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McCRONE SCIENTISTS PLAY KEY ROLE IN AUTHENTICATING THE 'GOSPEL OF JUDAS'

Ink Analysis Reveals Possible Physical Link Between Ancient World and Medieval Times

WESTMONT, IL (April 11, 2006) – McCrone Associates of The McCrone Group, internationally recognized as a world leader in microanalysis and the nation's Premier Microscopy Resource, announces it was responsible for conducting the analysis of the ink on the only known surviving copy of the Gospel of Judas.

The National Geographic Society unveiled the ancient Coptic manuscript dating from the third or fourth century containing the first modern translation of the ancient Gospel of Judas in Washington, DC on April 6th. The codex was authenticated as a genuine work of ancient Christian apocryphal literature on five fronts: radiocarbon dating, ink analysis, multispectral imaging, contextual evidence and paleographic evidence.

A five-person McCrone team of scientists specializing in forensic ink analysis, conducted polarized light microscopy (PLM), transmission electron microscopy (TEM), scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and Raman spectroscopy tests on samples of the document's ink. They established that the ink included a carbon ink (used throughout history) with a metal-tannate component for which there is some evidence of its use in third-century inks. The analysis was performed at McCrone's Westmont, Illinois facility.

Physical evidence of the Gospel of Judas' age was found not only within the papyrus but also in the ink that was used to pen the ancient Coptic script. Analysis suggests that the ink may

itself constitute a unique and important discovery. McCrone's scientists reported that the Gospel of Judas may have been penned with an early form of iron-tannate ink that included a small amount of carbon black (soot). If so, it could be a previously unknown "missing link" between the ancient world's carbon-based inks and the iron-gall alternatives that became popular in early medieval times.

The methodology followed by McCrone scientists on the Gospel of Judas analysis was previously used by the firm in work on the Shroud of Turin and the Vindland Map. McCrone scientists reported the overall analysis had a high degree of difficulty as many of the ink constituents were previously unknown as such. Furthermore, the samples were small and fragmented requiring special sample preparation for which McCrone is known throughout the world.

"There isn't anyone in the world with such a comprehensive array of equipment and skills," Donald A. Brooks, President and CEO, The McCrone Group said. "There are numerous small and medium sized labs that have selected pieces of equipment and the specialized staff to operate them. McCrone has more than \$15 million worth of microscopes and instrumentation and one of the best scientific and administrative teams in the world," he said.

"Because we also educate some of the top scientists in the world, they know where to come when they need some of their most difficult problems solved," Brooks said. "No other firm in the world is as qualified as McCrone to undertake such an assignment. The work on the Gospel of Judas reflects the very best of today's Modern Microscopy Science," he added.

The McCrone team was led by Joseph Barabe, Senior Research Microscopist at McCrone along with Joseph Swider, Elaine Schumacher, Kate Martin and Anna Teestov, Senior Research Scientists. All the team members are also on the faculty of the College of Microscopy located at the McCrone Group headquarters in Westmont, Illinois.

The College of Microscopy is a highly specialized academic institution that offers advanced professional training in analytical microscopy techniques, and it has the largest array of advanced modern microscopy instrumentation within any one single location in the United States. The staff of the McCrone Group has been teaching scientists and researchers for more than 40 years. The College of Microscopy specializes in training materials scientists, crime lab

personnel, First Responders, art conservators, researchers and technicians in how to identify unknown or suspect materials using light microscopy, electron microscopy, and micro-FTIR/Raman spectroscopy.

About The McCrone Group

Founded in 1956 and located in Westmont, Illinois, The McCrone Group, Inc. is internationally recognized as a world leader in microscopy, microanalysis, materials characterization, and the solving of tough materials problems. Today, The McCrone Group, Inc. is regarded as "The Premier Microscopy Resource" and combines the talents and skills of its staff in the areas of materials analysis, instrument sales, and education.

The McCrone Group includes McCrone Associates, McCrone Microscopes & Accessories, the College of Microscopy, the McCrone online Atlas of Microscopic Particles, and ModernMicroscopy.com.

McCrone Associates is focused on solving the most difficult materials research problems along with the day-to-day analysis needs of clinical laboratories, scientific researchers, business organizations, and government agencies worldwide. McCrone Microscopes & Accessories offers the most advanced microscopy technologies and scientific instruments for sale.

Through its academic institution, the College of Microscopy, McCrone provides training to both industry and government scientist worldwide. Although the staff of The McCrone Group has been teaching scientists around the world for over 40 years, the new College of Microscopy was started in January of 2004 to formalize their training and teaching. Today, over 35 courses per year are made available to the technical community worldwide.

The McCrone online Atlas of Microscopic Particles is the first of its kind internet-based particle reference for scientists, microscopists, and criminalists engaged in materials identification area. ModernMicroscopy.com is McCrone's online peer-reviewed journal with articles, scientific tips, and tutorials contributed by scientists from around the world.

For further information about The McCrone Group, please visit: www.mccrone.com.

National Geographic is sharing information about the Gospel of Judas with the public through an exhibit featuring pages of the codex at National Geographic headquarters, opening Friday, April 7; a feature in the May 2006 issue of National Geographic magazine, on newsstands April 25; a two-hour television special, "The Gospel of Judas," premiering on the National Geographic Channel worldwide on Sunday, April 9; two National Geographic books, "The Gospel of Judas" and "The Lost Gospel: The Quest for the Gospel of Judas Iscariot," both publishing April 6; a lecture at the Society with Gregor Wurst, Marvin Meyer and "The Lost Gospel" author Herbert Krosney, on Monday, April 10; and a comprehensive Web site at www.nationalgeographic.com/lostgospel. National Geographic Books also will publish a fully illustrated, critical edition of the codex in the coming year.

NOTE TO MEDIA Photographs are available for use by request.

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