

Shroud undergoes examination and scanning in November 2000

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The original English version of this article is on the Internet website of Barrie Schwartz at the page <http://www.shroud.com/latebrak.htm> with the date of June 27, 2001.

The following article was the first public indication that the Turin authorities had allowed an unannounced one week examination of the Shroud in November 2000 by a group of Italian scientists. I am reprinting it here courtesy of Zenit News Service exactly as it was released. Please note that I have included a personal editorial comment at the end of the article.

NEW STUDY BACKS AUTHENTICITY OF TURIN SHROUD SCANNER CAPTURES IMAGE OF REVERSE SIDE

TURIN, Italy, MAY 10, 2001 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The Shroud of Turin has bloodstains on its reverse side, indicating that the image of the man it bears was not copied, a new study indicates.

The Shroud, widely believed to have been the burial cloth of Jesus, was subjected to new scanning techniques last November, and results of the tests were first scrutinized by a symposium of scientists. Cardinal Severino Spolletto, archbishop of Turin, released the news of the tests.

In 1534, two years after a fire damaged the Shroud, Poor Clare nuns added a linen lining to the cloth to mend the damage. That allowed only one side of the relic to be seen.

The recent examination, carried out with a scanner, revealed bloodstains on the reverse side, indicating that the image was not copied.

"This is a confirmation of the unfounded character of the hypothesis formulated in the past, according to which the image of the holy Shroud was formed by combustion, namely, by the warming of an image wrapped in the cloth," explained Monsignor Giuseppe Ghiberti, vice president of the Commission for the Exposition of the Shroud.

Experiments which have reproduced this technique have always left traces on the reverse of the fabric -- something that does not happen in the case of the Shroud of Turin.

Paolo Soardo of the Galileo Ferraris Italian Institute carried out the scanning of the reverse of the Shroud, which no one had seen in more than 450 years.

In the one-week study, done in the sacristy of the new cathedral, a flat scanner was introduced between the Shroud and the linen lining. This made possible the photographing of the central band, and yielded the unique images, Monsignor Ghiberti said.

The photographs show bloodstains from the wounds in the feet, legs, hands and arms. The color and black-and-white pictures will be published in two volumes: one for the general public and one for experts.

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AN EDITORIAL COMMENT BY BARRIE SCHWORTZ

I rarely use this website as a forum for my personal opinions, but I feel compelled to speak out in response to the above article. It makes several points about Shroud research that I believe need clarification.

As most of you know, the Shroud of Turin Research Project (STURP), spent 120 hours in October 1978 performing an in-depth examination of the cloth. Working alongside STURP were a number of Italian researchers. One of these, Professor Giovanni Riggi, used an endoscopic camera system to

look at and photograph the underside of the Shroud. Prof. Riggi's resulting photographs clearly showed the blood had soaked through the cloth. To accommodate his experiment, a small section of the Shroud was separated from its backing cloth by a Poor Clare nun, giving the researchers the first look at the underside of the Shroud in 400 years. In fact, one of my most well known and often published photographs from 1978 is of the precise moment this "first look" occurred (it can be viewed on this website at <http://www.shroud.com/78strp4.htm>).

While Prof. Riggi manipulated his fiber optic probe between the Shroud and its backing cloth, the focusing light of his camera system backlit the Shroud, showing the density of the bloodstains and making it very apparent that the blood had soaked through the cloth. It was then that Eric Jumper, STURP co-founder, told me that I must photograph the entire Shroud with transmitted light, which I did several days later. The resulting photographs clearly revealed higher densities in these areas, confirming the bloodstains and water stains on the Shroud soaked through the cloth. Toward the end of our examination, a larger section of the Shroud (near the ventral feet), was separated from the backing cloth and again bloodstains were observed and photographed on the back side.

The article also states that this new research disputes the theory that the Shroud was "formed by combustion." However, the actual scientific evidence the excludes heat as the image formation mechanism of the Shroud is the ultraviolet fluorescence photography done in 1978 by Vernon Miller. Since scorched linen fluoresces under specific ultraviolet illumination, the entire Shroud was photographed using special UV lights and filters. The resulting photographs clearly showed fluorescence in all the known burn and scorch marks on the Shroud, but absolutely no fluorescence in the image area. Thus, we were able to exclude "combustion" as an image formation mechanism in 1978.

However, my purpose in writing this is not to argue who did what first or criticize the recently performed experiment and its results. I think it is wonderful that 21st century technology is being applied to Shroud research and have personally lobbied for further research using new digital imaging technologies myself. My criticism is that the Turin authorities took an important opportunity to gather new data from the Shroud and applied it to questions that had been answered long ago.

Last year the Turin authorities sent out an urgent call to Sindonologists worldwide to submit proposals for future research and set a deadline of October 31, 2000. I am told they received dozens, if not hundreds of responses and many of these were from top researchers around the world. The plan was that these would be reviewed and evaluated and certain groups and individuals would be chosen to perform the tests at some later date. In spite of this, and almost immediately after the deadline expired, the scanning tests mentioned in the above article were performed. Interestingly, none of the researchers who submitted proposals that included this type of scanning were ever contacted or consulted prior to the November tests.

It is my hope that the Turin authorities proceed with the evaluation of the proposals they received as originally planned, and select appropriate, qualified researchers to perform new data gathering tests on the Shroud based on the quality of their proposals, experience, technology and credentials. But I strongly believe it is necessary to select tests that will help us gather new data and not put the Shroud at risk (from exposure to light, handling and the polluted air in Turin) in the wasted effort of redoing experiments that have already been done or reproving science that has already been proved.

Barrie Schwartz