

Recent Publications

'Those are the Flowers of Jerusalem!' (Avinoam Danin)

Avinoam Danin, Alan D. Whanger, Uri Baruch, Mary Whanger *Flora of the Shroud of Turin*, Missouri Botanical Garden Press, \$14.95, 52 pp.softcover booklet, including 22 of black and white photographs, plus several charts and tables.

Whatever the difficulties pertaining to the Whanger 'image' claims, as discussed earlier in this Newsletter, this attractively produced booklet is an absolute must for all those with a serious interest in the Shroud. Its publication swiftly followed the paper on this topic that Professor Danin gave at the 16th International Botanical Congress held in St.Louis, Missouri at the beginning of August, attracting world-wide press coverage.

Quite evident is that Professor Danin 'sees' Israeli plants on the Shroud, in much the same manner as co-author Dr. Alan Whanger, and a relatively high proportion of the discussion concerns such perceived images. Professor Danin signals several in particular as especially significant. First, *Chrysanthemum coronarium* which grows in Israel, though not exclusively so, and is, described as 'one of the clearest plant images we perceive'. Second, *Cistus creticus*, found in Israel's Mediterranean regions, which has the evidential support of thirteen Cistaceae-type pollens identified on one of the Frei tapes, with a further ten found on other tapes. Third, *Gundelia tournefortii*, a plant exclusive to the Near East as far as Iran, and seen on the man of the Shroud's shoulder. Fourth *Zygophyllum dumosum*, exclusive to the Judean and Sinai desert regions, which Professor Danin sees on the man of the Shroud's upper chest, and which Dr.Max Frei found represented in the Shroud pollens although Danin and Baruch have yet to confirm this. And fifth *Pistacia lentiscus*, geographically less specific, but clearly seen by Danin above and to the right of the man of the Shroud's head (also again found by Dr. Frei to have been represented among the Shroud's pollens).

Enumerated earlier in this Newsletter are my reasons for not being able to 'see' these plant images as *Flora of the Shroud of Turin's* authors do, so there is no point in repeating this here. But altogether more important is the considerable incidental new data that the booklet contains concerning the Max Frei plant pollens. As the authors point out, by no means all Max Frei's identifications can be confirmed to species level, but mostly they can be to the general type, and overall his hypothesis can be considered richly supported. For instance, in the case of the combining of *Zygophyllum dumosum*, *Gundelia*, *Cistus creticus* and one other on the Shroud the authors affirm 'This assemblage ... occurs in only one rather small spot on earth, this being the Judean mountains and the Judean desert of Israel, in the vicinity of Jerusalem.' If that statement is not confirmation of the Shroud genuinely having been in Israel sometime in its history, and thereby the hugest support to the case for its authenticity, then I really will eat my hat.

A wealth of charts reveal much similar new detail on the Shroud's pollens. Useful maps show respective plants' geographical distribution. Shroud photographs are marked with where Dr.Max Frei took his sticky tape samples, also where Danin and the Whangers see particular plant images. For these and much else *Flora of the Shroud of Turin*, despite its deceptively low page count, must be accounted one of the most factually useful sources of new data on the Shroud for many a long while. Much remains to be properly evaluated of the data it contains, and a better quality of photographic reproduction would have been desirable for the photos on its inner pages. But no serious Shroud researcher should be without it on his or her bookshelf.

To order *Flora of the Shroud of Turin* contact Missouri Botanical Garden Press Orders (attn. Brian Gardner), 4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110, USA, telephone and fax: +1 314 577 9534; e-mail: mbgpress@mobot.org. Within the USA the mailing cost is \$4 for the first book, and \$1 for each additional one. Payment can be made via the usual credit cards, quoting the card's expiry date.

Giulio Fanti & Emanuela Marinelli, *Cento Prove sulla Sindone: Un giudizio probabilistico sull'autenticá*, Padova, Edizioni Messaggero Padova, 1999, softback, 190 pages with black & white photos included in text

Professoressa Emanuela Marinelli of Rome's Collegamento Pro Sindone is also one of the most popular, well-known and prolific of Shroud authors, and in this book has collaborated with mechanical engineer Professor Giulio Fanti to put forward '100 Proofs' in favour of the Shroud's authenticity. Following an 84 page introduction setting out the known historical and scientific background, each 'proof' is preceded by a considered statement worded 'The Shroud of Turin is authentic because...' and is followed by a table statistically evaluating the statement's likely truth or falsehood. For this reviewer, 'proof' is a statement that I shy from ever using in connection with the Shroud, and in the case of many of those that appear in the Marinelli-Fanti list, I could not accord them the statistical value that they do. But the approach is an interesting one. The book has been attractively presented, and is certainly worthy of being adapted to a more sceptical, Anglo-Saxon readership.

Marie-Claire van Oosterwyck-Gastuche, *Le radiocarbone face au Linceul de Turin. Journal d'une recherche*, Paris, François-Xavier de Guibert, 1999, softback, 350 pages, with black & white photos and diagrams throughout

Although resident in Aubignan, France, author Marie-Claire van Oosterwyck is Belgian, a doctor of physics and chemistry from the University of Leuven/Louvain. At the start of her book she quotes a 1990 statement by Professor Harry Gove, inventor of the AMS method of radiocarbon dating, confidently describing the 'success' of radiocarbon dating in determining the Turin Shroud's mediaeval origin. Commenting on this as typifying the 'reputation of infallibility' enjoyed by radiocarbon dating, she goes on to demonstrate, in most impressive detail, the huge fallacy behind this reputation. Some sympathy must be felt for Professor Donahue and others at the University of Arizona radiocarbon facility, who have patiently answered, albeit by denial, charges by Marie-Claire that the radiocarbon dating results obtained by the three laboratories were 'too heterogeneous' to have any statistical validity. Marie-Claire has had her battles even with those theoretically on her side, such as France's counterpart to the BSTS, the CIELT, or Centre International d'Études sur le Linceul de Turin. As she emphasises in a forceful conclusion, a belief system has grown up around radiocarbon dating tarred with all the ideology that is so often derided among those professing a religious faith. 'The Shroud of Turin has been conceived as having a message for people our time, yet it is materialistic science that has been responsible for their blindness.'

Eugenia Nitowski, *Through the Microscope: A Study of the Shroud of Turin in Photomicrographs*. Volume I, 38 pp, with 30 pp in Full Colour, and 106 photomicrographs in colour. Spiral Bound. \$45.00 inclusive of postage and handling

Dr. Eugenia Nitowski, former Carmelite nun Sister Damian of the Cross, who did much archaeological research on Israel's rolling stone tombs, and during the 1980s worked with Rex Morgan and others on a project replicating how the Shroud's image may have been formed in the tomb, is currently curator of the Ariel Museum, Salt Lake City. No review copy of this book has yet been seen, but she writes:

'Between 1983 and June 1986, I spent one thousand hours studying and photographing the 33 mylar tape samples taken from the Shroud by the STURP team in 1978. The result of that work was a catalogue of 715 photomicrographs. Due to failing eyesight and aware that even the best film does not last forever, I am releasing both my best and most diagnostic photomicrographs with the hope that it will inspire further research and perhaps train the next generation of sindonologists. If this volume is well received and my vision holds out, more volumes will be released. May this work provide the Shroud community with fresh insight and give glory to God!

Cheques should be made payable to Ariel Museum, 1427 Alder Road, Salt Lake City, Utah 84123, USA. Those outside the USA may expect to pay more for mailing costs, and are advised to check these with Dr. Nitowski.