

Geography of the Sindonology

by *Emanuela Marinelli* and *Maurizio Marinelli*

Collegamento pro Sindone – Rome – Italy

<http://www.shroud.it>

© 2005 All rights reserved

Originally presented at the

3rd International Dallas Shroud Conference on the Shroud of Turin

Dallas, Texas (USA) - September 8-11, 2005

In the past the knowledge of the Shroud in the world, in any case more devotional than scientific, was very poor. The copies of the Shroud, paintings witnesses of an ancient devotion, are about seventy. Outside Italy they are spread only in Spain in about twenty exemplars. The rest of Europe hosts other few copies in France and Portugal; only one respectively in Belgium, Malta and Switzerland. But some of them are lost.

Outside Europe, only the American Continent can boast four copies (respectively in Argentina, Canada, Mexico and USA); nothing in Africa, Asia, Australia and Oceania¹.

Fifty years ago only two Shroud centers were in existence in the world: one in Turin, the association *Cultores Sanctae Sindonis*, that in 1959 was transformed in *Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia*², and one in USA, the *Holy Shroud Guild* at Esopus, New York³.

Looking at the list of the Shroud books⁴ on *Collegamento pro Sindone* website <http://www.shroud.it>, we can consider that only about eighty in about 700 were in existence before 1960; similar the situation for the Shroud scientific articles⁵ in that period, about ten in about 300.

In that time, only one national congress, in 1939, and an international congress, in 1950, were held, both in Italy⁶; the proceedings of the national congress obviously are only in Italian and only the abstracts of the international congress were published in the proceedings, all in the original language without a translation.

The only magazine in existence was *Sindon*, published by the *Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia* of Turin since 1959⁷. Turning over the pages of the old issues of *Sindon*, a problem immediately is evident: most of the articles are in Italian and only the abstracts are translated into different languages.

In Italy the common second language in that time was French and this fact was an obstacle for the exchange of information with the English speaking world. Also the lack of the modern mass media

¹ Fossati Luigi, Elenco in ordine cronologico delle copie che riportano la data scritta sulla tela, *Collegamento pro Sindone*, November/December 1997, pp. 7-33; Fossati Luigi, Le copie della Sacra Sindone senza la data sulla tela, *Collegamento pro Sindone*, January/February 1998, pp. 5-30; Fossati Luigi., Elenco di copie della Sacra Sindone ricordate in documenti del passato ma non più ritrovate, *Collegamento pro Sindone*, May/June 1998, pp. 25-43.

² Anonimo, Storia del CIS, http://www.sindone.it/org_cis_storia.asp?sm=organizzazione&check=null

³ Otterbein Adam, History of the Holy Shroud Guild, September 8, 1982, <http://users.aol.com/fcbrink/hsg/hsghist.htm>

⁴ <http://www.shroud.it/BOOKS.HTM>

⁵ <http://www.shroud.it/ARTICLES.HTM>

⁶ AA.VV., La Santa Sindone nelle ricerche moderne, Atti del I Convegno Nazionale di Studi sulla Santa Sindone (Torino 1939) e del I Convegno Internazionale di Studio (Roma e Torino 1950), LICE, Torino 1950.

⁷ *Sindon*, Anno I, Quaderno N. 1, Ottobre 1959.

made the communication between the sindonologists in the world very difficult. The main personal means were the telephone and the letter. For the international contacts the second was preferable for two reasons: the cost of an international call, moreover not direct but through an international operator, and the problem of the different language and time zone. So, with the help of a dictionary, a letter could accurately be prepared; but the waiting time for an answer could be of weeks.

The development of the mass media, that has been very fast in the last years, has produced a hyperbolic intensification of the exchanges of information to a worldwide level. The Sindonology itself has turned out to be remarkably benefited by these innovations that have allowed a greater contact between the scholars all over the world.

Ten years ago the situation was far better. The fax was common to communicate in a cheap and fast way and English had become the worldwide spread language for international communications; but the e-mail was at the beginning and only very few centers had a website.

In a research carried out in 1997 for our cd-rom *Sindone Viva*⁸ we listed the main 25 centers and associations in existence at that time: one in Argentina, one in Australia, one in Brazil, one in Canada, three in France, one in England, three in Italy, one in Mexico, one in Spain, twelve in the USA. Ten of them had an e-mail but only four had a website. We listed also the twelve magazines published, one in Australia, one in Belgium, one in England, two in France, two in Italy, one in Mexico, one in Spain, three in the USA; and the twelve conferences held of which the proceedings were published: two in France, one in Hong Kong, seven in Italy, two in the USA.

Today the main mass medium is surely Internet, both for the numerous websites in various languages, and for the amount of e-mail messages daily exchanged either in private or in mailing-lists and forum.

This powerful means has enabled even people who did not know the Shroud to approach information about it, also having the opportunity to know conflicting opinions and to evaluate the various positions personally, and all that without moving from their houses and without having to spend a lot of money or of time.

Most of the Shroud centres in the world have opened their own Internet websites with links to other sites, so enabling everyone to have all the archives of all the centres at his or her disposal. Today, therefore, it is possible to consult the lists of the existing books and articles and to have access to the images placed at anybody's disposal by the photographers. Moreover, it is possible to contact the scholars to have first hand information and material from those who have worked out theories and carried out studies on the Shroud.

The Shroud magazines are fewer than in the past because the possibility of spreading the articles by Internet solved the problems of the cost of realization and the slowness of the postal mail. Of the twelve magazine published eight years ago, only five are still in existence, and in reality not so regular. Even *Sindon* ceased its publication in 2003.

In return, many new books in different languages were published. Most of the about 700 books listed in *Collegamento pro Sindone* website are in Italian; but 137 are in English, 60 in French, 28 in Spanish, 14 in German, 11 in Portuguese. Besides the most common languages, there are also 6 books in Polish, 5 in Hungarian, 3 in Arabic, 3 in Flemish, 3 in Greek, 3 in Russian, 2 in Bohemian, 2 in Croatian, 2 in Japanese and one in every of the following languages: Bengali, Catalan, Chinese, Danish, Indonesian, Kiswahili, Romanian, Slovak, Ukrainian.

The publication of books in languages as, for example, Bengali, Indonesian or Kiswahili is the fruit of the effort of willing missionaries; no plans for systematic publication of books in such type of languages were started.

We have to face the reality of today, that will become much more evident in the future: the English language is the vehicle for the exchange of information in the world. But we cannot forget that a great part of the people in the world is not able to speak a second language, so the importance of the publication of books in different languages is still important.

⁸ Marinelli Emanuela – Marinelli Maurizio, *Sindone viva*, cd-rom, Edizioni San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo, Milano 1997.

For the people with a low culture, the spreading of the Shroud knowledge can be helped by photographic exhibitions in different languages, films, documentaries, TV programs. Of course it is important that the organizers of the cultural enterprises can have access to good sources and participate to an exchange of documented information. The role of Internet in that exchange of information is of primary importance⁹.

With the help of Internet, it is possible to carry out a research about the Shroud situations in the world. Of course, it is impossible to discover all the Shroud Centers and all the Shroud researchers, especially if they don't have access to Internet; so, obviously this paper cannot be complete. The authors of this article will be grateful to everybody who will send them news to add for a possible future update of this research.

The main Center in the world is the *Centro Internazionale di Sindonologia* <http://www.sindone.it>; it is located in Turin, with many delegations¹⁰ in different Italian regions, and publishes the monthly newsletter *Sindone News*, in Italian and English. Very interesting in this magazine, for the Geography of the Sindonology, are the news of Shroud activities in the world, for example from Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, Rumania, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, Viet Nam, USA.

In Turin there is also the official website of the Shroud <http://www.sindone.org>, realized by the Turin Archdiocese, who offers five routes: scientific, biblical, iconographic, pastoral, exposition, and one more, special for kids.

Another important place of Shroud interest in Turin is the *Real Chiesa di San Lorenzo* <http://www.sanlorenzo.torino.it>, in which there is an Association of Volunteers to spread Shroud knowledge.

Other websites on the Shroud are realized by people of Turin: for example, <http://www.geocities.com/jmbalzan/sindone.htm> is the website of Giovanni Imbalzano, <http://www.pagliarino.com/sindone> that of Guido Pagliarino and <http://xoomer.virgilio.it/misalcit> that of Michele Salcito.

In Rome, *Collegamento pro Sindone* <http://www.shroud.it> had activities in the world in different countries, for example Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Greece, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malta, Poland, Russia, and new plans are in progress for Burkina Faso, Ecuador and Peru.

In Rome there is also the *Centro di Sindonologia del Caravita* <http://www.sindonologia.it>, that unfortunately hasn't presented new activities since May 2004, and the *Centro Diocesano di Sindonologia "G. Ricci"*, until today without a website.

About the rest of Europe, only few countries have Shroud groups.

In France there are two groups with a website: the *Centre International d'Etudes sur le Linceul de Turin* (CIELT) <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/cielt>, who publishes also the magazine *Revue Internationale du Linceul de Turin*, and *Montre-nous Ton Visage* <http://www.mntv.asso.fr/homepage.htm>, who publishes the homonymous magazine; there is also one group without a website, *Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches Rhône-Alpes du Linceul de Turin* (GERRALT).

In Spain there is the *Centro Español de Sindonología* (CES) <http://www.linteum.com>, who publishes the magazine *Linteum*; other two interesting European website in Spanish language are <http://www.sabanasanta.tk> and <http://www.sindon.info>

⁹ Schwartz Barrie, The role of the Internet in the future of the Shroud research, in: AA.VV., *Sindone e Scienza*, Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di studi sulla Sindone, Torino, 5-7 giugno 1998, CD a cura di Pier Luigi Baima Bollone, Maurizio Lazzerio e Carolina Marino, pp. 437-443 and in AA.VV., *The Shroud of Turin, Unraveling the Mystery*, Proceedings of the 1998 Dallas Symposium, Alexander Books, Alexander, North Carolina, USA 2001, pp. 335-342; Schwartz Barrie, Electronic archiving and distribution: the value of the Internet and CD-ROM Technology, in: AA.VV., *The Shroud of Turin, Unraveling the Mystery*, Proceedings of the 1998 Dallas Symposium, Alexander Books, Alexander, North Carolina, USA 2001, pp. 124-131; Marinelli Maurizio, *Proposte per una commissione di studio permanente e una banca dati sulla Sindone di Torino*, in: AA. VV., *Sindone 2000*, Atti del Congresso Mondiale, Orvieto 2000, Gerni Editori, San Severo, Foggia 2002, pp. 47-56.

¹⁰ Two delegates have a website: Giulio Fanti <http://www.dim.unipd.it/misure/fanti/fanti-ital.html> and Emilio Lazzarin <http://www.emiliolazzarin.com>

In the United Kingdom there is the *British Society for the Turin Shroud* who publishes the magazine *Shroud Newsletter* that can be read at <http://www.shroud.com/bstsmain.htm>¹¹

There is also a website in Russian language <http://www.shroud.orthodoxy.ru/indld09.htm>

In America few centers are outside the USA¹². In Argentina there is the *Centro de Estudio y difusion de la Santa Sindon*, without a website. In Brazil there is the *Associação Santo Sudário de Jesus* <http://www.santo.sudario.nom.br> and the *Brazilian Association of Sindonology*, without a website. In Canada there are the *Centre Canadien de Sindonologie* and the *Vancouver Shroud Society*, both without a website. In Mexico there are the *Centro Mexicano de Sindonologia* <http://www.santasindone.org>, who publishes the newsletter *Sindone*, and the *Centro Potosino de Sindonología* <http://www.geocities.com/santosudario>

In USA the Shroud interest is really considerable and it is possible an impressive list of activities¹³.

Centers with a website:

- *Council For The Study of the Shroud of Turin (CSST)* <http://www.shroudscouncil.org>
- *Imago Christi* <http://www.open.org/imago>
- *Shroud Center of Southern California* <http://www.shroudcentersocal.com>
- *Shroud of Turin Center of Richmond, Virginia* <http://members.aol.com/turin99/shroud.htm>
- *Shroud of Turin Education Project (STEP)* <http://www.shroud2000.com>
- *The Garden Tomb Shroud Center* <http://www.gardentombshroud.org/home.htm>
- *The Holy Shroud Guild* <http://users.aol.com/fcbrink/hsg/hsg.htm>
- *Turin Shroud Center of Colorado* <http://shroudofturin.com>

Centers without a website:

- *Alaska Center for the Shroud of Turin*
- *Albany Center Turin Shroud (ACTUS)*
- *American Shroud of Turin Association for Research (AMSTAR)*
- *Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin (ASSIST)*
- *Atlanta International Center for Continuing Study of the Shroud of Turin (AICCSST)*
- *Face to Face*
- *Holy Face Monastery*
- *Holy Shroud Center of Lisle, Illinois*
- *Holy Shroud Committee of Boston*
- *Holy Shroud Shrine*
- *Holy Shroud Society*
- *Holy Shroud Task Force of St. Louis*
- *Indiana Center for Shroud Studies*
- *New York Shroud of Turin Society*
- *Shroud Society of Texas*
- *Shroud Sources*
- *Sindone Educational Gallery*
- *The Man in the Shroud Committee of Amarillo*

Personal websites:

- *Jim Barrett* <http://www.uthscsa.edu/mission/spring96/shroud.htm>
- *John Iannone*, <http://www.theshroudofturin.com>
- *Jack Kilmon* <http://www.historian.net/shroud.htm>
- *Gilbert R. Lavoie* <http://www.shroudofjesus.com>
- *McCrone Research Institute* <http://www.mcri.org/Shroud.html>

¹¹ This page is hosted in the Barrie Shwartz's website <http://www.shroud.com>.

¹² Part of this information is taken from <http://www.shroud.com/centers.htm>.

¹³ Part of this information is taken from <http://www.mysteries-megasite.com/main/bigsearch/shroud.html> http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_shro4.htm and <http://www.shroud.com/centers.htm>.

- *Kevin E. Moran* <http://users.vnet.net/cambiano/shroud.htm>
- *Joe Nickell* <http://www.csicop.org/articles/shroud/index2.html>
- *Dan Porter* <http://www.shroudstory.com> <http://www.factsplusfacts.com>
<http://www.skepticalspectacle.com>
- *Ray Schneider* <http://www.bridgewater.edu/~rschneid/FocusProjects/SOT.htm>
<http://users.adelphia.net/~schneirj/shroud.htm> <http://users.adelphia.net/~schneirj/grail.htm>
- *Kenneth and Mary Stevenson* <http://www.everlasting.org/Shroud.htm>
- *David Sunfellow* <http://www.nhne.com/articles/sashroud.html>
- *Nathan D. Wilson* <http://www.shadowshroud.com>
- *Frederick T. Zugibe*, <http://www.e-forensicmedicine.net> <http://www.crucifixion-shroud.com>

Last but not least, a special mention is necessary to *Barrie M. Schwartz* <http://www.shroud.com> who has the biggest website in the world, highly ecumenical, open to everybody. A paragon to follow.

Three more activities are in South Africa with *Nicholas P.L. Allen* <http://www.petech.ac.za/shroud/>, in Australia with the *South East Asia Research Centre for the Holy Shroud (SEARCH)*, in Hong Kong (China) with *William Meacham* who has the page <http://freepages.religions.rootsweb.com/~wmeacham/shroud.htm> and another page <http://freepages.religions.rootsweb.com/~wmeacham/shroud2.htm>

Another activity on the web is the debate between many Shroud researchers, named *ShroudScience*; but it is evident that a large part of the people of the world is excluded from the knowledge of the Shroud. Most of the people of the world don't know English language and don't have a computer. Which strategies can we try to spread the knowledge of the Shroud in the countries where there is none and to upgrade or improve it where, instead, it is already living? Our suggestion is to continue to organize exhibitions and lectures, to show films and documentaries, to write articles and books; but minding that we are carrying out a service to the truth, that can be done only with the spirit of cooperation that grows in the humility of the silence.

