

Da Vinci Code Hoax

A letter from Jonathan Gray:

Have you heard of the silent cities?

"What are they?" you ask.

DESERTED CITIES

They are deserted cities in Syria - about a hundred of them - and still in a remarkable state of preservation.

There are splendid remains of villas, churches, inscriptions and public buildings that were established during the early Christian centuries.

Did you know, there are still places where no modern traveler has been. There are ancient towns which no tourist has seen. In fact, there are whole regions full of antiquities, which are not shown on the latest maps.

And just when we thought there was no place left to explore!

Yes, these silent cities lie far from the main lines of travel and in the midst of an easily excitable population.

Just imagine it, will you - a wasted land of barren grey hills. And in the distance you see a towering mass of broken walls and shattered colonnades, the mighty remnants of a city long deserted by civilized men.

There it rises, silent, with gates wide open and every house inside it untenanted even by wild beasts.

You enter what was once a thriving town. And it has stood uninhabited for 13 centuries.

Its health and sanitation arrangements would be superior to those found in many places in the Western world today, even in America and Europe.

The inscriptions on many of these buildings indicate that Syrian Christianity covered a large portion of the territory in which the silent cities stand today.

WHY DESERTED?

You may ask, "But why are they silent and deserted?" Here's why. After Jerusalem fell to the Roman siege in AD 70, Antioch in Syria became the new world headquarters of Christianity.

However, as the church in Rome grew powerful and adopted pagan practices, it tried to enforce its innovations on those who disagreed with Rome. Then terrible persecution fell upon Syria.

So entire Christian populations migrated from the areas of the silent cities and the rest of the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire.

They found refuge within the boundaries of the restored Persian Empire.

After 622, following the Muslim invasion, the Christians who remained in Syria worked their way farther east. They left behind their cities, silent and deserted, and the area depopulated.

The people themselves migrated into India, China and eastern Asia, to continue their way of life undisturbed.

This fact is of paramount importance in considering the claims of Dan Brown's Da Vinci Code. It solidly refutes his claims, but that is another story.

Anyway, Temcat, I hope you have found this information about the deserted cities, of interest.