

SINDONOLOGY: ITS IMPERATIVES FOR THE FUTURE

**The Atlanta International Center
for the
Continuing Study of the Shroud of Turin, Inc.**

PRESERVATION AND PERPETUATION

In preparing for this 2001 Dallas Conference, I realized that I didn't so much have to "re-invent the wheel" as to reiterate the points I have been stressing over the years since the last conference in on this site in 1999. The memo which I had dug out of my files and in June of 1988 still spoke to our ecumenical need and imperative for Preservation, Perpetuation and Proclamation of our collective resources. In re-reading it, I was amazed how many of its conclusions and recommendations might still be applicable to the present. With minor revision and editing, I offer for your consideration what I believe should be the direction and emphases which should be pursued by all Shroud groups throughout the world; but specifically for whose primary concern with this sacred linen revolves around its religious significance and purpose.

With the emergence over five years ago of Barrie Schwartz's premier web site (www.shroud.com), for the first time in history the international community of sindonophiles has had the ability access to - directly from their own homes - a wealth of quality and up-to-date

Shroud graphics and articles never before available. Since the birth of this site, it has since been joined by three other major groups from the United States (*i.e.* Council for the Study of Shroud of Turin (CSTS), the Holy Shroud Guild, Shroud of Turin Education Project (STEP) and the Turin Shroud Center of Colorado). To date the American sites offer information only in English, a limitation which hopefully will be rectified in the coming years to enable them to better serve the larger international community. Many of the latter's sites already provide such multilingual accessibility including those from France, Italy, Mexico, Spain & Russia (*i.e.* C.I.E.L.T., Collegemento Pro Sindone, the Centro Español de Sindonología, the Centro Internationale Di Sindonologia, the Centro Mexicano de Sindonología, Linceul De Turin, Montre-Nous Ton Visage, Museum of the Shroud and the Shroud of Turin Russian Language. For those fortunate enough to be on his mailing list, Joe Marino's frequent e-mails also provide the latest in news on the Shroud, recently published books, exhibits, upcoming symposia, *etc.*

Lest we become too enamoured with our own technological success, let us also be quick to acknowledge that some of the very basic texts which should be read by all of the next generation of Shroud researchers (*e.g.* Pierre Barbet's *A Doctor at Calvary*, Werner Bulst's *The Shroud of Turin*, José-Luis Carreño's *Las Huellas de la Resurreccion* - Ed. Don Bosco, Pamplona 1978, Luigi Fossati's - *La Santa Sindone/Nuova luce su antichi documenti* - Borla Ed., Torino 1961, John Heller's *Report on the Shroud of Turin*, Giuseppe Maria Pugno's - *La Santa Sindone che si venera a Torino* - SEI, Torino 1961, Pietro Savio's - *Ricerche storiche sulla Santa Sindone* - SEI, Torino 1957, Manuel Sole's- *La Sabana Santa de Turin* - Ed. Mensajero, Bilbao 1986 (Spanish), Paul Vignon's *The Shroud of Christ*, John Walsh's *The Shroud* and Ian Wilson's *The Shroud of Turin, The Mysterious Shroud, and Holy Faces, Secret Places*) are now out of print and not readily available at the local library. Sometimes these basic works are

difficult to obtain even via inter-library loan. Alas, many potential new “Shroudies” are stymied in their research projects when the very texts they need are unavailable.

SHROUD LIBRARIES, RESEARCH PAPERS, ETC.

The demise of America’s greatest contributors’ to the promulgation of the Shroud’ message like Frs. Wuenschel, Weyland, Rinaldi, Otterbein, and Filas warns us of the necessity not only to insure adequate plans for the *preservation* of their collections, but also of providing *access* to these collections for future generations of Shroud scholars. Had it not been for prompt action at the time of Fr. Filas’ untimely death, his collection might well have been tragically lost or neglected by his fellow faculty members at Loyola, many of whom like his superior Fr. Robert Wilde not only failed to share his enthusiasm; but, in, the latter's case, firmly believed the Shroud to be a fake. The whereabouts of much of Fr. Peter Weyland's work remains a cause for concern and needs to be located and catalogued.

There still remain scientific papers in the hands of individual **STURP** members which have been neither peer-reviewed nor published – papers possibly containing myriad clues for continuing research. These documents also need to be collected and catalogued in a central repository.

And while we struggle with the vast amount of material already known to exist, what definite plans have been made by each of the groups assembled here in Dallas to insure the preservation and effective utilization of their own collections? What is to become of the enormous collection of the **Colorado Shroud Center** when the Jacksons are no longer able to carry on their work? The same can be asked of the Whangers with regard to the **Council for the Study of the Shroud of Turin**. Add to these the unpublished research of individuals like Paul Maloney, Dan Scavone,

Gus Accetta, Warren Grunfest, the Whangers, myself and a host of others whose computer and paper files need to be passed on to future researchers. With the exception of **Turin's Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia**, what other international groups have made plans to insure that their organization, mission and resource files are passed on to the next generation?

For example in the **AICCSST** archives alone can be found the original 1961 manuscript of B.G. Sandhurst's (*i.e.* a pseudonym used by the father of Fr. Maurus Green) "The Silent Witness" complete with B&W photographs. We also have a xerox copy of the unpublished 1936 manuscript by Theodora Bates Cogswell in which this amazing laywoman already had concluded that the Image of Edessa/"Shroud"(*i.e.* Mandylion) of Constantinople/ Shroud of Turin were one and the same. We have xeroxes of Gabriel Quidor's original blueprints filed with the French patent office from which in 1910 he produced the first *bas* relief made directly from the densities on the Holy Cloth first photographed by Secondo Pia - 64 years before that process was perfected by his fellow countryman Paul Gastineau and 67 years before the now-famous 3-D sculpture created by Jackson and Jumper which in turn has been surpassed by Mattei's superb creation.

Sometime in the very near future we need to explore the expensive and time consuming process of digitizing these basic texts and creating a central source like the Vatican Library at St. Louis University where scholars - from high school students to university professors - can gain access to them. For the professionals, a committee should be selected to chose just which volumes - and in what priority - of the **Wuenschel Collection** should be included in such a repository. Even in this magnificent repository currently housed at Esopus, not all texts are of real or equal value to the serious researcher. Thanks be to God, this entire collection already has been microfiched; but there lies ahead the laborious and expensive task of converting that format

into a digitized one to insure its computer accessibility. Such digitization will also enable a veritable “index” search capability for some of the older works which fail to have indexes. Legal advice will be required as to which volumes may or may not be so reproduced without violating copyright laws; and, in the case of more modern works, permission and arrangements must be negotiated with contemporary publishers.

Simultaneously, the international community of sindonologists must become a part of this project. God alone knows what treasures waiting to be mined already exist in texts published in French, Italian, German and Spanish to say nothing of more ancient works in Greek, Latin, Syriac and possibly even Coptic - some hidden away in monasteries and unknown even to those who possess them. What might we learn if the sands of Egypt one day yield a copy of the lost *Gospel of the Hebrews*? Meanwhile we eagerly await publication of Mark Guscini's research on the manuscripts and icons conducted in June of 2000 at Mt. Athos. For the non-linguist, just imagine what a priceless gift it would be to have an English translation of Ernst von Dobschütz' *Christusbilder* or of Gertrud Schiller's *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst, Vol. 3*

Finally, add to the above list the need to assemble an Audio-Visual Library where photographs, 35mm slides, movies, videos, DVD's, audio tapes, *etc.* could be stored and accessed by future researchers. Have any of you ever tried to come up with a full-length reproduction of the *epitaphios* of Uroš Milutin depicting the Man of the Shroud in a standing or vertical posture with his arms crossed à la the Man of Sorrows/Christ of Pity? Not only is this cloth highly significant for both iconographic and liturgical scholars, but the danger to which it has been exposed in the recent bombings of Belgrade points to the larger need to insure photographic preservation of it and all other such existing visual representations of the Shroud.

How grateful all of us are to Lennox Manton for his superb photographs of the Cappadocian frescoes which have now begun to deteriorate considerably.

OTHER VALUABLE ITEMS

Many items related to the Shroud are "one of a kind" (*e.g.* the STURP table on which the actual 1978 testing was performed, the pre-fire cloth replica shroud crafted by England's John Weston for "The Silent Witness", the pre- and post-mortem forensic sculptures of the Head of the Man of the Shroud effected by Thomas Goyne and most recently the magnificent full length sculpture created in 2000 by Luigi Mattei. Mercifully Aldo Guerreschi, professional photographer and Shroud image expert from Turin has now made available a full-size color print on cloth of the Holy Shroud which I recently saw as part of a travelling exhibit at Vetralla this past May. The Italian-made replica is said to be faithful to the original in almost every detail. Here in the United States at the **AICCSST** we also have a piece of linen in the correct dimensions of the Holy Shroud – a replica meticulously crafted by the late Kate Edgerton. It awaits the day when a process is devised which can most accurately duplicate the Image(s) on the Shroud – possibly reflecting exactly how that sacred linen appeared on the first Easter morning with neither burn nor water marks.

Certain other items are too delicate and/or too valuable to be chanced to just any exhibit (*e.g.* Richard Orareo's Boston Collection, *bas* reliefs of the Holy Face by Robazzo, Ferri, Gastineau and Bossani, the one-of-a-kind Mexican "Face of Threads" crafted from metallic wires, a wood carving of the Holy Face by Charles Eze of Nigeria, the full-size replica *mandylion* by Mary Whanger and one of six extant fiberglass "sculptures" of the Man of the Shroud constructed by Drs. Jackson and Jumper from the readings made by the VP-8 Image Analyzer).

However, with proper insurance and security individual owners and groups might be persuaded to permit these “treasures” to become part of an international travelling exhibit which would be especially appropriate for Lent in some of the world’s major cities.

THE NEED FOR PERMANENT REPOSITORIES

Like the Boston Collection, all of these items can be photographed digitally and even preserved and distributed on CD-ROMs, videotapes or DVD’s. However, the need still remains for permanent display sites - be they museums, art galleries, central Departments of Sindonology on university campuses or whatever.

Truly a university - with a school of theology, one of medicine, liberal arts, and a strong school and/or alliance with a nearby institution prestigious in the hard sciences -would be the ideal location for such a repository. We are already aware what today's modern technology is capable of providing in terms of storage both data and images which in turn can be retrieved by scholars around the world who have access to these universities’ network terminals. The ideal scenario would be to convince certain well-chosen institutions to offer the first multi-disciplinary courses of sindonology in its own country. Departmental professors already salaried on the faculty could be utilized to teach as was done as long ago as 1952 at Wesleyan University in Connecticut for the mandatory course in freshman Humanities. Some of these scholars might even be inspired to conduct further research in their own fields of expertise on this “the world’s most-studied artifact.” We have already witnessed such inter-departmental cooperation at the University of Bologna in the creation of the Mattei sculpture and the hope is that it might inspire even the most skeptical and empirical of *academe* to participate in such joint ventures. In the

process, these scholars too just might discover that the Shroud's initial *appeal to their minds* consequently just might result in an eventual *conversion of their hearts*.

Finally, even despite the obvious limitations, there is a need to insure some basic standards required of those who offer themselves as Shroud lecturers. I continue to be concerned about some of the unsubstantiated claims which proclaimed as “facts” though they never have been submitted to valid peer review. All of us must come to realize that expertise in one field in no wise guarantees accuracy when speculating in other fields equally complex and demanding for which one has not adequately been trained. Though everyone has a right to his or her own opinion, not all “opinions” are equally valid and often confuse and mislead those whom we are endeavouring to teach about the Shroud. We might even consider “certification” of public speakers on sindonology and, like other “professions”, provide up-date training seminars during the summer months where our various experts could come and update other presenters on the latest peer reviewed findings in their respective fields. These seminars could be the occasion when the latest in visual aids could be made available to the attendees to enhance their future lectures.