

Guido Pagliarino



**SINDÒN**  
*The Mysterious*  
**SHROUD**  
*of Turin*



# **Guido Pagliarino**

## **Sindòn The Mysterious Shroud Of Turin**

### **Аннотация**

This essay divulges what the research has established about the famous Shroud of Turin, and it is not intended to persuade to believe that the Cloth of Turin really wrapped the body of Christ a couple of thousands year ago.

The author returns several times to certain subjects, according to different perspectives: the reader does not consider such reiterations as not necessary and involuntary: the work includes a general introductory part - at some point, considering it useful, already with in-depth studies, as for the medical conclusions of the anatomopathologist Pierluigi Baima Bollone - and a section, divided into chapters, specifically dealing with particular topics already covered in the first part, for example the photographs of the Shroud, and a chronology.

This essay has been updated several times by the author.

The essay is not intended to persuade to believe that the Sheet of Turin has really wrapped the body of Christ a couple of thousand years ago or, as commonly said, that it is authentic-

On the other hand, authenticity can also mean something else, you can say the Shroud preserved in Turin is the Cloth that wrapped

body of Christ, but it could be different than simply assume that an item is two thousand years old; and if I do not take a position on the fact that this famous Sheet wrapped Jesus, I suppose that the reasons for thinking that the Shroud is very ancient are prevailing, as there are currently lots of evidence to support it and only two against, of which only one seems objectively to be considered: the radiodating tests on Shroud samples which determined the age of the Sheet at lower medieval period; but they are increasingly disputed by Christian experts, scientifically and not only. The other reason against the Shroud is a prejudice, that comes both from anticlerical laity

and from the majority of the Christians Reformed, preclusion that leads the first to ignore the theme, and sometime to mock it; and leads the Protestant believers to condemn the veneration of the Shroud, which they consider to be a mere "symbol" created by human hands: they follow the Old Testament condemnation of "make for yourself images", historically born for anti-idolatrous reasons, although Catholics argue that the prohibition existed only before God was incarnated in Jesus, showing himself to the world as "image", that is as carnal human figure, without any possibility to be confused with graven images; there are, moreover, Catholics who deny authenticity, in the sense that the Shroud isn't precisely the one that wrapped Jesus, and you can find Protestants which assume it is authentic, at least in the second sense of the term or even in the first. In any case, it should be stressed that the Christian faith is not based on the Shroud of Turin but, historically, on the oral witness of the Apostles on Christ's resurrection, gathered within the first century in the books of the New Testament and come down to us because it was preserved by

the Church over the centuries, with systematic control of matching between the new copies and the previous ones, starting with the oldest.

With this spirit comes the second edition of the essay of Guido Pagliarino on the Shroud, , carried out considering new data and correcting a couple of inaccuracies in the book released years ago

The author returns several times to certain subjects, according to different perspectives: the reader does not consider such reiterations as not necessary and involuntary: the work includes a general introductory part - at some point, considering it useful, already with in-depth studies, as for the medical conclusions of the anatomopathologist Pierluigi Baima Bollone - and a section, divided into chapters, specifically dealing with particular topics already covered in the first part, for example the photographs of the Shroud, and a chronology.

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SINDÒN

THE MYSTERIOUS SHROUD OF TURIN

**Essay**

**Translation by Annibale Marsili**

Guido Pagliarino

SINDÒN The mysterious Shroud of Turin

Essay

Translation from Italian to English by Annibale Marsili

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On the cover: One of the two paintings by Giovanni Battista della Rovere “il Fiammenghino” depicting Jesus wrapped into the Shroud

The general and detailed photos of the Shroud inside the book belong to the Catholic Church, therefore they belong to all of us

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[AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION](#)

If it is true that the Cloth par excellence has led many people to embrace or rediscover Christianity, a phenomenon called “apostolate through the Shroud”<sup>1</sup>, this book is not going

to persuade that the Shroud truly wrapped Christ's body two thousand years ago or, as commonly said, that it is authentic. On the other hand, the concept of authenticity could have a different meaning in this context, because you can even believe that the relic preserved in Turin is the shroud which enveloped Jesus' body, but you can simply assume that this sheet is just a two thousand years old item. I suppose that we cannot deny that the Shroud is a very ancient relic, but I do not wish to take a position on the circumstance that it really would wrap the body of Christ. At the moment, there are much evidence to support the hypothesis that it is a very ancient relic rather than the only two against this theory, which are: a) radiocarbon dating experiments on Shroud's samples, which determined the age of the Sheet at lower medieval period (although many Christian scholars express scientific doubts regarding those tests); b) the prejudice, both from anticlerical laity and from most of the Reformed Christians. The first simply neglect the argument, and sometimes they mock it; the Protestant believers, on the contrary, condemn the veneration of the Shroud, which they consider to be a simple "icon" created by human hands: they follow the Old Testament verse "you must not to make for yourself an idol of any kind of image...", which was historically written down for anti-idolatrous reasons<sup>2</sup> .. In this regard, the Catholics argued that this banning existed only before the Incarnation of God in Jesus, when God made flesh and showed himself to the world as an "image". Moreover, there are Catholics who deny

the authenticity of the Shroud as the relic which wrapped the body of Jesus<sup>3</sup> . And, on the contrary, there are Protestants who believe it is a genuine 1st century artifact, and sometimes even the real burial cloth of Jesus. In any case, it should be stressed that the Christian faith is not based on the Shroud of Turin but, historically, on the oral testimonials of the Apostles on the Christ's resurrection, collected during the 1st century in the New Testament's books<sup>4</sup> ; the work of the Church to match, over the centuries, the new evidence with the oldest one, has allowed to pass them down to us<sup>5</sup> . I admit that in the past I was not particularly interested in the Shroud. But in 1998 I met Dr. Giovanni Latino, who was introduced to me by a common friend, and since then I was intrigued and involved by the relic. The passion of Dr. Latino prompted me to attend conferences of experts; and, besides, the weekly meetings arranged by him and the association “Amici della Reale Chiesa di San Lorenzo [Friends of Saint Lawrence Royal Church]” in a room of Saint Lawrence Church during the two years before the 2000 Holy Year Exhibition, aimed at deepening the study and the debate on the Shroud. Later, I became a member of that organization and a volunteer for the Shroud explanation during the Exhibition<sup>6</sup> . But my belief is always based on the New Testament's books, not on the Sheet. With that idea in mind, I'm publishing this new edition of my essay about the Shroud, by adding new details and adjustments with respect to the book released years ago and the

report I promoted online on the occasion of the 2000 Holy Year Exhibition. This work examines certain topics several times, from different perspectives; and the reader should not consider those repetitions as redundant and unintended.

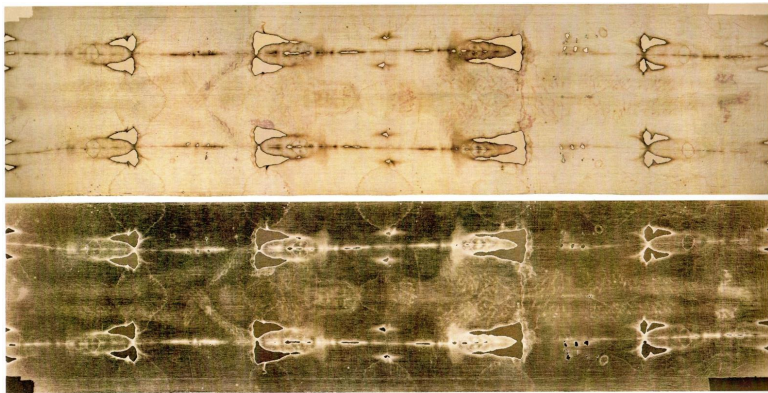
The essay presents:

a general introduction (although some insights are already inside, such as the medical conclusions by the pathologist Pierluigi Baima Bollone);

a section in chapters, with detailed discussion about the topics introduced in the first part (for example, the photographs of the Shroud); and finally a chronology.

## THE MYSTERIOUS SHROUD

Positive and negative image of the Turin Shroud



### A) General introduction :

The Shroud – Holy Shroud for Catholics – is a linen

cloth (sindòn = shroud, cloth) just 0.34 mm thick; the relic's weave pattern is a "herringbone", with a technique used two thousand years ago in Egypt (there are even five-thousand-year-old Egyptian artifacts) , in Palestine and in other Middle East areas; the yarn is described as a "Z-twist" (clockwise twisting), unlike the "S-twist" process (counter-clockwise twisting) used in later times<sup>7</sup> . They are spinning and weaving techniques no longer considered since the early Middle Ages. The Cloth is 4.41 meters long and 1.13 wide, after the 2002 conservative restoration (see Chronology, , 2002 AD)<sup>8</sup> . The Archbishop pro tempore of Turin (namely, in office at the time) is its Custodian. The Shroud is housed in Turin since 1578, with some temporary displacements due to wars: such as when the French besieged the city in 1706, or when the Shroud was transferred to the Montevergine Abbey (near Avellino, Italy) to protect it from the bombings when Italy entered the World War II in 1939. It returned to Turin in 1946.

The Shroud of Turin, simply known as “The Shroud” all over the world, is still a mysterious cloth for the most part.

Several stains, whose origin and interpretation is only partially known, can be found on the Shroud, which is like a photographic negative for some of them and not for others.

No doubt . . .

Patches and burn marks are clearly detectable on this sheet.

After sampling and analysis by experts, microscopic pollen of plants from Middle East and Alps were found on the Shroud.

Furthermore, evidence of aloe and myrrh was identified, along with aragonite (a composition of calcium carbonate, iron and strontium); the latter is a mineral present in Jerusalem, and in particular inside a tomb examined by the University of Chicago researcher Riccardo Levy-Setti who claimed that the two soil, respectively coming from the Shroud and from the Jerusalem grave, were exactly the same type.

Definitely there are AB type clotted bloodstains with trace of human male DNA on the linen cloth, according to studies by several internationally renowned pathologists, such as Pier Luigi Baima Bollone (professor emeritus of Forensic Medicine at the University of Turin).

By the way: It is curious that the same AB group blood was detected on the Sudarium of Oviedo (Spain), a 83x52 cm cloth. These are mirror-like bloodstains and, according to many, they overall would look like a human face <sup>9</sup> . Furthermore, it is interesting that the remains (relics) of the miracle which, according to tradition, occurred in the city of Lanciano, Italy, in the 8th century (a monk had doubted the presence of Christ in the Eucharist when, during a Mass celebration, bread and wine suddenly turned into flesh and blood) are: AB group clotted blood, the same as the Shroud; human flesh from myocardial tissue (as emerged from the analysis by the pathologist Professor Odoardo Linoli in 1970).<sup>10</sup>

Below, pictures depicting the Sudarium of Oviedo and

the Ostensory at the Sanctuary of Lancia with the flesh and  
a crystal cup containing the clotted blood :





Some bloodstains on the Shroud present blood serum (typical of a postmortem blood); but others, instead, appear to have been produced by a person still alive.

The Cloth definitely suffered burns in the past. For example, the scorch marks resulting from the fire in the chapel of Chambery, Savoy, where the Sheet was safeguarded, on December 4th 1532 (see Chronology, 1532 A.D.) are clearly visible: two charred lines throughout the length of the Cloth; holes, which later were patched up by the Poor Clare nuns of a nearby convent, who also sewed a backing Holland Cloth on the back of the sheet. Those repairs and the Holland cloth were removed during the 2002 restoration of the Shroud.

Burn marks

charred line \_\_\_ hole O



The back and front image of a human body is clearly imprinted on the linen cloth. Essentially, this figure appears as a photographic negative; but, once exposed on a photographic film, or earlier on a photographic plate, it emerged as a photographic positive. It is as the Man on the Shroud had looked himself in the mirror and his reflected image had been imprinted on it as a photographic negative: like in each negative and like in a mirrored image, the right side appears as the left one, and vice versa.

For clarity, I'm going to compare a positive and negative picture of a Byzantine painted icon with a photographic positive and negative of the Shroud Man's face:

Fotografia di un'icona (opera umana)



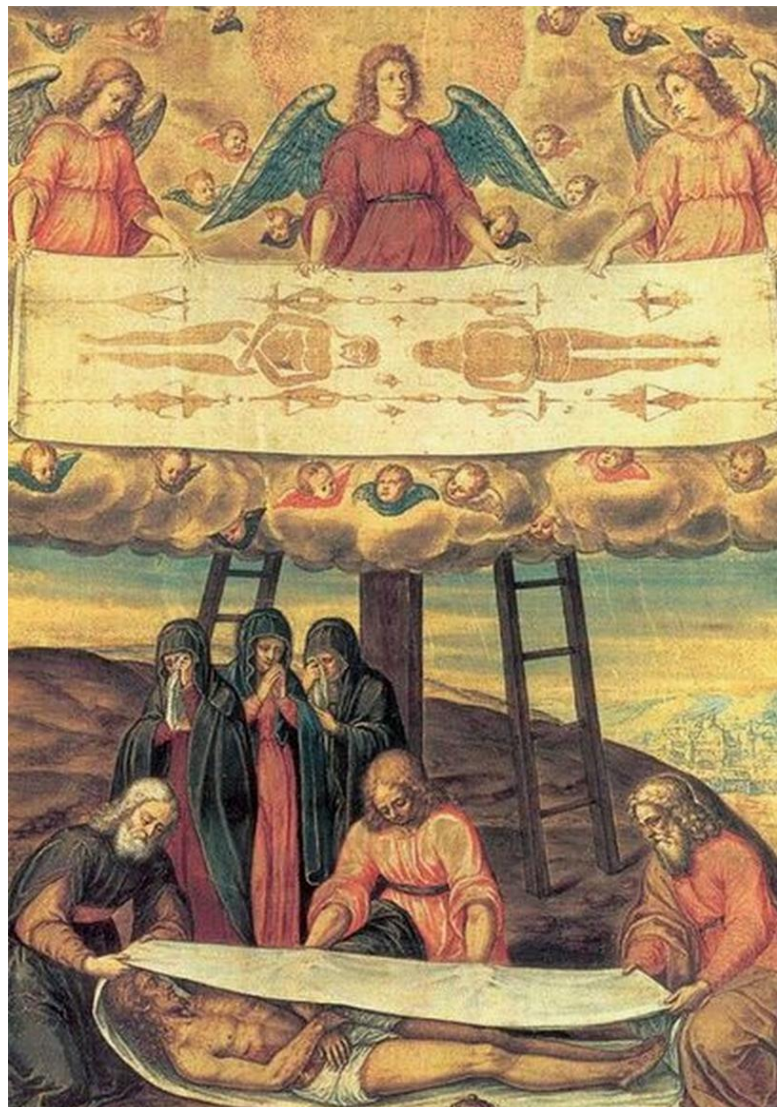
Negativo della stessa foto



- 1) Photograph of an icon (by human hands)
- 2): Negative of the same photograph
- 3) Photograph of the Shroud's Face
- 4) Negative of the same photograph

The lines crossing the Shroud Face's hair and beard are two folds on the sheet, probably caused by the backing cloth sewed by the Poor Clares Nuns of Chambery on its back after the 1532 fire. They appear positive in the right photo and negative in the left one, unlike the face; likewise the bloodstains, such as one very clear on the forehead, which has a "ε" (or a "reversed 3") shape in the right image (on the left of the reader) and a "3" shape in the mirrored left picture.

One of the two paintings by Giovanni Battista della Rovere "il Fiammenghino", depicting Jesus wrapped in the Shroud (the other one is printed on cover page)



The cloth definitely is consistent with the type used to wrap the corpses in Palestine at the time of Christ, although it was common to bandage the body differently, like the Egyptians used to do, and as it is reported in the Gospel of John about Lazarus of Betània episode<sup>11</sup> . When wrapped in a shroud, the body was lying on half of the burial cloth, with the feet at the end and the head to the middle of the Cloth (but sometimes placed in the inverted position); the other half then being drawn over the head to cover the body, which remained inside the cloth (as the picture above shows).

### Linen cloth or strips ?

The evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke write that Jesus was placed into a sindòn, a linen shroud; on the contrary, John uses the word linen cloths instead of shroud, “bende” according to the Italian translation. Consequently, many people think and claim that the Shroud of Turin actually is a forgery. Let's try to solve this "mystery" concerning the strips through the reading of the related Gospels' verses: I have already given you a clue.

An ancient sepulcher in Nazareth (known as the “Tomb of the Just”) resembling the tomb of Jesus, with a rolling stone used to seal the entrance



"When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus . Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away" (Matthew, 27, 57 - 60).

"And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the Council, who was also

himself looking for the Kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead, and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. When he learned from the centurion that it was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb " (Mark 15, 42 - 46).

"Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man,, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the Kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb cut in a stone, where no one had yet been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning" (Luke, 23, 50 - 54).

*"After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths<sup>12</sup> with the spices, as in the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in*

*which no one had yet been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there (John, 19, 38 - 42).*

John also writes about the discovery, on Sunday morning after the Friday of crucifixion, of the burial cloths of Jesus in the empty tomb where Christ had been before his resurrection<sup>13</sup> :

"Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved<sup>14</sup> , and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him!'. So, Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stopping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then, Simon Peter came, following him and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed;

for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead" (John, 20, 1 - 9).<sup>15</sup>

So strips, or bandages (as in the 1974 Italian version)?! Not shroud?

Well, I told you I had left a clue; more precisely, I had talked about translation. According to the original Greek translation, the two apostles, in addition to the "soudarion", identified as the burial handkerchief placed on the head<sup>16</sup>, found othònia (plural), namely generic linen cloths, therefore not strips (bende) as from the 1974 Italian translation<sup>17</sup>, which is not literal. Since othònia means generic linen cloths, and is a word in the plural, it may refer to a sheet together with a handkerchief-shroud and strips<sup>18</sup>; but definitely it does not mean only strips or bandages. It should be noted that Luke, Mark and Matthew do not describe the fabric of the Shroud of Jesus; only John, the last evangelist to write a Gospel between A.D. 80 and 100, fills the gap:

Here the 2008 Italian translation by CEI (Conferenza Episcopale Italiana), in Italian language, with the difference between 2008 and 1974 versions of John: 20, 1-9.

Il primo giorno della settimana, Maria di Màgdala si recò al sepolcro di mattino, quando era ancora buio, e vide che la pietra era stata tolta dal sepolcro. Corse allora e andò da Simon Pietro dall'altro discepolo, quello che Gesù amava, e disse loro: "Hanno portato via il Signore dal sepolcro e non sappiamo dove l'hanno posto!". Pietro allora uscì insieme all'altro discepolo e si recarono al sepolcro. Correivano insieme tutti e due, ma l'altro discepolo corse più veloce di Pietro e giunse per primo al sepolcro. Si chinò, vide i teli (linen cloths) (in the 1974 translation by CEI "bende", that is "bandages") posati là, ma

non entrò. Giunse intanto anche Simon Pietro, che lo seguiva, ed entrò nel sepolcro e osservò i teli posati là, e il sudario -che era stato sul suo capo- non posato là con I teli, ma avvolto in un luogo a parte. Allora entrò anche l'altro discepolo, che era giunto per primo al sepolcro, e vide e credette. Infatti non avevano ancora compreso la Scrittura, che cioè egli doveva risorgere dai morti.

When John intends to refer expressly to a term similar to strips, such as when he narrates the raising of Lazarus (John, 11, 44) he uses the Greek word keiriài instead of othònia.

### [History of the Shroud until A.D. 1356 and the first definite historical record in the same year](#)

The history of the Shroud was recorded year by year from A.D. 1356 onward (see Chronology). For the previous centuries, we have only traditions passed down, theory and few written papers.

In A.D. 340, Cyril of Jerusalem described the Sepulcher's red rock with white veins and the Shroud - he did not mention the word bandages - which wrapped Jesus according to the evangelists, as “witnesses of Resurrection”; but he did not tell us he saw directly that cloth, thus we cannot connect it to the Shroud of Turin. In A.D. 570, hence about two hundred years later, a man called Antonino da Piacenza claimed, on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, that the “sudarium” which wrapped Jesus' head was kept in a monastery near the river Jordan: however, the pilgrim meant a handkerchief, not an imprinted image, thus we can rule out that it was the Cloth of Turin, and even a generic shroud.

Moreover, many alleged relics freely went around during those centuries, such as the nails of Christ, the wood of the Cross, the spear of Longinus which would have pierced Jesus' side, various towels containing Mary's tears, and other sacred remains<sup>19</sup>.



A mandylion, a cloth with the face of Jesus, was exhibited in Edessa, today Şanlıurfa (Urfa) in south-eastern Turkey, in A.D. 544. It has been speculated that it was the Shroud folded in overlapping layers in order to show only the Face, or little more. Is it the Shroud of Turin? In certain images representing the mandylion (Spas Neredica near to Novgorod in Russia, Gradac in Serbia, Laon Aisne in France), it appears as a rectangular lozenge reliquary with a bearded and long hair face in the middle. In 1984, the sindonologist J. P. Jackson detected some uninterrupted marks throughout the Cloth of Turin, corresponding to a folding into eight rectangular parts measuring 110 x 55 cm each: with the Shroud folded in that way,

its Face would have appeared on the top, roughly in the middle of the frame, with the torso and a small part of the chest under it<sup>20</sup> . It is perfectly plausible that for decency reasons, because of the scandal to show the naked and tortured body of Christ according to the mentality of that times, in Edessa decided to exhibit only the Face of the relic, assuming it was the Shroud. On the other hand, for the same reason the paintings and mosaics did not depict Jesus without clothes at that time, and there were no images of Jesus crucified, or at least wearing a loincloth: they will be produced centuries later.

There is an ancient legend about the origin of the Edessa's image:

The mandylion was an image miraculously produced by Jesus as a gift to Abgar V, known as Ukama (“the Black”), King of Edessa from A.D. 13 to 50. Since he was suffering from leprosy, he sent messengers to Jerusalem during the Easter week for inviting the Nazarene to his court to be cured. Christ, who could not go due to the imminent crucifixion, healed King Abgar through the view of an icon, which delegates carried to the king. According to another version, the mandylion was a portrait painted in tempera by a man called Anania, who was sent to Jesus by Abgar V. Another legend says that Jesus, who was not satisfied with the Anania's work, dipped his fingers into the colors to modify the icon and make it identical to his face. However, Abgar V healed when he saw the image; and therefore he converted to Christianity, along with his son Ma’nu V (who was king for

a short time after his father died). But Abgar's nephew Ma'nu VI, who took the throne in A.D. 57, reverted to paganism and started to persecute Christians. Even today, an icon painted in tempera with an egg-white base, which would be the one sent by Jesus to King Abgar, is venerated at the Genoese church of San Bartolomeo degli Armeni. Obviously, the Shroud is not a painting, and therefore the mandylion is not the Shroud. The one showed in Genoa is rather an ancient Byzantine icon inspired by the mandylion and probably produced in Edessa.

Icon painted in tempera – Church of “San Bartolomeo degli Armeni” in Genoa



According to various Greek, Arab and Syriac traditions, in the middle of the 10th century the Eastern Emperor Romanus I Lecapenus wanted the mandylion to be moved to Constantinople. The Edessa Christ's Face was identified and venerated as an acheropito, or “not made by human hands”<sup>21</sup> .. The region of Anatolia was ruled by the Turks, who regarded the mandylion to be the protector of the city, being Muslims and considering Jesus as the second most important prophet after Muhammad<sup>22</sup>. In the spring of A.D. 943, the Emperor Romanus I declared war on the Turks to claim the mandylion's protection and, after sending a powerful army led by General John Kurkuas, conquered Edessa. The Byzantine general asked the emir of the defeated city to deliver the mandylion, in the meantime hidden by the besieged; in order to achieve his goal, he offered indulgence to the inhabitants, released 200 prisoners and promised to pay 12,000 precious metal coins (maybe silver coins, or even gold coins). The emir accepted and handed over the sacred relic to Kurkuas, despite the protests of the people. The mandylion arrived in Constantinople on August 15th 944, during the day of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (at that time, Dormition of the Mother of God). The mandylion – or the Shroud folded? - was kept in the Pharos chapel adjacent to Boukoleon, the palace of Romanus I.

A miniature painting of the Skilitzis Code, a Byzantine manuscript produced between the 11th and 13th century,

and currently kept at the Madrid National Library, shows the handover of the mandylion to the Emperor Romanus I Lecapenus (sided by the Patriarch of Constantinople Theophylact and dignitaries). In the middle of the picture below, it is clearly visible the almost three-dimensional image of Christ rising from the cloth:



On August 16th 944 A.D., the day after the mandylion arrived in Constantinople, the Archdeacon and Referendarius of the Cathedral of Hagia Sofia Gregory, in charge of official relations between the Patriarch and the Emperor, pronounced a sermon concerning the event from the cathedral pulpit. The

respective manuscript is preserved in the Vatican Archives (Cod. Vat. Gr. 511, ff. 143-150v, classified as De Christi imagine Edessena<sup>23</sup> ). After talking about the image arrived from Edessa in the current year 6452 (according to the biblical dating, corresponding to A.D. 944), Gregory passionately described the mandylion, which he called shroud, clearly in reference to the three synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) which, unlike the John's Gospel, used that term. About the image, Gregory said: "Imprinted only by the agony sweats from the face of the Originator of Life, falling like drops of blood, and by the finger of God. For these are the beauties that have made up the true imprint of Christ; since, after the drops fell, it was embellished by the drops from his own side. Both are highly instructive: blood and water here, there sweat and image. Oh equality of realities, since both have their origin in the same person; the source of living water can be seen and it gives us water, showing us that the origin of the image made by sweat is, in fact, of the same nature as the origin of that which makes the liquid flow from the side. Gradually you get used to something you had never seen before and whose eyes and mind had no experience. An image not outlined on the edges, that fades into nothing, that if you approach it, pale and disappear, and if you move away it reappears; a color faded, very pale, that you could not define, almost out from the chromatic scale; two long imprints of a naked body, front and back, so strangely and illogically put next to each other; a quantity of bloody signs, also imprinted on a

skin in a supreme rigor mortis [...] before plunging into that long speechless contemplation that is always, for anyone, the first shroud watching. The first impact with the shroud, is for everyone a long look at a long silence”.

Obviously, the use of the term shroud in that old sermon is not an evidence that Gregory wished to refer to the Shroud of Turin. However, it is really important he mentioned the full body of Jesus, and not only his face, because it suggests that the relic was a burial cloth and not a simple handkerchief.

A 15th century miniature representing the Latin conquest of Constantinople



In 1204 A.D. a tragedy took place: the Byzantine Empire was sacked by the army of the Fourth Crusade, which was

called by Pope Innocent III to reclaim Holy Land from Muslims, without achieving such purpose. On April 12th, Constantinople was conquered, with horrible massacres and awful looting of treasures and holy relics. If it's true that only the First Crusade had strong idealistic motivations, besides the usual economic and power reasons, before the 1204 events the Christians never reached a such level of cynical and bloody profiteering. Count Baldwin IX of Flanders was in charge of the abject expedition, and under his command the French knights William of Champlitte, Geoffrey of Villehardouin, Othon de La Roche (Duchy of Burgundy) and the Italian commanders Boniface of Montferrat and Enrico Dandolo (Doge of Venice) participated to the crusade. When the Latin Empire was finally established, the Byzantine's territories were apportioned between the winners, except for the Doge of Venice who was ninety years old and very ill. Count Baldwin of Flanders was crowned as Emperor Baldwin I in the cathedral of Constantinople, Hagia Sofia, with a lavish ceremony. William of Champlitte became Prince of Achaea; Geoffrey of Villehardouin Prince of Morea; Boniface of Montferrat King of Thessalonica. Finally, but his figure is the most important in our history, Othon de La Roche became Duke of Athens and Thebes. Meanwhile, the mandylion (or the Shroud?) was stolen during the looting from the church annexed to the imperial palace of Blachernae by unknowns. Was it hidden in Athens? We can presume it by reading the copy of a letter dated August 1st 1205, just after the sack of Constantinople,

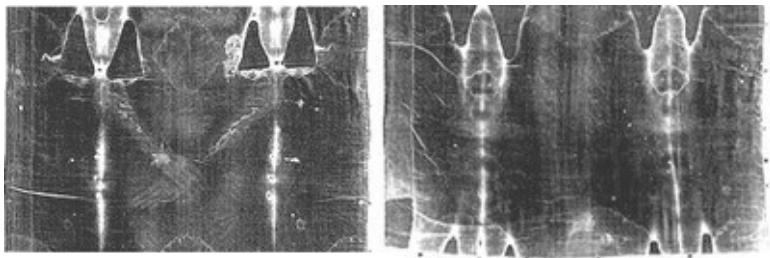
which was originally sent by Theodore Komnenos, related to the imperial family, to the Pope Innocent III (but we have no certain evidence on the existence of the original)<sup>24</sup> ; in this paper, Theodore blamed crusaders to be predators of relics, and asked the Supreme Pontiff for the return of the Constantinople cloth, which he claimed to be kept in Athens by the Duke Othon de La Roche. Later, in A.D. 1208, the Duke of Athens and Thebes probably would have sent the shroud (again, the Shroud of Turin?) in his possession to his father Ponce II de La Roche-sur-Oignon and Ray; hence, from that year the cloth would have been in France guarded by the de La Roche family.



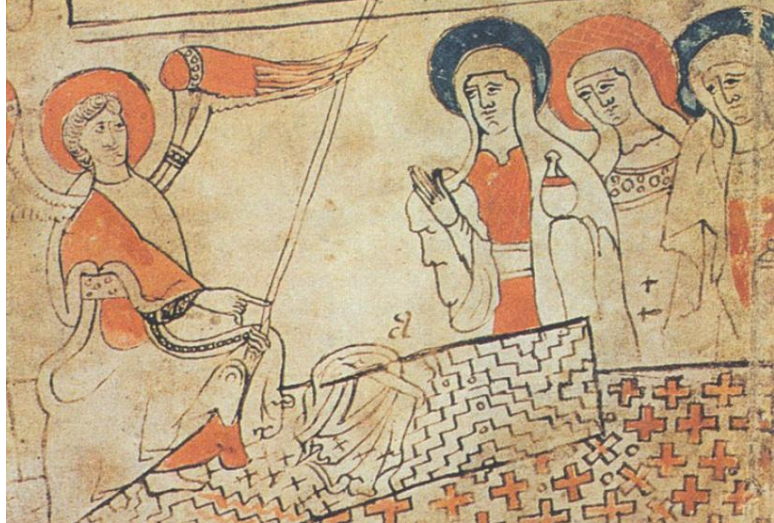
Since there are no definite documents to corroborate that the cloth in Constantinople actually was the Shroud of Turin, we have an historical gap until 1536 when, as we will see, it was definitely in Lirey, France. Nevertheless, a miniature, not properly a document, was found in the Pray Codex, a collection of manuscripts dating to A.D. 1192-1995 and currently kept in the National Library of Budapest.

It is a sacramentary written in Latin which includes a funeral

sermon in Hungarian (it's the oldest text in this language). The Hungarian Jesuit Georgius Pray (who gave the name to the Codex) discovered the artifact in Slovakia in the library of the Benedictine monastery of Pozsony, currently Bratislava, in the 18th century. The Pray Codex is an handwritten (in the 12th century the printing press had not been invented yet). The miniature we are interested in, composed by two overlapping illustrations, is on the back of the sheet number XXVII, and shows the entombment of Jesus. The upper image depicts the anointing of Jesus' body, entirely naked just like in the image of the Shroud of Turin (this is a specificity compared to the contemporary and earlier icons); moreover, the arms are crossed on the pelvis, the right on the left, and the thumbs and the feet are not visible, everything again like on the Shroud (see the following paragraph Why are the thumbs not visible on the Shroud? Why is his right foot covering his left one in the positive photographic image?). On the pictures below, hands and lower extremities details on a Shroud negative image, and the Pray Codex:



Pray Codex miniature



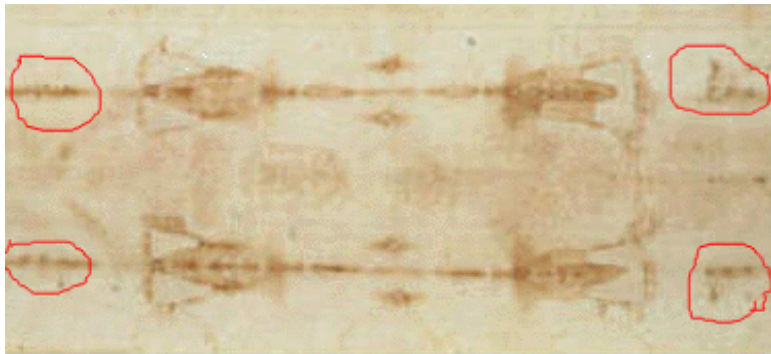
The miniature's upper illustration shows the body of Christ lying on a sheet while being anointed; and the lower image represents the pious women visiting the sepulcher on Easter Sunday, bringing oils for the corpse who, however, was no longer there because of the resurrection, as the angel proclaimed:

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. An they were saying to one another: "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?". And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back – it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them: "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified! He had risen, he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you". And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid. (Mark, 16, 1-8).

On the miniature again, there is a zigzag pattern on the sheet which resembling, according to some but not for me, the Shroud's herringbone weave. On the bottom illustration, there are two groups of tiny circles to form a letter L, similar to the

four groups of four holes each, originated from burns, that can be found on the Shroud of Turin (actually, there are other small holes not clearly visible to the visitors, unlike the larger ones). These symmetrical groups of holes are, approximately, in the middle of the four layers which result from a folding of the Cloth in four.

A detail of the Shroud with highlighting of the four groups of the oldest burns



Closeup of one of the burn groups



A detail of the Pray Codex with the highlighting of two supposed L-shaped holes



It could be that the burn marks had been produced with the Shroud folded in four, and the damage passed through all the sides. The origin of the burns is unknown - perhaps molten metal accidentally dripped -, but we know they are on the Cloth since before the A.D. 1532, when the Chapel of the Shroud in Chambery caught fire (see Chronology, A.D. 1532); in fact, these symmetrical holes are depicted on a printmaking made by Dürer in Chambery in A.D. 1516, reproducing for the first time the whole Shroud:

Printmaking of the Shroud credited to Albrecht Dürer - A.D. 1516 -, one third of the real size of the Shroud, guarded in the church of Saint. Gommaire in Lier, Belgium: the four

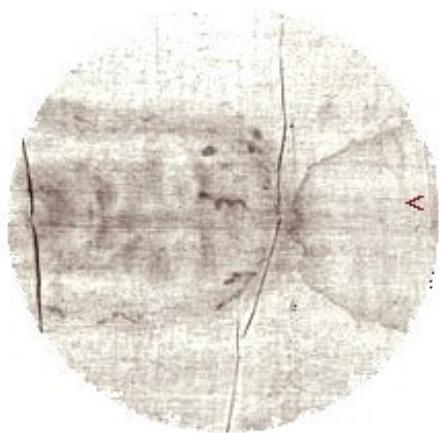
symmetrical groups of holes are clearly displayed



The question is: did the author of Pray Codex miniature, who expressly states in the text that he was inspired by a shroud, really see the Shroud of Turin so as to be influenced by it?

By the way: please note that the Man's face and head are divided and detached in the printmaking (as a result of the three-dimensional head); in fact, in A.D. 1516 there was not yet on the linen the water stain caused by 1532 Chambery fire extinction (see Chronology) which many people confuse, making a mistake, with the Man's nape.

Water stain



< macchia di acqua

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