

Introduction

On November 8, 1979 *Monty Python's Life of Brian* opened in London and, in spite of hymn-singing demonstrators outside, went on to break box-office records. But in the rest of Britain, *Brian* became a victim of regional censorship. There is a loophole in British law to protect the spread of disease, which allows local authorities to close cinemas for health reasons, and they used this extraordinary clause to ban *Life of Brian*. As Python member, Michael Palin recalls, *"They thought it would spread diseases in cinemas."*

So *Life of Brian* was banned in parts of Devon where councillors refused even to watch it, arguing that, *"You don't have to see a pigsty to know that it stinks"* and Cornwall where, after one screening, a local councillor stated, that all the participants in the film should be locked up in the Criminal Lunatic Asylum.

Norway banned the film outright, so shrewdly, the Swedes advertised the film as *Life of Brian is so funny the Norwegians have banned it.*

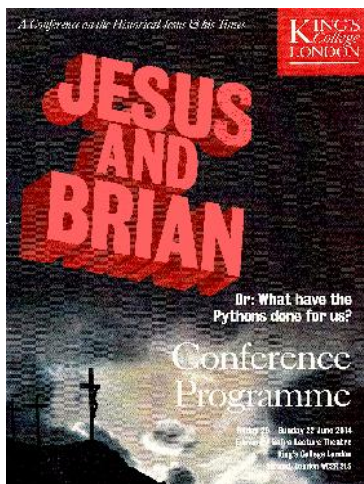
In 1997 Swansea Council finally permitted the film to be shown. Informed that the ban had been lifted, Python's Eric Idle told the press, *"What a shame. Is nothing sacred?"*

In 2009 in Aberystwyth in Wales, the local ban was lifted when, extraordinarily, Sue Jones-Davies the actress who played Judith in the film was elected mayor of the town.

And finally, I was invited to open the film in resistant Ireland, which had banned it totally for years. In a radio interview before-hand I was introduced to one of the committees who viewed the film and banned it. I asked him

if he laughed when he watched it? He said he was sitting between two Priests and was too scared to laugh.

Extraordinarily after all the banning and angry protests, thirty-five years later a conference was held at Kings College London, called '*Jesus and Brian*' and hosted by the Reverent Canon Professor Richard Burridge, Dean of King's College.



It was addressed by eminent Professors from all around the world including:

Helen Bond, *Professor of Christian Origins, Edinburgh.*

Martin Goodman, *Professor of Jewish Studies Oxford.*

Adèle Reinhartz *Professor of Classics, University of Ottawa.*

Dr. Guy Steibel, *Archaeologist at Tel Aviv University.*

Amy-Jill Levine, *Professor Gospel at Vanderbilt University.*

Paula Fredriksen, *Professor of Scripture at Boston University.*

David Shepherd, *Associate Professor in Hebrew Bible and Director Trinity College Dublin.*

And many others including well known New Testament commentator, Prof. Bart Ehrman, of the University of North Carolina.

The declared aim of the conference was to explore the historical Jesus via *'Monty Python's Life of Brian'* and many of the Professors spoke about how important the film was to their research. This was particularly pleasing to me as years before I had written a book on the making of 'Brian' with a defence of its content, which included an analysis of each scene comparing them to the actual Biblical events, and finally concluding that *'The Life of Brian'* was the most accurate Biblical film ever made.

I was asked by Professor Joan Taylor to bring the conference to an end.



**Prof Joan Taylor
introduces Julian Doyle**



**Julian Doyle in discussion
with Prof Martin Goodman**

At the time of the conference, I had not yet brought my research to a conclusion but the thirty-five years since the making of *'Life of Brian'* had not been wasted. While working on my own films and those of Terry Gilliam and the Pythons, I had been reading and making notes on anything and everything I could lay my hands on, from purely academic works to the wildest of cranky books about Jesus. Oddly some of the weirdest books often

produced little gems of information; for instance, in a book that claimed Jesus was a woman because a baby produced by a virgin birth cannot have the male Y chromosome, so the child had to be XX. Even in this rather strange book I found a quote I had missed in the Gospels, misinterpreted by the author but crucial to my research.

It was three years later in 2017 that I finally unravelled the Crucifixion story and could explain what had happened in Israel at the time, but what was extraordinary was that at the same time I discovered the monumental secret hinted at by esoteric groups over the centuries.

For instance, it is clear that the original Knights Templar did have secrets about the crucifixion that actually survived their demise, but which Templar researchers had failed to discover.

'Of all charges levelled against the Templars, the most serious were those of blasphemy and heresy – of denying, trampling and spitting on the cross. It is not clear what precisely this alleged ritual was intended to signify – what, in other words, the Templars were actually repudiating. Were they repudiating Christ? Or were they simply repudiating the crucifixion? And whatever they repudiated, what exactly did they extol in its stead? No one has satisfactorily answered those question.' (H.B.H.G. Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln)

The answers to these question are exactly what unfolded some 40 years after I sat on the sand in Tunisia and watched the Python's being crucified.

In case you have never heard about the idea of a monumental secret here are a few examples over history. This is a letter sent by Louis Fouquet to his brother Nicholas Fouquet after a meeting in Rome with the enigmatic painter Poussin.

'He and I discussed certain things, which I shall with ease be able to explain to you in detail – things which will give you, through Monsieur Poussin, advantages which even kings would have great pains to draw from him, and which, according to him, it is possible that nobody else will ever rediscover in the centuries to come.' (Letter: Louis Fouquet)

Fouquet was subsequently arrested and imprisoned being held strictly incommunicado for the rest of his life. Even the jailers were forbidden to talk to him. Some historians regard him as a possible candidate for the 'man in the iron mask'. Fouquet's correspondence was confiscated by King Louis XIV, who inspected them personally. The King went on to obtain Poussin's arcane painting of 'Les Bergers d'Arcadia', which he kept secreted in his private apartments at Versailles.

That there is a monumental secret has so often been hinted at, even to modern days where an article in the Guardian newspaper in 1976, following the imminent excommunication of Archbishop Lefebvre, to their surprise the Pope suddenly backed down.

'The Archbishop's team of priests in England, believe their leader still has a powerful ecclesiastical weapon to use in his dispute with the Vatican. No one will give any hint at its nature, but team leader Father Peter Morgan, describes it as being something 'earth-shattering.' (Guardian 1976)

Those trying to fathom the mystery have, at best, come up with the story that Jesus was married and had a child, but we will show why this is very unlikely. Or that he was drugged to survive the crucifixion, but when one unravels the heretical Templar beliefs this also becomes very improbable

The original Freemasons also appear to have known the secret, that Father Morgan, described as *'earthshattering'*, and is reflected in their higher degrees. The 27th Degree of the *'Grand Commander of the Temple'* is a chivalric degree where the ritual tells of the *false* condemnation of the Knights Templar and the importance of the *'denial of the cross.'* But how can it be both claiming, they were falsely condemned and at the same time repeating what they were condemned for, *'denial of the cross?'* If they denied the cross then the accusations were not false! They were true. The Templars were heretics who had some revealing knowledge about the crucifixion that led to them spitting on the cross. Something that was known by Grand Master, Claude Debussy who wrote in a review, *"Perhaps it's to destroy that scandalous legend that Jesus Christ died on the cross."*

To unravel the monumental secret we will begin, where I began when I sat on the sand on a hot day in Tunisia watching the Monty Python's being crucified and realized something was very seriously wrong with the process.

