yarbrough for making the material on which the above is based, available to us.

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AND NOW X - RAYS

A recent story reported in the Sydney Daily Telegraph reported that an American scientist has claimed that natural X-rays reacting with salt and dirt on the skin of the man in the Shroud caused the image to appear.

SHROUD NEWS has yet to receive the press release or wire story of this claim but we quote from the Telegraph:

"Dr Giles F. Carter, an archaeological chemist from East Michigan University, has made the claim after a lengthy study of the shroud. 'The images are not fake,' Dr Carter said, 'All scientists who investigated the shroud in 1978 believe the images were not painted, dyed, stained, rubbed or otherwise applied by man.'

Although some researchers say light may have caused the images, Carter believes X-rays are a more likely source because bones and teeth are visible. However the bone images were not formed directly by X-rays travelling through bones because the X-rays would have been too energetic, passing right through the fabric without a trace. A reaction caused chemicals in the dirt and salt to emit soft X-rays which could have made the images of the body on the shroud."

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DR ALAN WHANGER OF DUKE UNIVERSITY

We mentioned in an earlier edition of SHROUD NEWS the claims made by Dr Alan Whanger concerning the dating of the Shroud. We now have available a press release from the Duke University News Service dated April 8, 1982 and written by Beverley Welter.

SHROUD OF TURIN SAID DATED TO TIME NEAR CHRIST'S DEATH

A Duke University Professor, Dr Alan D. Whanger, said today he has evidence which he believes dates the controversial Shroud of Turin, reputed to be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ, close to the time of Christ's crucifixion in the first century.

Whanger said his findings present "striking evidence" that the mysterious image on the shroud of a crucified man was made between 29 A.D. and 70 A.D. Christ's death has been placed by various experts from 28 to 36 A.D.

The Shroud, known to have been in existence for more than 600 years, has been housed in the cathedral of Turin, Italy since 1578. Records place it in France two centuries before, but its earlier history is less certain.

Whanger, a Duke University geriatric psychiatrist who studies the shroud as a hobby, said that by using a photographic technique he developed, he has examined in new detail the eyes of the facial image on the shroud. The facial image has unusually large eyes. While the shroud markings have sometimes been assumed to be the irises or corneas of open eyes, some researchers say the circular impressions may be from coins placed over the eyes, a custom of Christ's time.

Whanger said his evidence confirms the latter belief. He said his work also indicates the coin over the right eye was a Pontius Pilate lepton, a coin struck in 29 A.D. Last January 27, Whanger released evidence which he said dates the shroud back another 800 years to the 6th century in the Byzantine Empire.

Using a polarized light system which he developed in December 1981, Whanger compared the shroud image to images found on icons and a coin dating back to the 6th and 7th centuries, and was able to count up to 60 points of congruence. Fourteen points of congruence are sufficient to legally declare fingerprints identical, Whanger said.

Alan Whanger claim (contd)

With the aid of a computer-enhancement process, Whanger and his wife, Mary, went on to count 74 points of congruence between the lepton and the image over the right eye, he said. The computer enhancement process helps to eliminate much of the confusing background of the threads of the cloth and sharpen the image on it.

The shroud itself is a piece of linen cloth fourteen feet, three inches long and 43 inches wide, which bears the imprint of a man. A scientific commission which has been studying the shroud for several years has concluded that the body image was not painted or put on by any other known artificial means. The commission held that it is the image of a five-foot, ten-inch man who had been crucified and that bloodstains on the shroud are genuine.

The Pilate lepton which Whanger used in his studies is owned by Father Francis L. Francis of Loyola University, Chicago. It is an almost perfect match with markings on the shroud image, Whanger said. His findings, which are totally independent from the previous work of Father Filas except that they use the same coin do, however, confirm Filas's work, Whanger said.

Whanger said he had been able to carry the findings a step further. Using his polarizing technique, he has been able for the first time to date Filas's coin to 29. A.D. from photographs of its eroded back side. Whanger said he found two features of the right eye coin which are especially convincing. These are the Greek lettering for Tiberius Caesar around the margin and the astrologer's augur or lituus, a curved staff like a shepherd's crook. Only Pontius Pilate used the lituus on coins.

Included in the nearly identical points are images of the Greek letters I, O, U, C, A, I and the second previously unrecognised letter A at the one o'clock position, Whanger said. Many of the markings on the coin have been eroded but about one half of the U is congruent, all of the letter C, two-thirds of the letter A, one half of the letter I and about one-third of the second letter A. The only reasonable conclusion, Whanger said, is that the coin used to cover the right eye and Filas's coin were struck from the same die.

Alan Whanger claim (contd)

Controversy has arisen because of the letters UCAI rather than the UKAI found on other similar coins of that time. But Whanger says it now appears that this is a simple misspelling at a time when coins were often crudely made. At least one other Pontius Pilate lepton coin certified by numismatists clearly carries this same misspelling. Filas owns this coin also and supplied photographs for study.

Using the same technique in studying markings over the left eye, Whanger said he found they are compatible with the design of another Pilate lepton minted in 29 A.D. in Palestine and often called the Julia lepton. The left eye markings are not as clear as those over the right eye, Whanger said.

He said his research shows details that convince him that the coin over the right eye can be "identified with virtual certainty as a lepton of Pontius Pilate, issued in the 16th year of the reign of Tiberius, which would have been 29 A.D." Tiberius was emperor of the Roman Empire and Pilate was the ruler of Palestine under him.

"These findings, I believe, are striking evidence that the imprint was made on the shroud between 29 A.D. and 70 A.D." Whanger said. He noted that it was in 70 A.D. that the Romans tried to destroy Jewish culture and after that time Jews likely would not have used Roman coins when burying their dead.

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By special arrangement Runciman Press has available copies of

THE DATING OF THE SHROUD OF TURIN FROM COINS OF PONTIUS PILATE

A 10,000 word monograph by Father Francis L. Filas of Loyola University, Chicago. \$6 per copy post free from The Runciman Press, Box 86, P.O., MANLY, 2095, Australia



The famous mosaic of Christ in the narthex of Santa Sophia in Constantinople. There are numerous ancient portrayals of Christ which suggest influence on the artist by the special features of the image on the Holy Shroud.

Picture Credit: International Centre for
Sindonology, Turin, Italy.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Please feel free to write to SHROUD NEWS with any comment about the newsletter itself or about the subject of the Holy Shroud of Turin. The newsletter goes to interested people all over Australia and to several other countries of the world.

FUTURE ISSUES

We have in hand much scientific and other material to provide copy for future issues. We receive the latest information from many international sources and author REX MORGAN draws on his frequent overseas visits for personal contact with people and institutions devoted to the study of the Holy Shroud.

LECTURES

Rex Morgan is happy to lecture (free of charge) to any group interested in the Holy Shroud. Contact Sydney 981 4633.

PUBLICATION

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