

Yeshu'a: An Account of a Master's Journey East

Patrick Gallivan

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Patrick Gallivan's novel *Yeshu'a: An Account of a Master's Journey East* paints a vivid picture of the life and times of Jesus. The story takes readers from caravan trains through the desert—where the hospitality of strangers could literally mean the difference between life or death—to the inner workings of the Essene brotherhood which claimed Yeshu'a as a member. Gallivan also explores the personal and political relationships between the Jews, Arabs, and Romans of the time.

Using sources other than those of traditional Christianity to explore the so-called "lost years" of Jesus's life, Gallivan traces the Master's early travels to India, Nepal, and Lhasa. As the story unfolds, it becomes clear that even in those places, people in positions of power tended to feel threatened by the young man's message.

The author's account of Jesus's whereabouts and activities during the years not mentioned in the Bible and his interpretations of events surrounding Jesus's crucifixion conflict with mainstream Christian teaching. In Gallivan's story, Jesus did not really die when he was crucified, but induced himself into a deep trance that allowed him to avoid the pain of crucifixion; after he was placed in the tomb, he was attended to by Essene healers who restored him to health using herbs and spices. The author then has Jesus moving on to live in Kashmir and continuing his teaching and healing ministry until he dies in his eighties, after a full and rich life.

Gallivan calls this work a novel, and, as such, it is colorful and fast paced with believable characters. The book would be much more powerful, however, were Gallivan to place it into the category of Historical Fiction, back up his statements about Jesus's life and activities with the references he mentions having used in his research, and take on the theological debate that his research and personal conclusions will surely provoke. As it stands, it is difficult to determine whether the author is using his narrative as a platform to put forth his own conclusions about the events in Jesus's life, or whether it was his intent to create a work of pure fiction, a possibility that seems to be denied in his preface.

The cover art, a compelling portrait of Jesus based on the Shroud of Turin, is noteworthy for its beauty. According to Gallivan, it came from a black-and-white computer printout of a postcard of the Shroud which the Avatar Sathya Sai Baba changed into full color by merely passing his hand over it.

The book would benefit from thorough proofreading to correct its frequent errors, such as the spelling of Jesus's name as "Yeshus" on the back cover and as "Yeshu'a" in the text. Repetitive word use, as in "With quick steps, the donkeys moved quickly," and the conflicting information given when the author writes that Yeshu'a traveled on foot and then immediately afterward "rode along" and "rode deep in thought" detract from the book's overall quality. It is also suggested that Gallivan provide readers with his own biographical information and a list of any past publications in order to lend credibility to his conclusions.

KRISTINE MORRIS (January 29, 2013)

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