**To the attention of Dr Jalil Jabbari and Dr Fatemeth Ghambar**

***Qualifying points of the project "Research of one of the Magi" and tourism-cultural enhancement***

**Premise**

The acquisition of documents, the visit to the church of St. Mary Mother of God and the meeting with the Assyrian priests who run the sacred place have allowed our scientific team to verify the conditions for an accurate and rigorous research. ***The results of this exam have had positive results, so there are conditions for an actual and proper research.***

The further acquisition of documents, the realization of an accurate photographic shoot, the visit to many Paleo-Christian churches in Urmia and the territory of the region of West Azerbijanhave allowed us to verify the possibility to propose a tourist-cultural project "Journey to the discovery of Proto-Christianity", with a high appealing and tourist attraction for the Christian world and beyond. This proposal would have as a fundamental centre of attraction the place where one of the Magi, who went to in Bethlehem to honour the Saviour’s birth, was buried.

The historical, social, cultural and religious background on which this project is inserted sees the city of Urmia as its hub. A unique example of coexistence in the Muslim world, with the three monotheistic religions, the presence of Islamic, Christian, Assyrian and Protestant churches as well as the presence of a Synagogue. It should be added that there are Catholic and Armenian churches in the region. A unique that, united with the presence of the remains of one of the re Magi, offers a cultural product that has no equal, and therefore, surely with a touristic attraction.

In these weeks we have carried out a series of verifications of the attractiveness of this offer to major tour operators around the world; ***the response has been very positive.***

The same result has been obtained with the major global players for national and international communication.

**The Research**

The phases that will characterize the research are subdivided as follows:

Preliminary exam with the Geo-Radar

Start of archaeological excavations with the recovery of mortal remains

Preliminary examination on the field of recovered mortal remains

Sending of some samples of the mortal remains to Universities

Anthropological, carbon 14, histological examinations any other related to the finds

Elaboration of results and delivery

***Preliminary examination with Geo-Radar: Methodology.***

***Methodology***

The geo-radar methodology allows to have low-depth underground information in a non-invasive way, particularly suitable for archaeological researches. The abnormalities detected by this methodology provide information on the presence of inhomogeneity in the subsoil correlable with buried structures in masonry, concrete, pipelines, empty spaces, etc., by using the phenomenon of electromagnetic waves reflection.

The electromagnetic impulse Ground Probing Radar is an electronic system capable of investigating soils and materials with remarkable details, using the reflection of electromagnetic waves specially produced.

The result of the analysis consists of vertical sections that visually illustrate the development of the discontinuities present in the subsoil, thus allowing to detect the presence of metallic materials, foundations, piping, cables, cavities and inhomogeneity of various nature.

The operation of the Geo-Radar is conceptually analogous to that of conventional radar and is based on the ability of the instrument to emit radiofrequency signals, generally between 80 MHz and 2 Ghz, and so to record the echoes re-radiated by the objects present in the analysed area, characterized by electromagnetic properties different from those of the surrounding ones.

***Archaeological excavations with recovery of mortal remains***

Archaeological excavations will be under the responsibility of one of leading experts in Paleo-Christian archaeology. At a later stage we will send in detail how they will be implemented and the name of the professor responsible.

***Preliminary examination on the field of the recovered mortal remains***

As for the preliminary on-site anthropological examinations, they will be performing by an anthropologist of the scientific team. In this case again we will send in the final project all useful information and who will perform this task.

***Anthropological, carbon 14, histological any other examination related to the finds***

For the anthropological part, coordinated by Professor Giorgio Gruppioni, renowned at European level, the following examinations will be made:

***Archaeoanthropological researches in the church of Santa Maria in Urmia (Iran)***

1) Recovering, recognition and documentation of the finds brought to light;

2) Acquisition of digital models of the finds by computerized tomography (CT) and laser scanner;

3) Sampling of the finds for the implementation of the analysis for ancient DNA, C14 and other possible chemical-physical analyses;

4) Anthropological study of the remains and reconstruction of the individual biological profile by macro and micromorphological, morphometric, radiological and chemical-physical analyses;

5) Extraction of DNA from the finding samples

6) Determination of sex, mitochondrial haplogroup and genetic profile by microsatellite or haplogroup of Y chromosome.

***First steps relevant to the research***

The first phase of the research consists of the examination with the geo-radar in order to verify the presence of burials in the church object of the investigation.

Only if the presence of burials will be verified the investigation will continue with the archaeological phase, with minimal impact on the floor of the Church itself; then the others previously explained will follow.

The costs for the first phase are reasonable and will be highlighted in the final project

As agreed with the coordinator of the university campus in the city of Urmia, there will be involvement and a close interaction between our scientific staff and the departments, professors and students of the university campus of the city of Urmia.

**Tourism-cultural enhancement**

*Implementation of a national and international press office*

*Implementation of permanent relationships with major world tour operators*

*Implementation of a national and international press office*

A key element to ensure the maximum dissemination of the research of one of the Magi and all information aiming at drawing global attention on Urmia and the Region is structuring a highly professional press office with a consolidated network of relationships with the major national and international media. The Committee uses high-level professionals with proven ability to disseminate information.

*Implementation of permanent relationships with major world tour operators*

Thanks to previous institutional assignments related to the promotion of the Italian cultural heritage it is possible to establish permanent relationships with major tour operators around the world. This is a fundamental initiative if we want large groups of tourists to arrive in Urmia and in Iran.

Finally, with regard to the various Italian Universities involved in this research, the following should be pointed out: the University of Bologna, the University of L'Aquila, the University of Salento (Puglia).

The National President

Dr Silvano Vinceti