

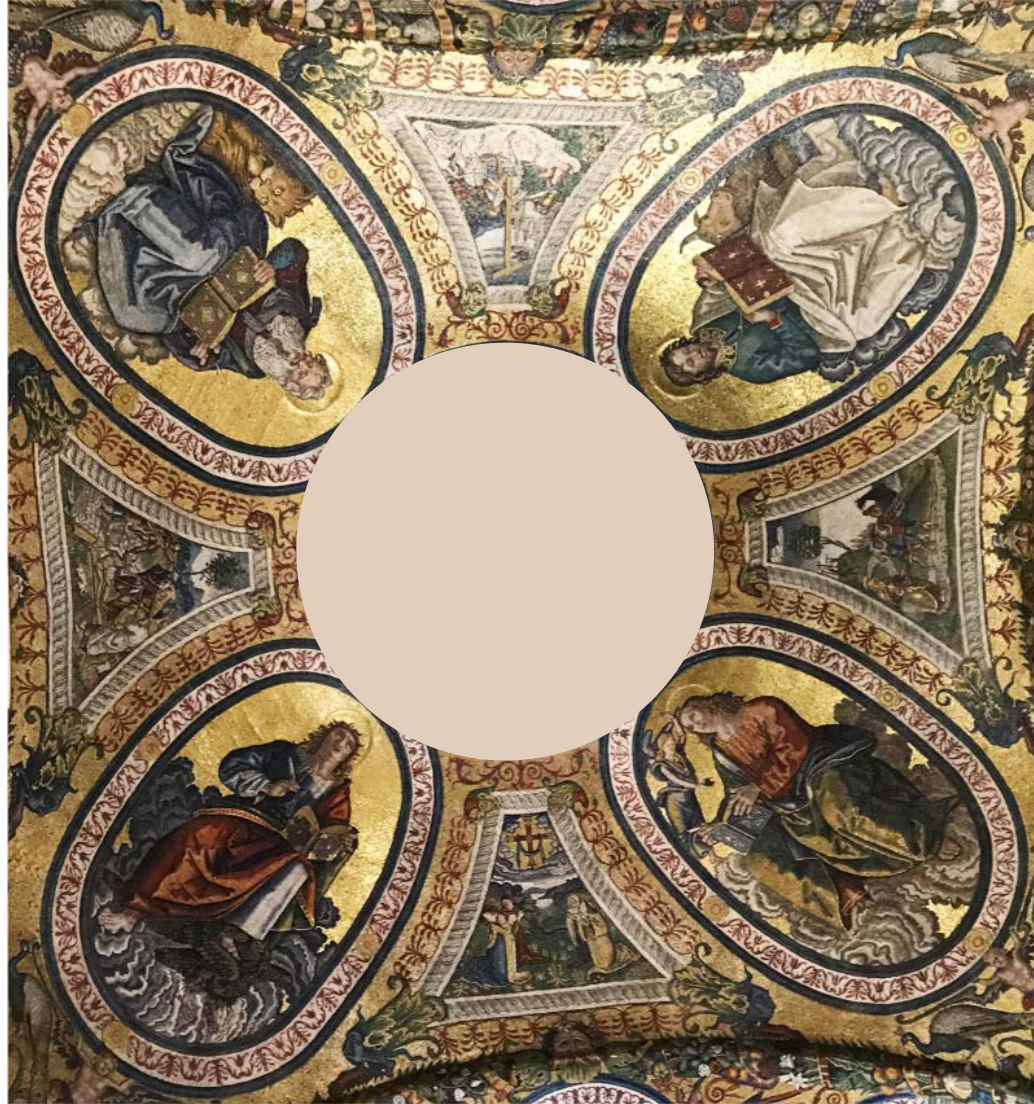
THE 5th GOSPEL



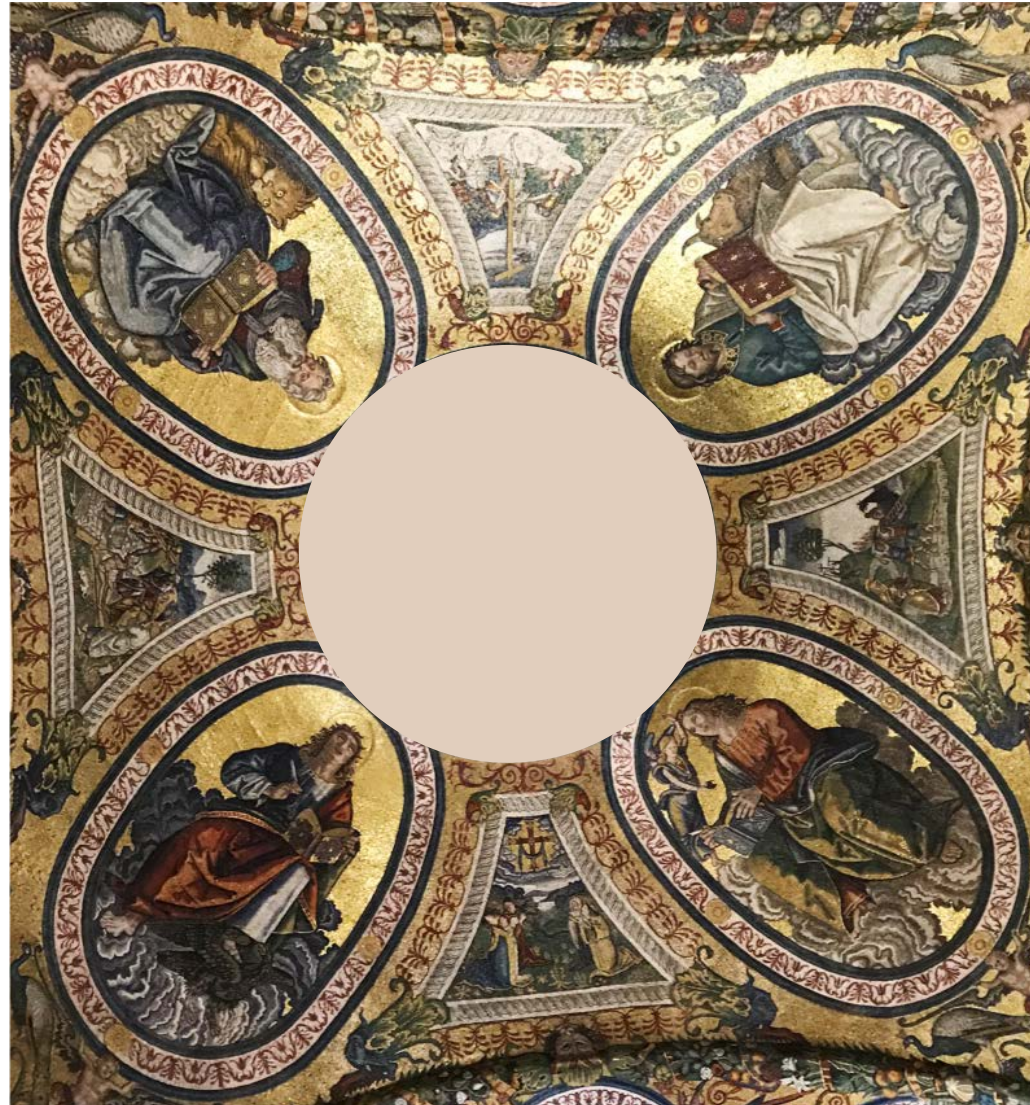
Synthesis by
CHARLES NAJJAR

THE 5th GOSPEL

WE ALL KNOW THE FOUR GOSPELS...



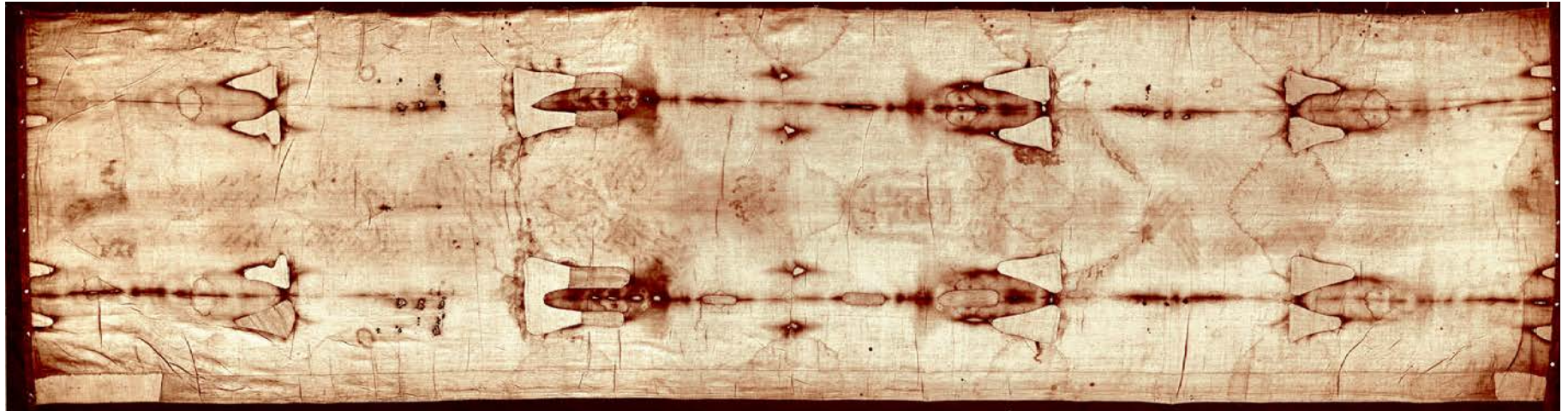
... BUT WHAT IF THERE WAS A FIFTH ONE?



... "WRITTEN" BY JESUS HIMSELF!

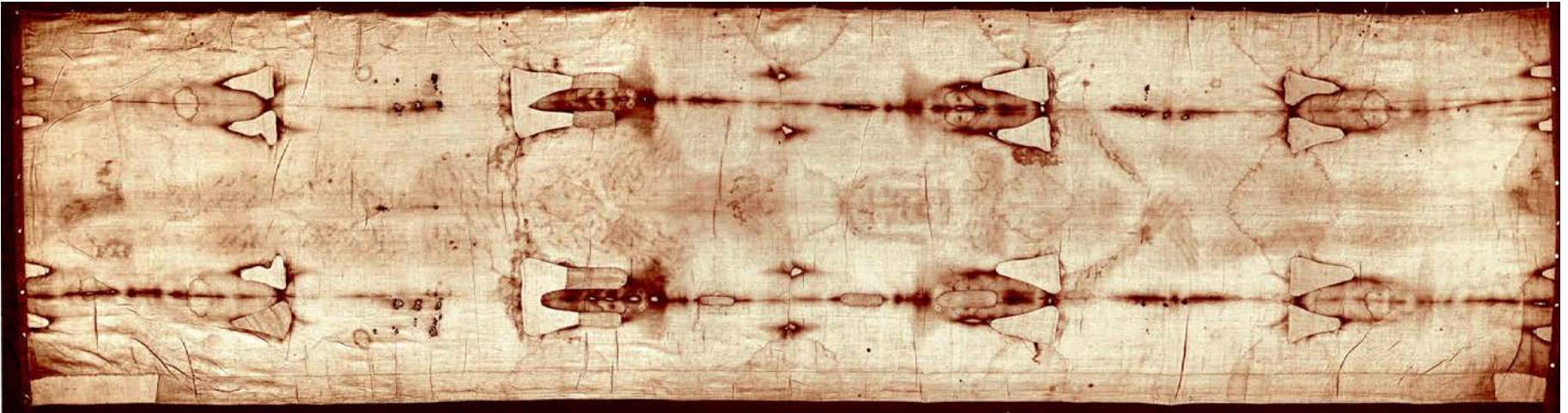


A gospel that tells with incredible PRECISION all the details of his Passion: his flogging, his coronation with thorns, his side pierced with a spear, and all the suffering from his crucifixion...And, most importantly, a Gospel that PROVES his resurrection!



WHO COULD BE BETTER THAN HIM TO TELL US ALL THIS ?

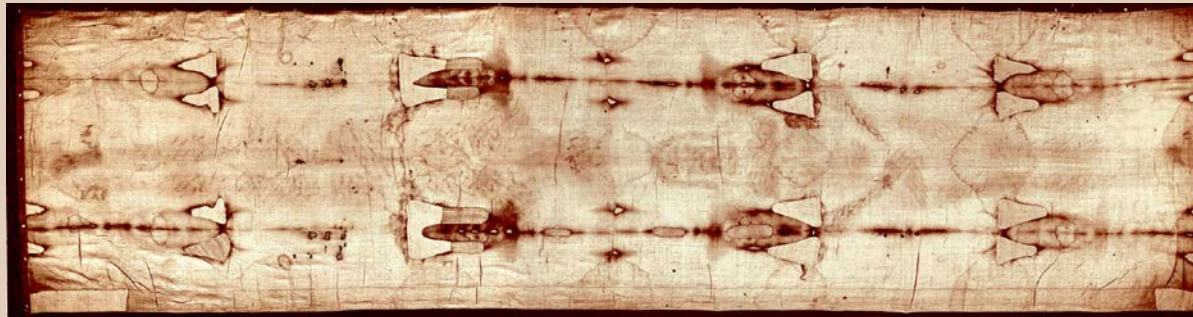
THE SHROUD



The Shroud is a linen cloth of 4.41 meters of length and 1.13 meters of width, on which is printed a front and back image of a crucified man bearing all the signs of the Passion of Jesus.

The technical and anatomical characteristics of the image are impossible to reproduce, even using today's technology. It has also been proven that the image on the Shroud is in no way a painting since there is no directional path and no trace of pigments.

THE SHROUD IN THE GOSPELS



“Joseph of Arimathia, who bought a shroud, took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped him in the shroud and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb.”
(Mk 15, 46)

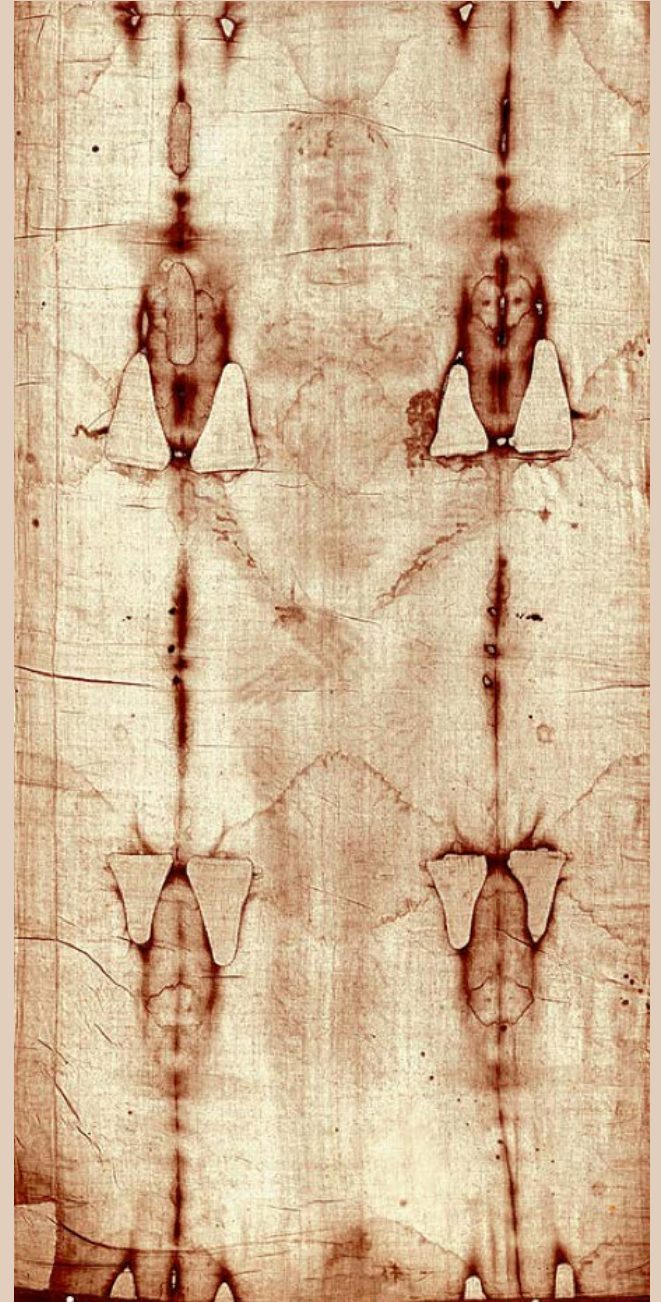
“So Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.”
(Mt 27, 59)

“Then he took the body down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and placed it in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had yet been laid.”
(Lk 23, 53)

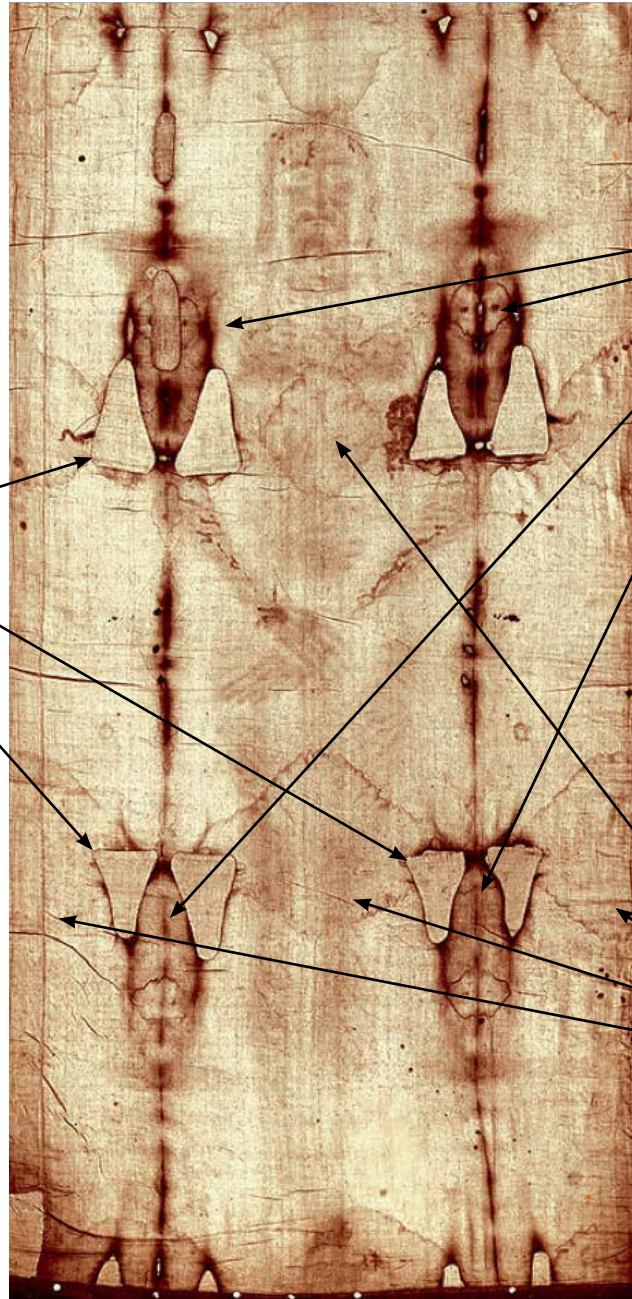


Gianbattista delle Rovere, the "*Fiammenghino*", 1498-1578, painting on canvas. Sabauda Gallery (Turin).

FRONT IMAGE



Before analyzing the picture, it is important to underline the damages that have occurred on the Shroud during its history. **These damages have altered the Shroud but not the image itself!**

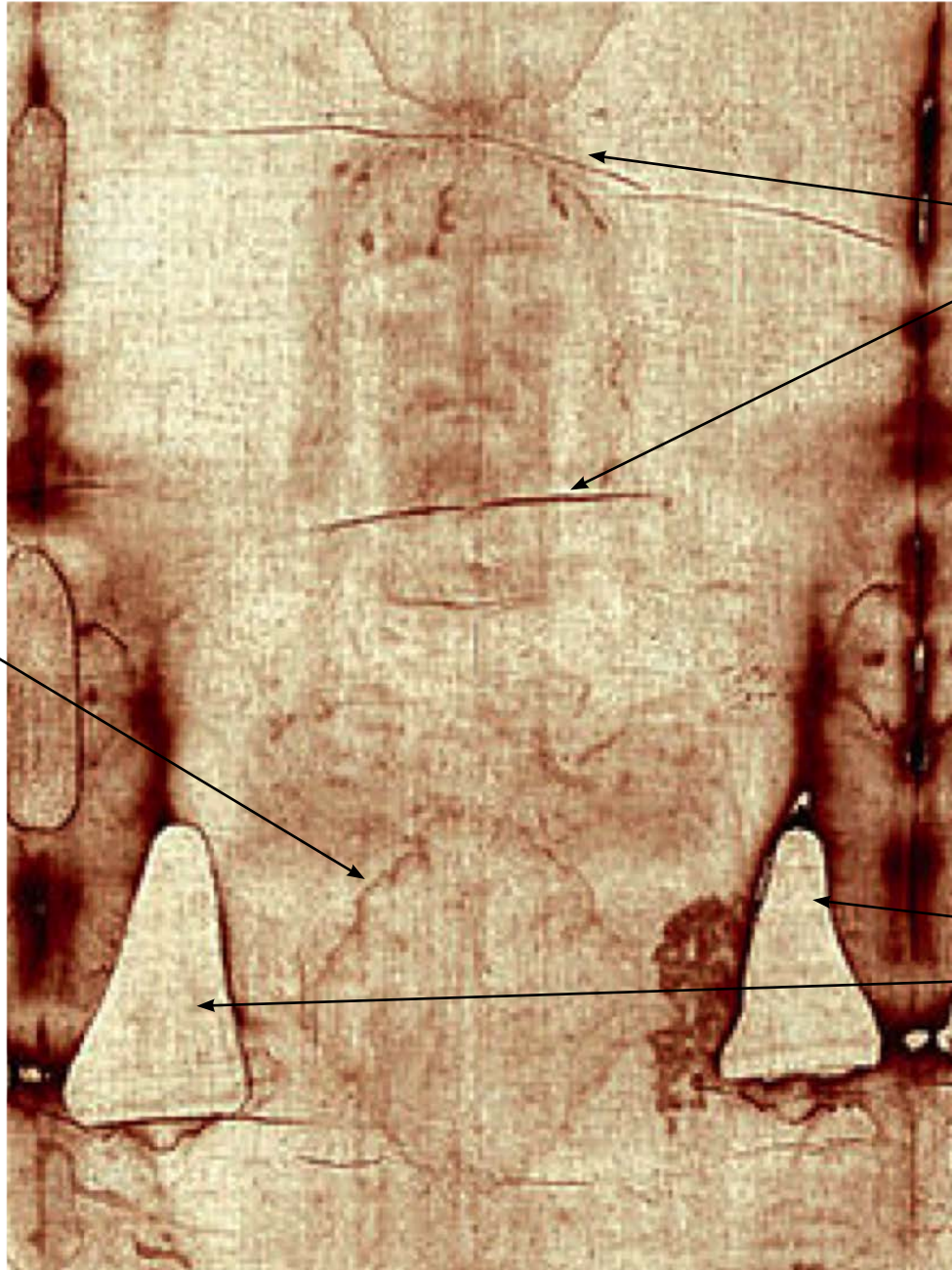


Patches of fabric from the restoration work that followed the fire

Burns due to the fire in Chambéry in 1532

Traces of water used to extinguish the fire

IMAGE INSENSITIVE TO WATER AND HEAT



*Permanent folds caused by the long conservation of the Shroud in the form of the Mandylion * during the Middle Ages*

**Image of the Face of Jesus "not made by a human hand" worshipped in Edessa and Constantinople from 525 A.C. to 1204 A.C.*

Traces of water used to extinguish the Chambéry fire

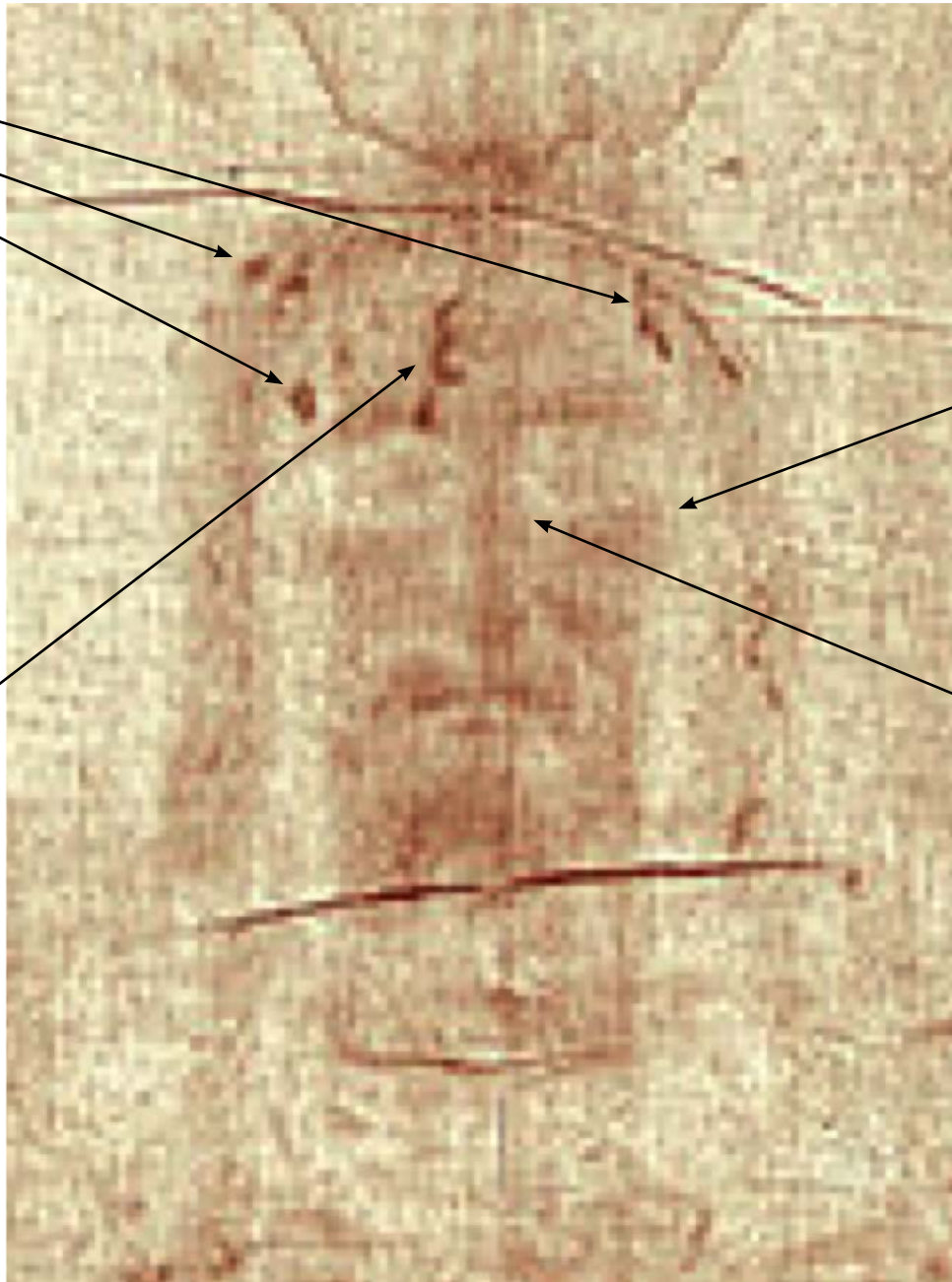
Patching made by the Poor Clares of Chambéry following the fire

The image of the face shows clearly that the crucified was harshly beaten and crowned with thorns.

Bloated cheek

Fractured nose

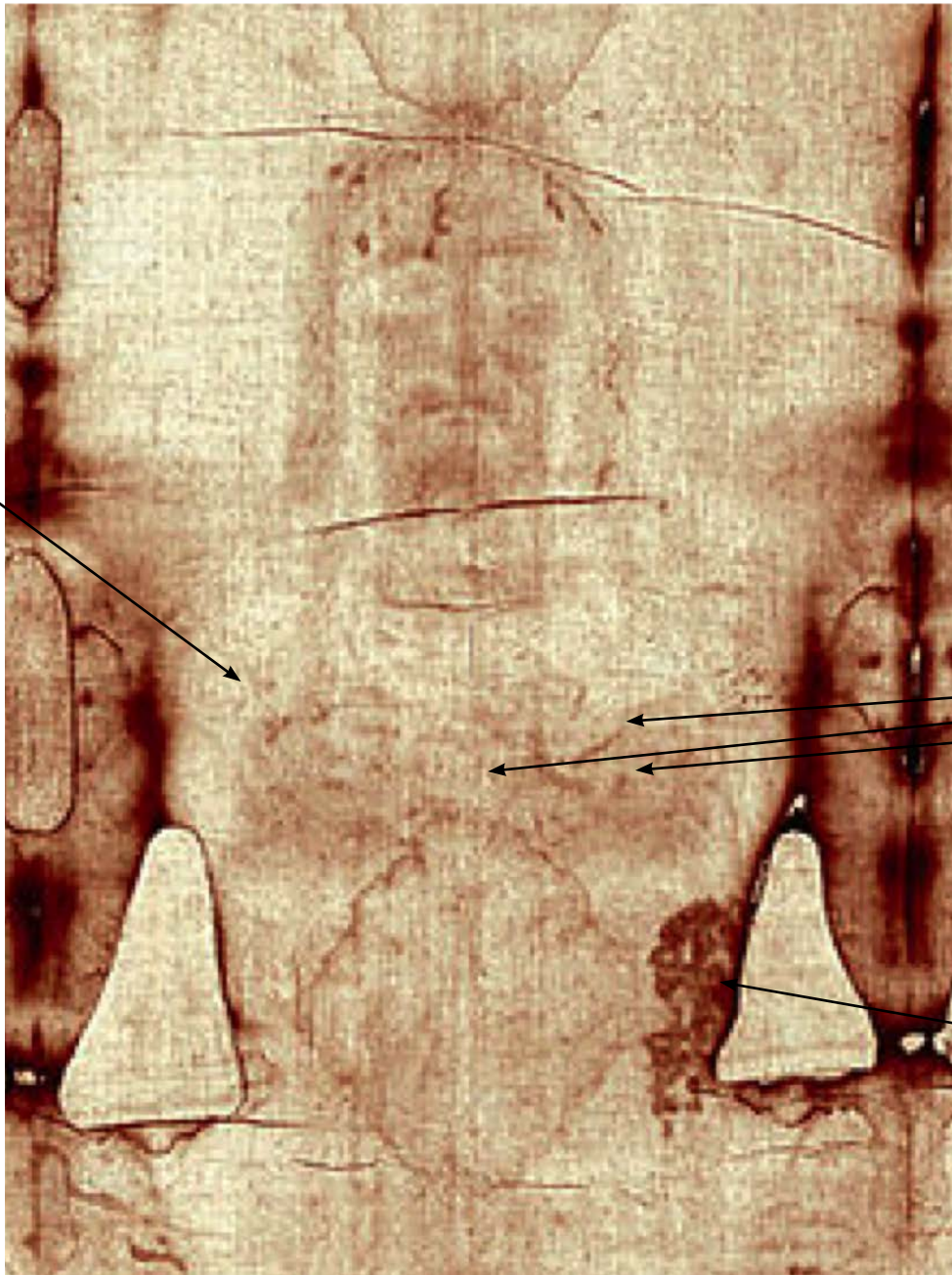
THE FACE



Flow of blood due to the crown of thorns

Flow of blood from a frontal vein in the shape of inverted 3 (this shape is due to the wrinkling of the forehead by the intensity of pain)

Inflated lungs



Whip traces

Spear wound

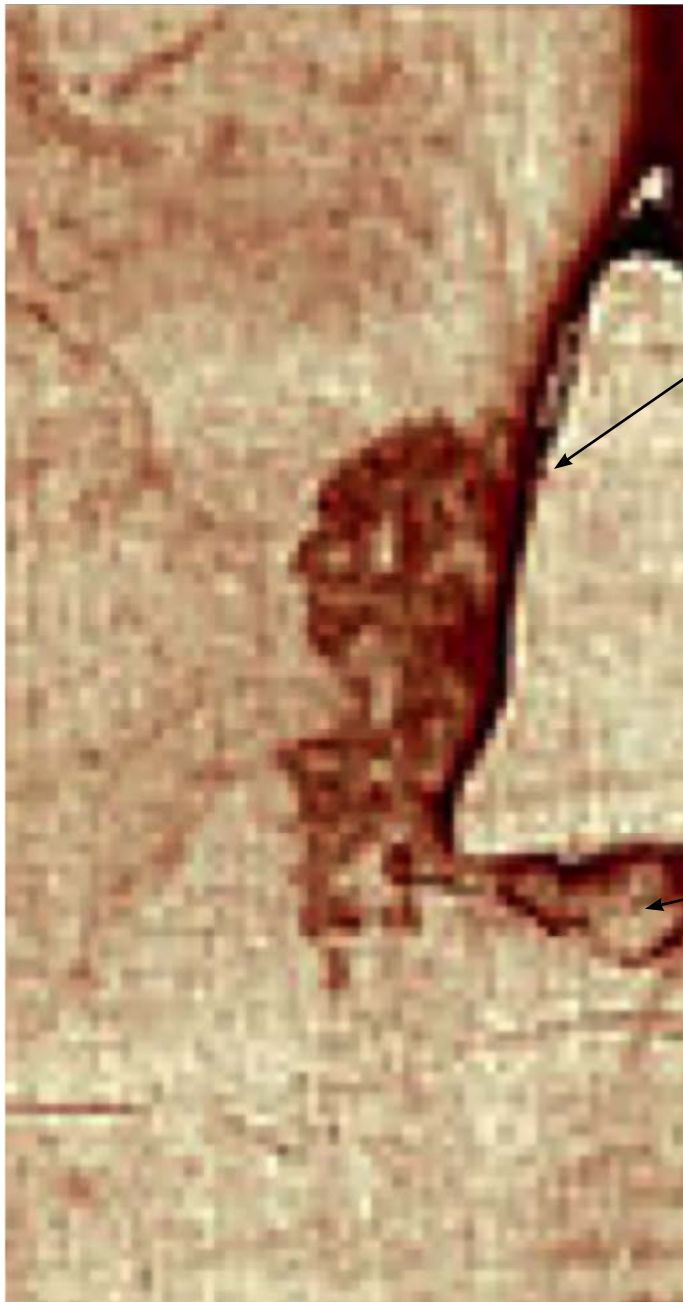
THE CHEST

INFLATED LUNGS DUE TO SUFFOCATION

It is important to note that **a crucified person dies by suffocation**, as his arms are no longer able to hold his body, his lungs will tighten until he suffocates. The crucified person could not reduce the pressure on his lungs by raising his heels because they were blocked by nails (as shown in the back image of the Shroud) . The only way for the crucified to delay his death is to try to straighten himself by a continuous movement of the knees. This is why when the Romans wanted to accelerate the death of a crucified person, they used to break his legs. Jesus had the peculiarity of being a crucified man whose legs were not broken because he was already dead when the Roman soldiers aimed to do so. Instead, to ascertain his death, they pierced his side with a spear.

Jesus died on the cross “earlier than expected” (before the Romans had to break his legs) because he had been flogged before the crucifixion, which had greatly weakened him. This element is also particular to Jesus, since it was not tradition to flog those who were condemned to crucifixion. The reason for this peculiar double torture is that Pilate had initially decided only to scourge Jesus, as he saw no reason to crucify him. It is later, under the pressure of the high priests, that he changed his mind and ordered his crucifixion. That's why Jesus suffered this uncommon double torture: flogging + crucifixion.

The Crucified of the Shroud presents all the characteristics that are UNIQUE to Jesus' crucifixion including the flogging, the crown of thorns, the mark of the spear, and the unbroken legs.

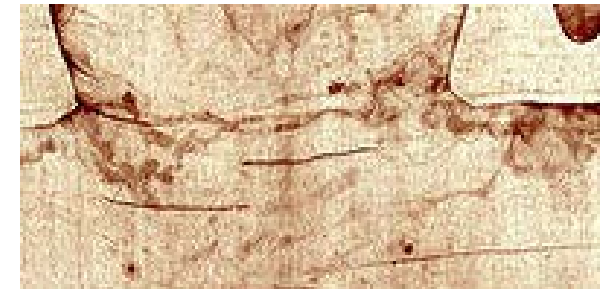


Flow of blood due to the spear wound on the right side

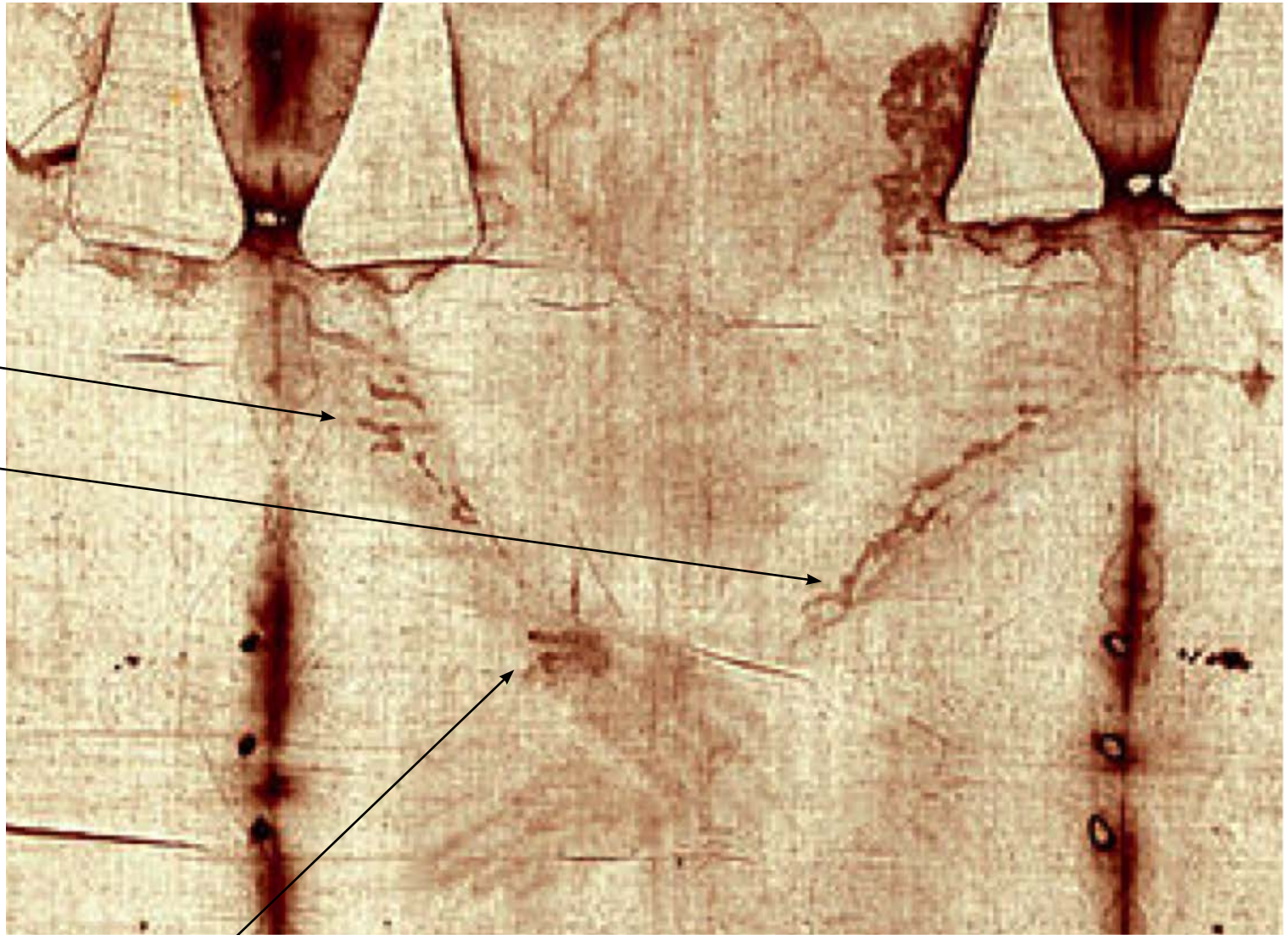
The injury on the side continues to bleed as it is a medical fact that a post-mortem wound does not stop from bleeding

The image of the side wound is very impressive because it shows that the wound did not stop bleeding, as it had been made after the death. It is a medical fact that post-mortem wounds do not cicatrize and thus, continue to bleed. This is exactly what is shown on the Shroud image. The wound continues to bleed even after the body is buried, with the blood flowing and accumulating in the back (as the body is laid down). We can see the accumulation of that blood in the back image of the Shroud. No forger aiming at creating a false image could have ever imagined such precise detail.

The image of the side wound is very powerful because it shows that **Jesus has literally given ALL his blood.**



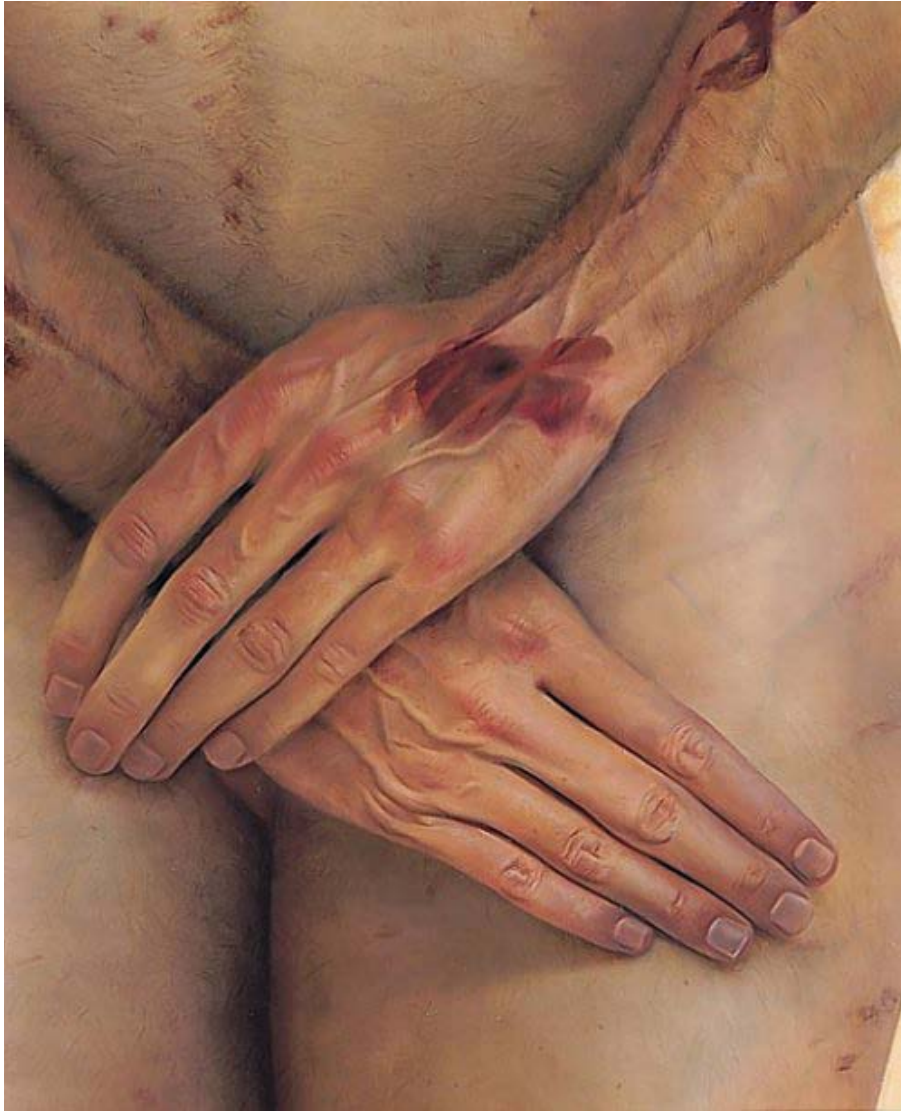
“So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out.”
(Jn 19, 31-35)



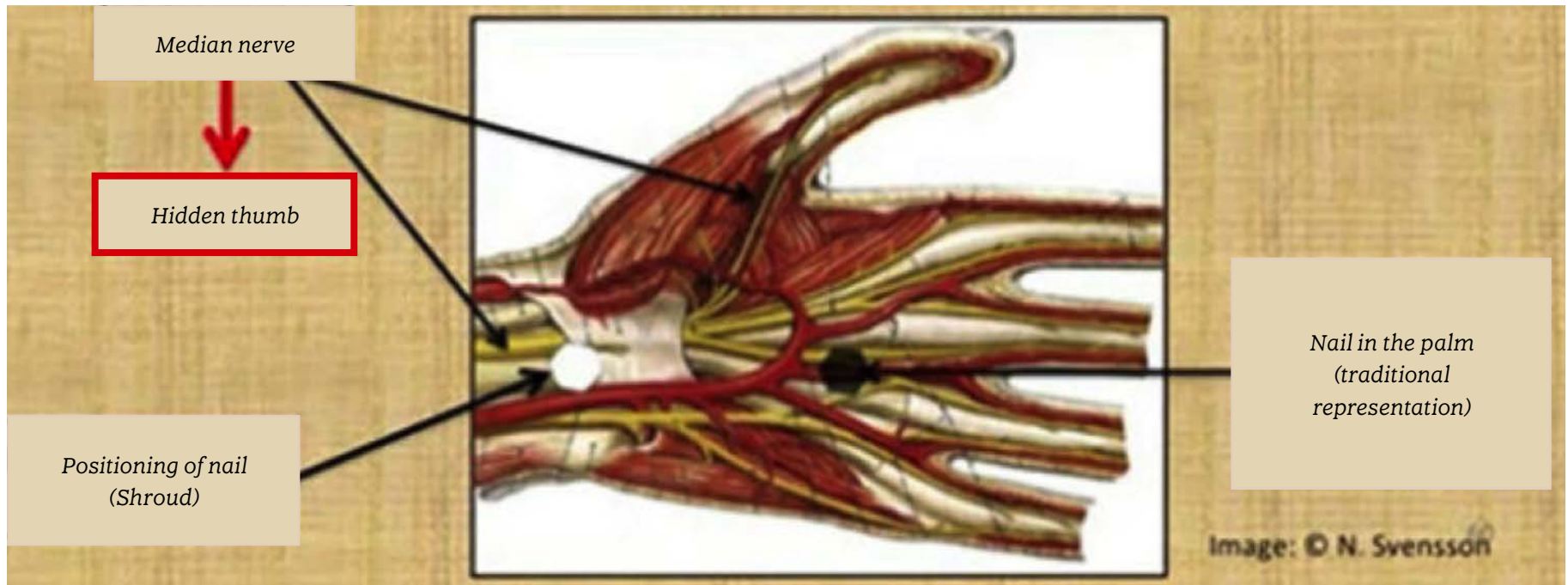
The flows of blood are upwards because these streams of blood coagulated while the crucified was still on the cross

Trace of nail in the wrist

THE ARMS AND HANDS

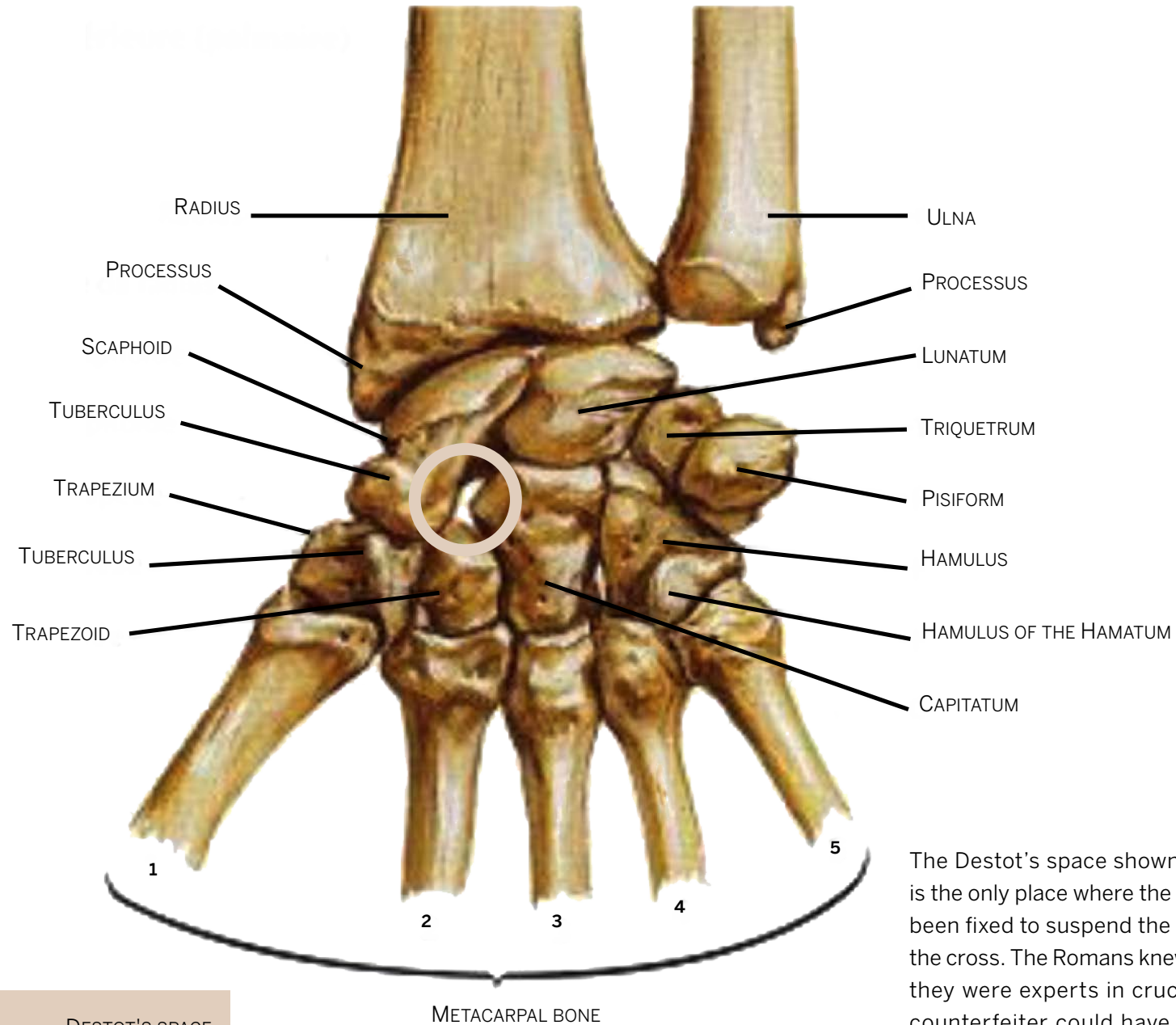


THE MYSTERY OF THE 4 FINGERS...



The positioning of the nail on the image of the Shroud appears in the wrist, and not in the palm as traditionally represented. Anatomically speaking, the hand cannot support a body on the cross, otherwise it gets torn. The only possibility is to place the nail at the top of the wrist and more precisely in the Destot's space.

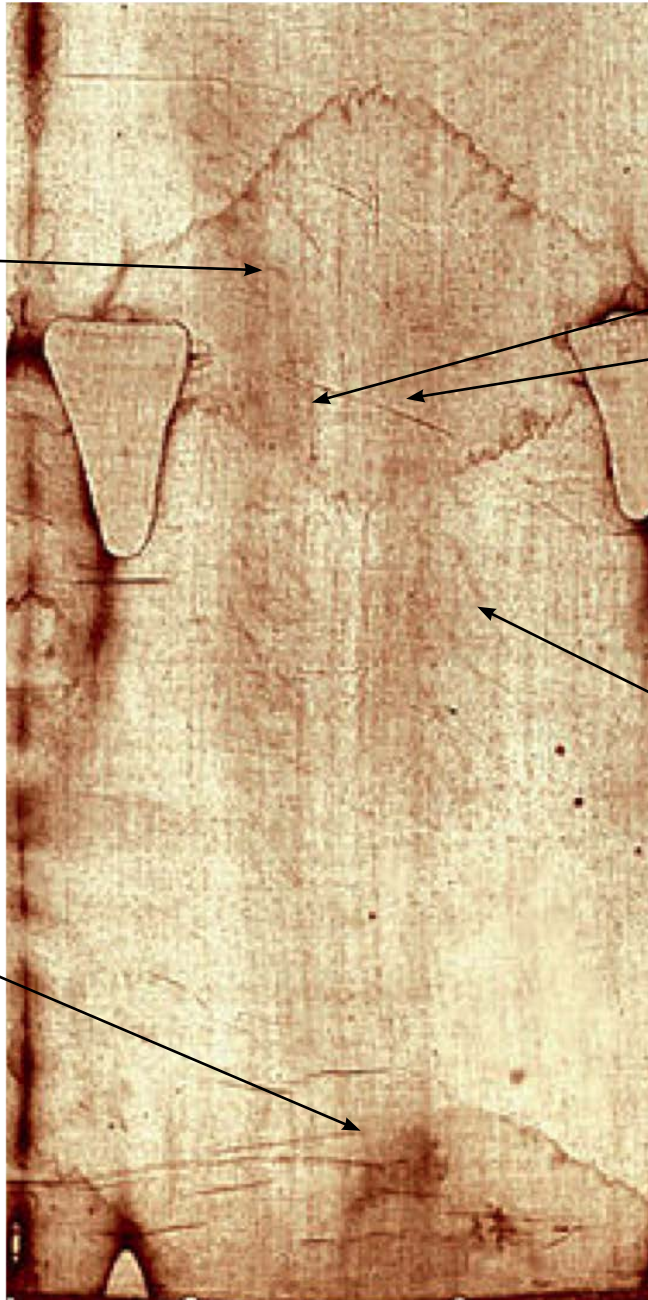
By planting the nail in the wrist, the nail touches the median nerve, which retracts the thumb towards the inside of the hand. That's why on the shroud we see only 4 fingers in each hand! No "forger" could have ever imagined that.



DESTOT'S SPACE

The Destot's space shown in the picture is the only place where the nail could have been fixed to suspend the entire body on the cross. The Romans knew that because they were experts in crucifixion, but no counterfeiter could have known such a precise detail.

Traces of water
(used to extinguish
the fire of 1532)



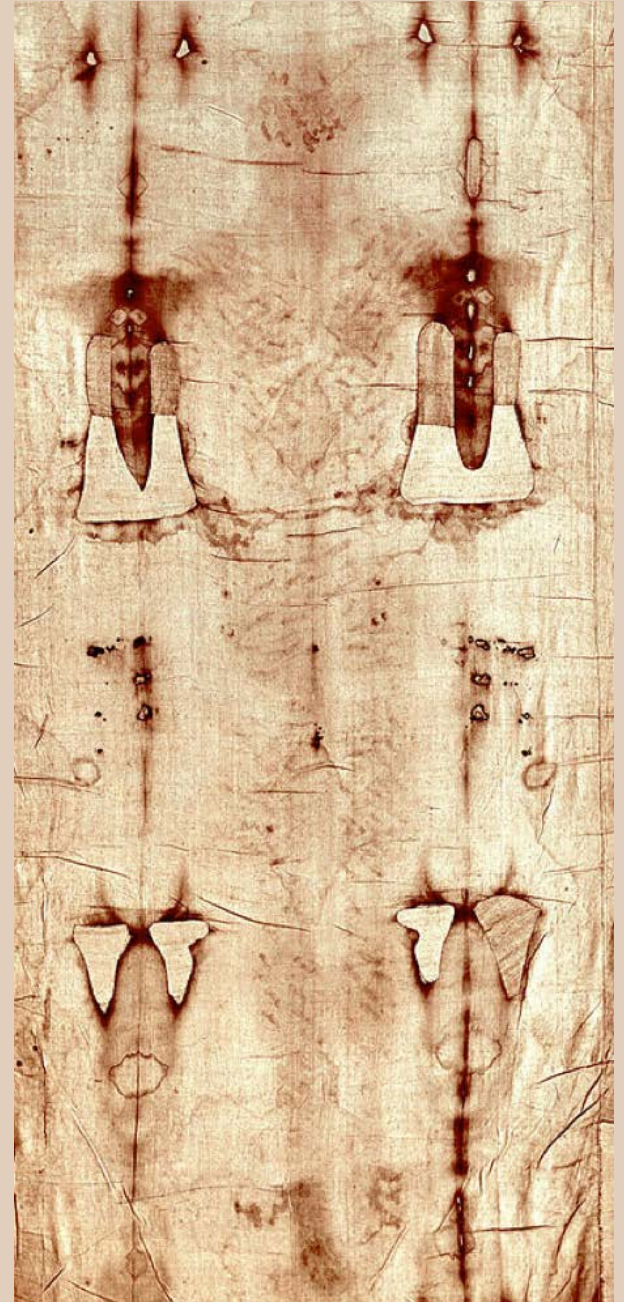
Three-dimensional image:
The right leg is more prominent
than the left leg because it is
superimposed on it. The color of
the knees is more intense than the
rest of the leg because the knees
are pushed forward

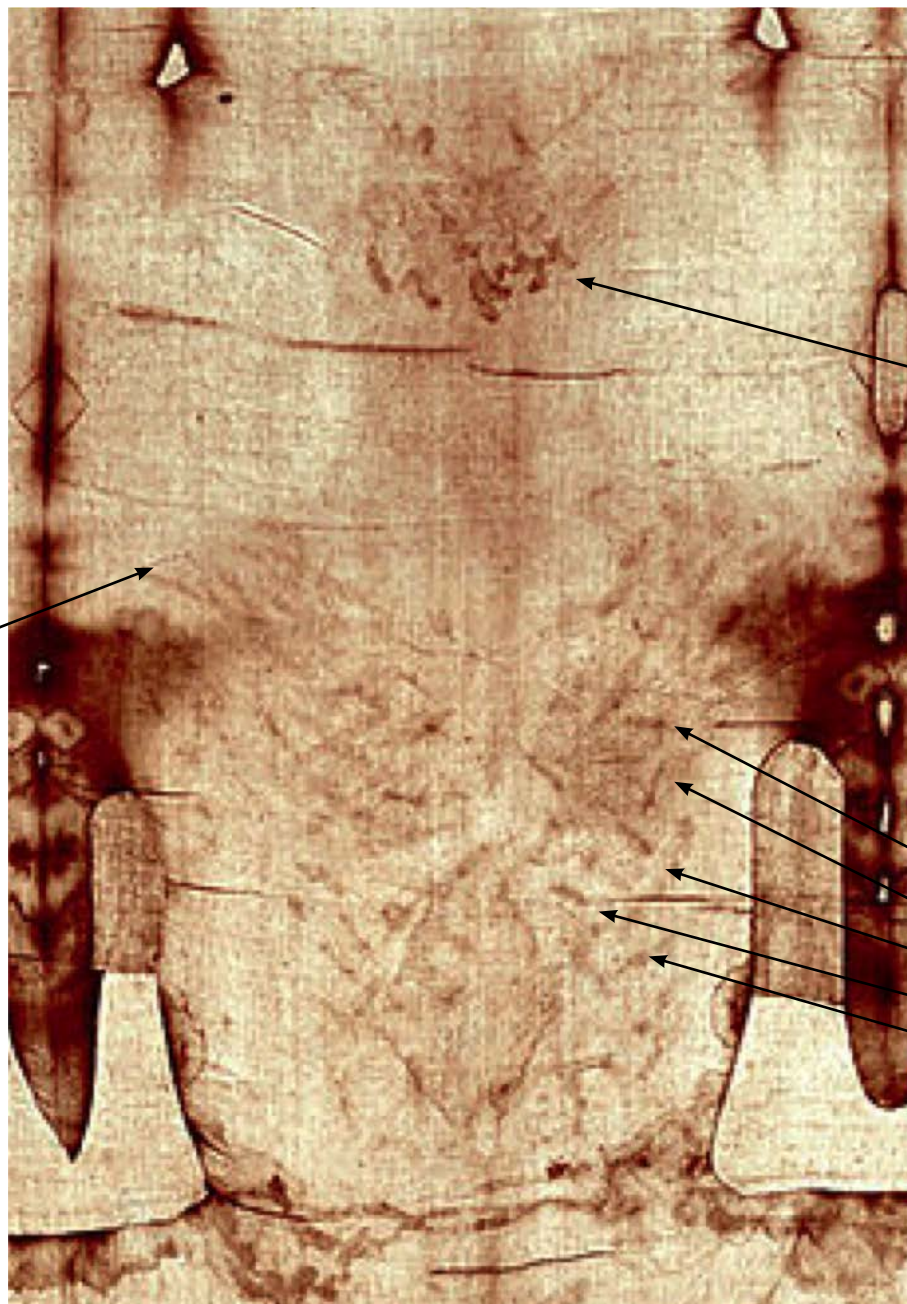
Unbroken knees

Nail injury on the
right foot which is
superimposed on
the left foot

THE LEGS

BACK IMAGE





Twisted
shoulder

Traces of blood due
to crown of thorns

Traces of whip
(that correspond
EXACTLY to the
Roman flagrum)

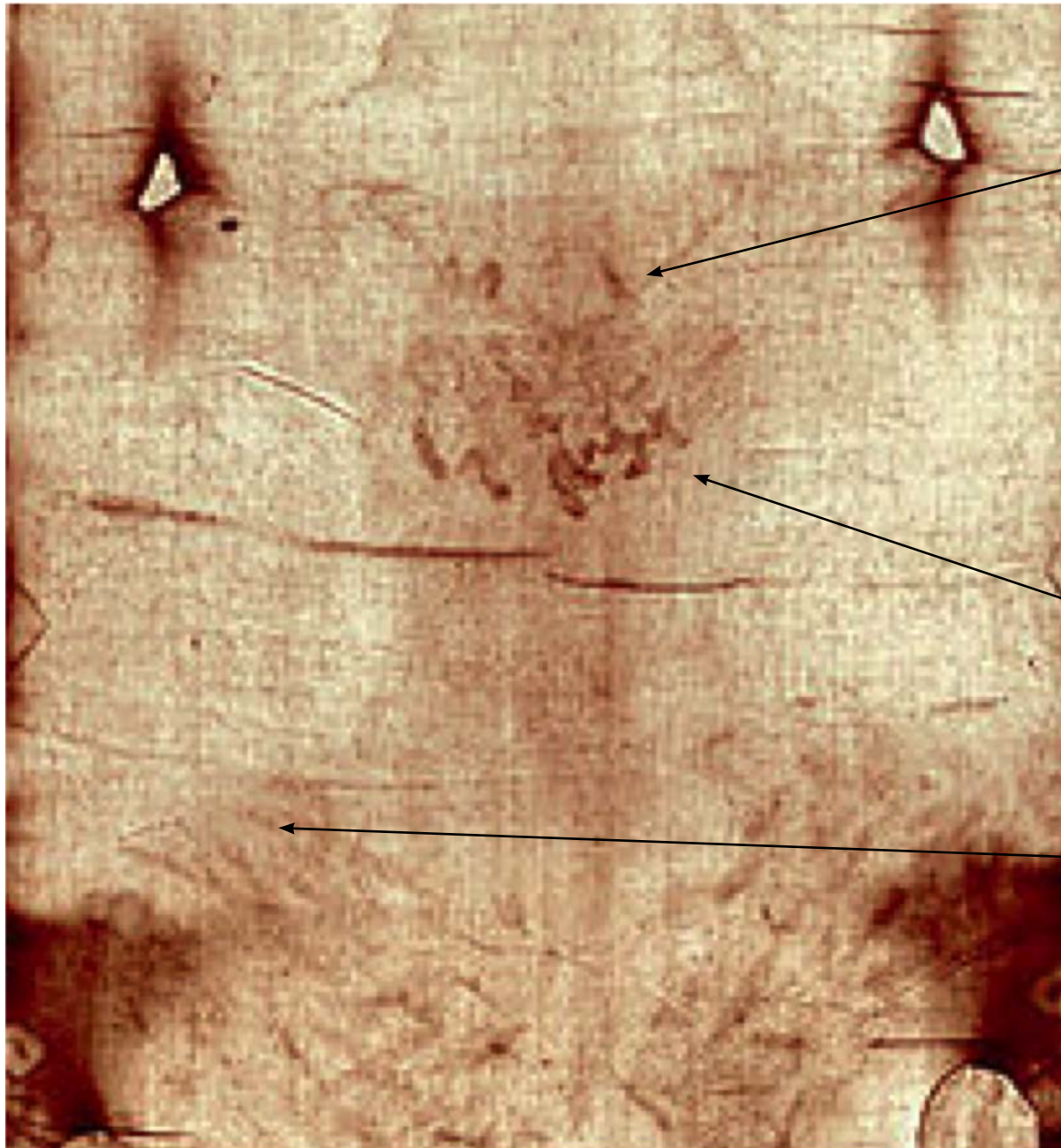
THE HEAD AND THE BACK



“The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe.”
(Jn 19, 2)

“They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him.”
(Mk 15, 17)

THE IMAGE OF THE BACK OF THE HEAD SHOWS CLEARLY THE TRACES OF THE CROWN OF THORNS (COVERING THE HEAD ENTIRELY)

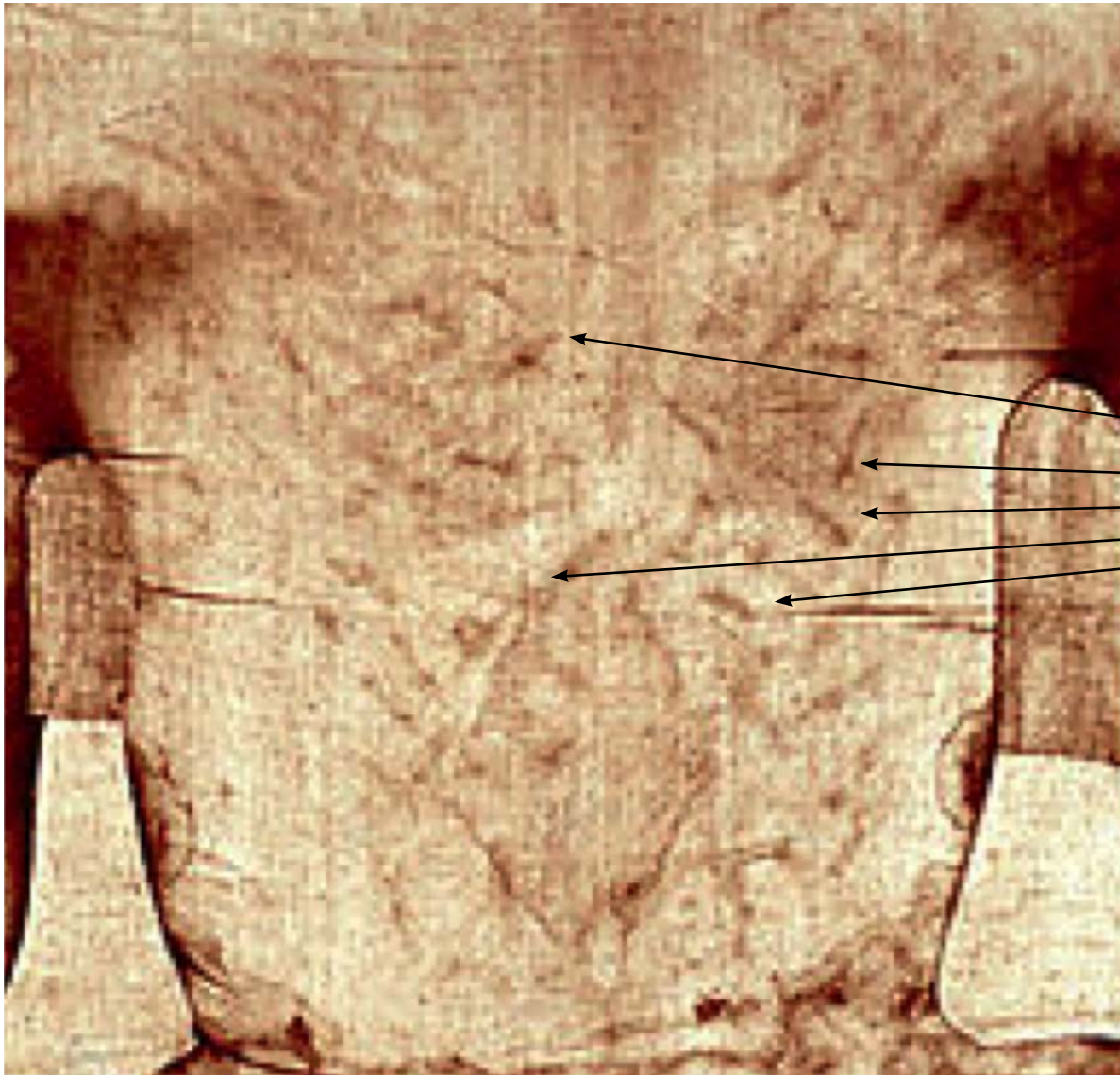


The traces of blood due to crown of thorns start from the top of the head, which indicates that the crown covered the head entirely like a helmet. So it was not a circled crown as it is commonly thought. Why would a counterfeiter worry about creating such an uncommon and unnecessary detail?

Traces of blood due to the crown of thorns

Twisted shoulder probably due to the carrying of the cross

THE BACK OF THE HEAD AND THE SHOULDERS



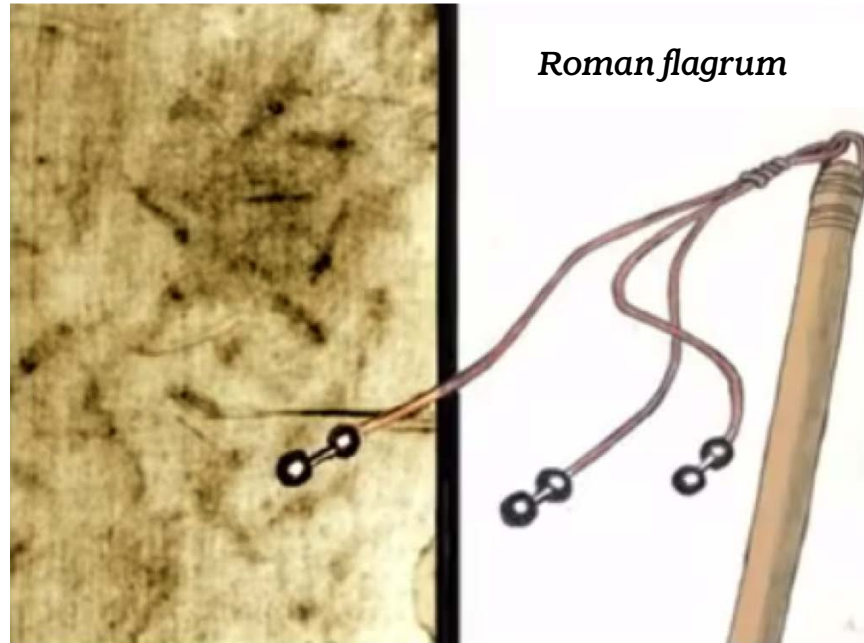
Traces of flogging that correspond EXACTLY to the Roman whip

“Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.”
(Jn 19, 1)

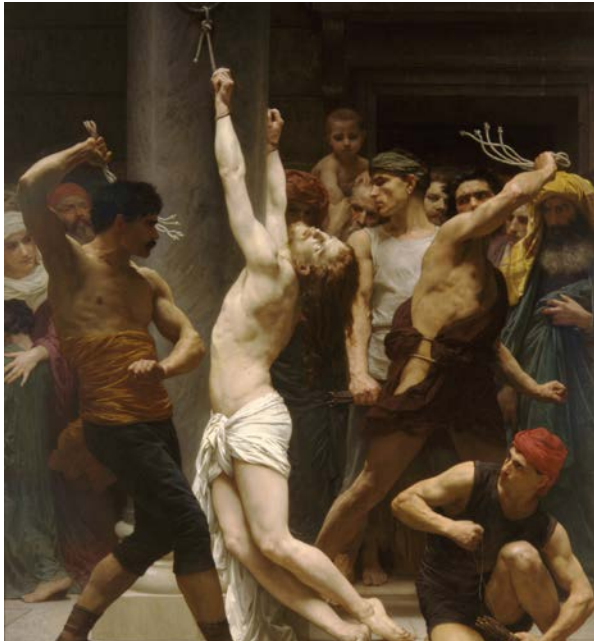
“Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.”
(Mk 15, 15)

“Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.”
(Mt 27, 26)

THE BACK



Roman flagrum



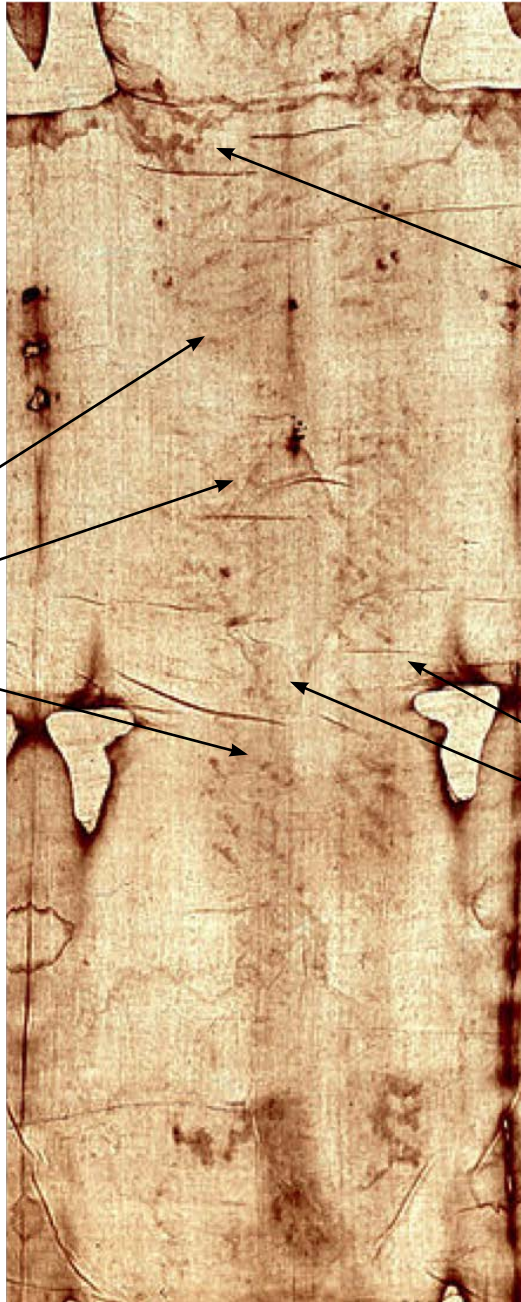
*Left
flogger*



*Right
flogger*

The traces of whip correspond exactly to the Roman whip (Flagrum) which consists of leather slats ending with small lead alters. The position and direction of the whip marks indicate that there were two executioners.

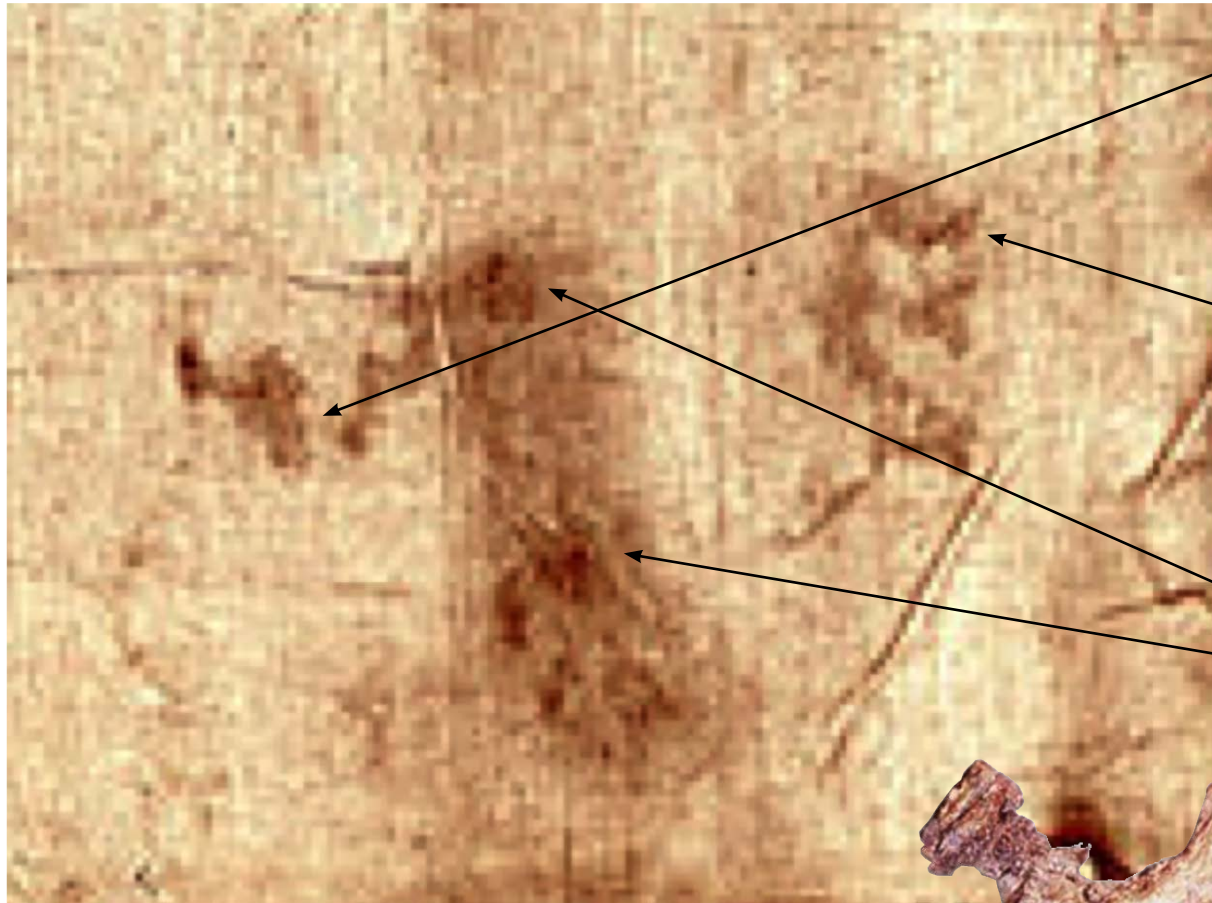
The traces of whip appear also on the back of the legs. So the entire body was flogged, not only the back as usually thought.



The blood from the rib wound continues to flow into the back as the body is laid down... That's because a post-mortem wound does not close! No "forger" could have imagined that!

Three-dimensional image! From the back, the coloring of the knees is less intense than the rest of the leg because the knees are forward

THE BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET



Flow of blood due to withdrawal of the nail from the heel of the left foot

A trace of nail appears in the heel of the right foot. The other nail that is in the middle of the right foot does not appear because it is hidden by the left foot. We only see it on the front image.

In the left foot, that are TWO traces of nails, one in the centre of the foot and one in the heel.

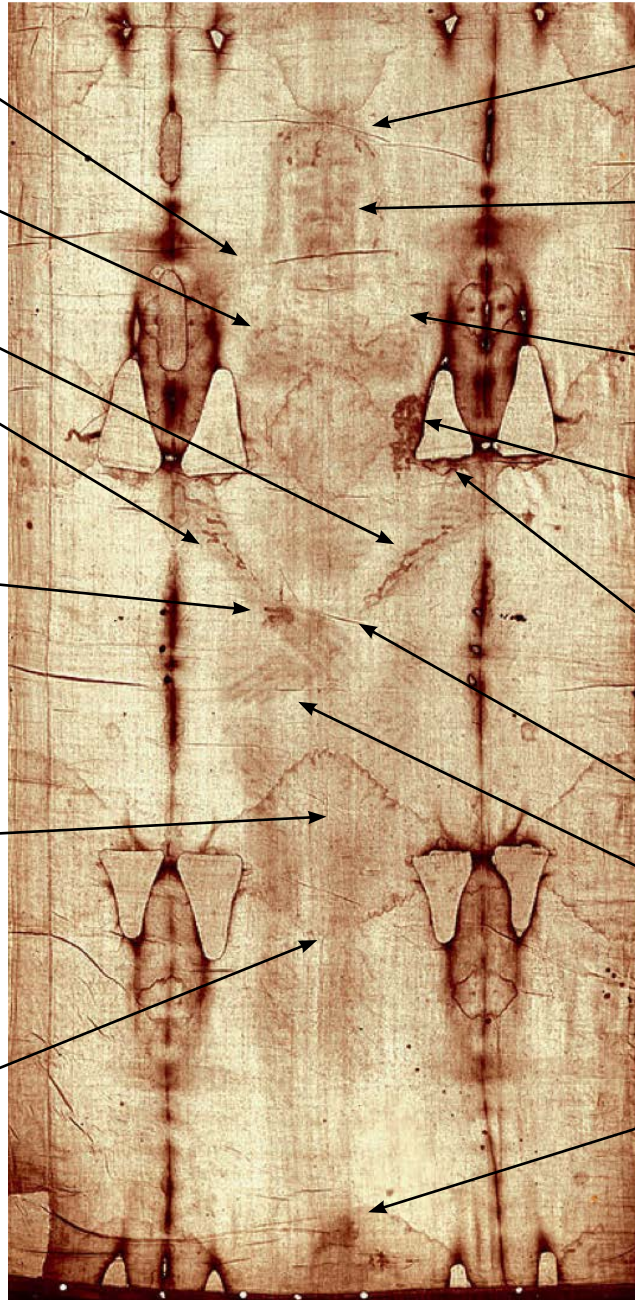


Bone pierced with a nail

The bone of a crucified man from the first century named John (Yohanán), whose remains were discovered next to Jerusalem in 1968.

In 1968, the remains of a crucified man from the Roman era were discovered with a nail in the heel! Without this recent discovery no one knew that it was customary to nail the crucified by the heel. So before 1968, no “forger” could have imagined that! The nail in the heel speeds up suffocation as it blocks the feet and the crucified cannot lift up to breath.

THE FEET



Twisted shoulder

Traces of Roman whip

Flows of blood going upwards, indicating that the blood has coagulated while the crucified was still on the cross

Trace of nail in the wrist (and not in the palm of the hand)

The right leg is forward because of the superposition of the legs given their position on the cross

Preponderance of the knees (darker color) indicating the three-dimensionality of the image

Flows of blood due to the crown of thorns

Fractured nose / Swollen cheek

Inflated chest due to suffocation

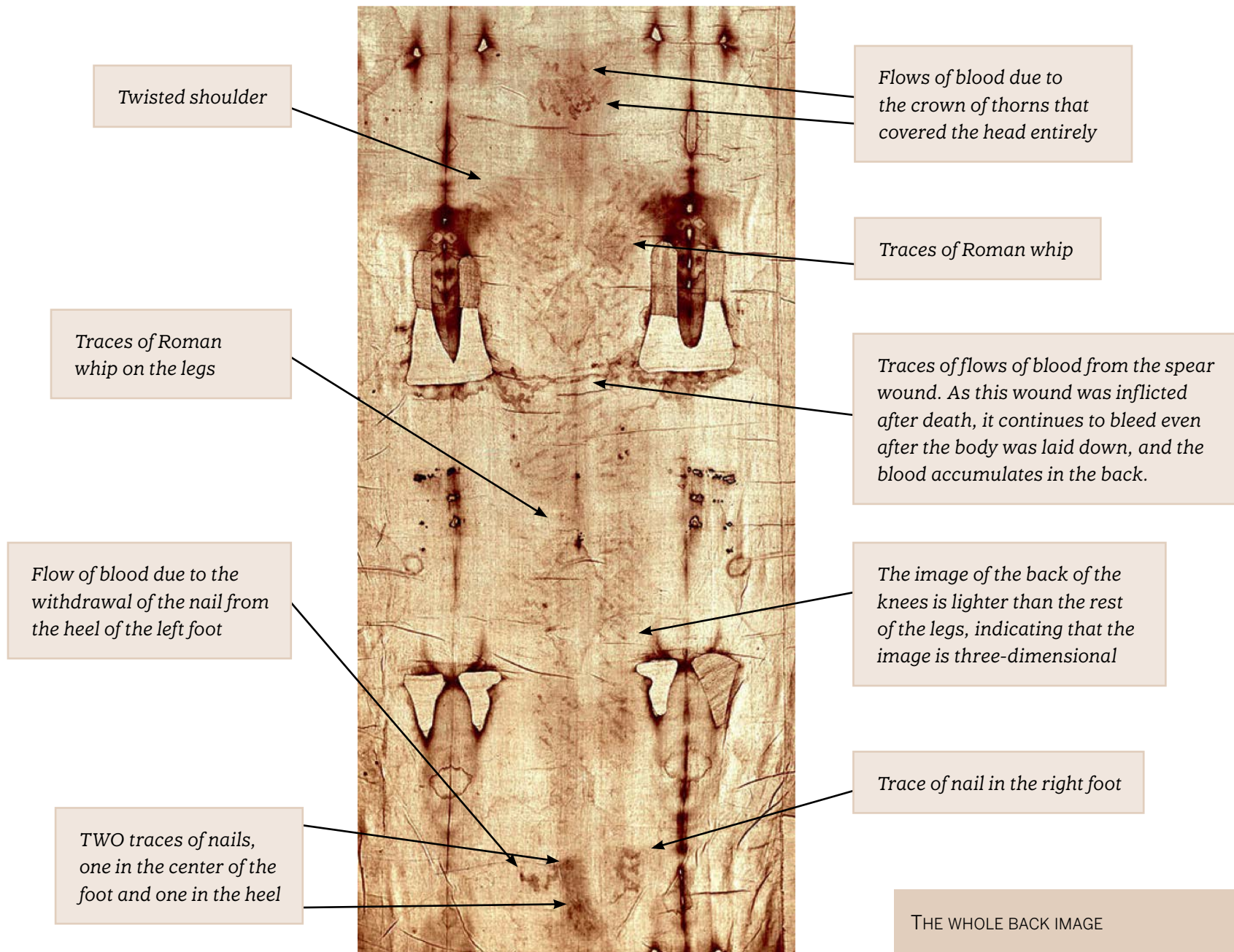
Spear wound

The spear wound continue to bleed as it was inflicted after death

Each hand shows only 4 fingers because the thumbs retracted to the inside of the hand as the median nerve got cut when the nails were planted in the wrists, precisely in the Destot's space.

Trace of nail in the right foot

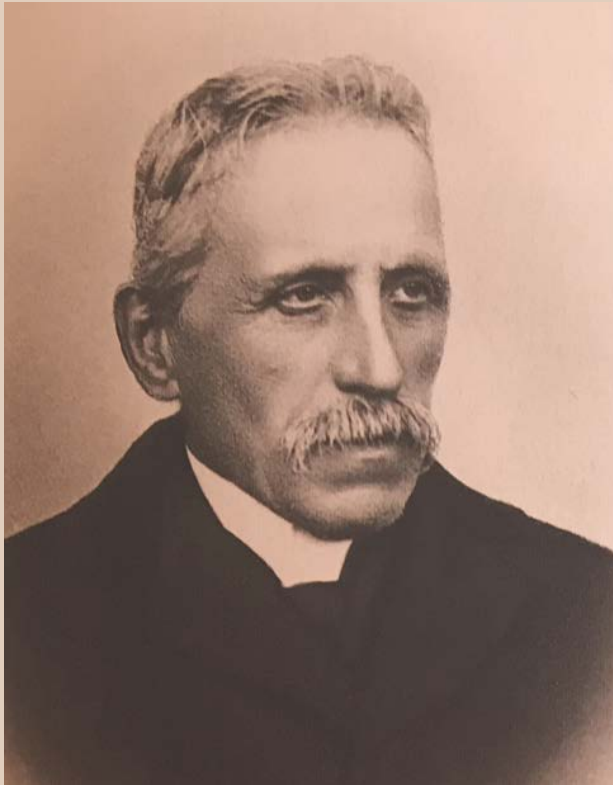
THE WHOLE FRONT IMAGE



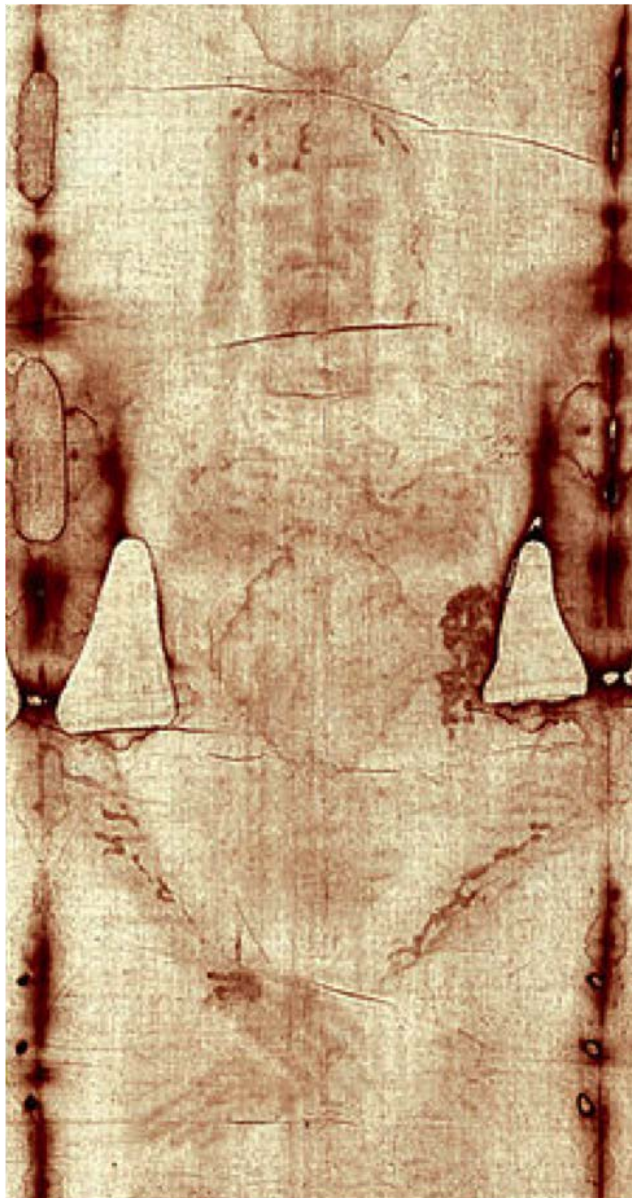
THE WHOLE BACK IMAGE

IN 1898... THE SHOCK

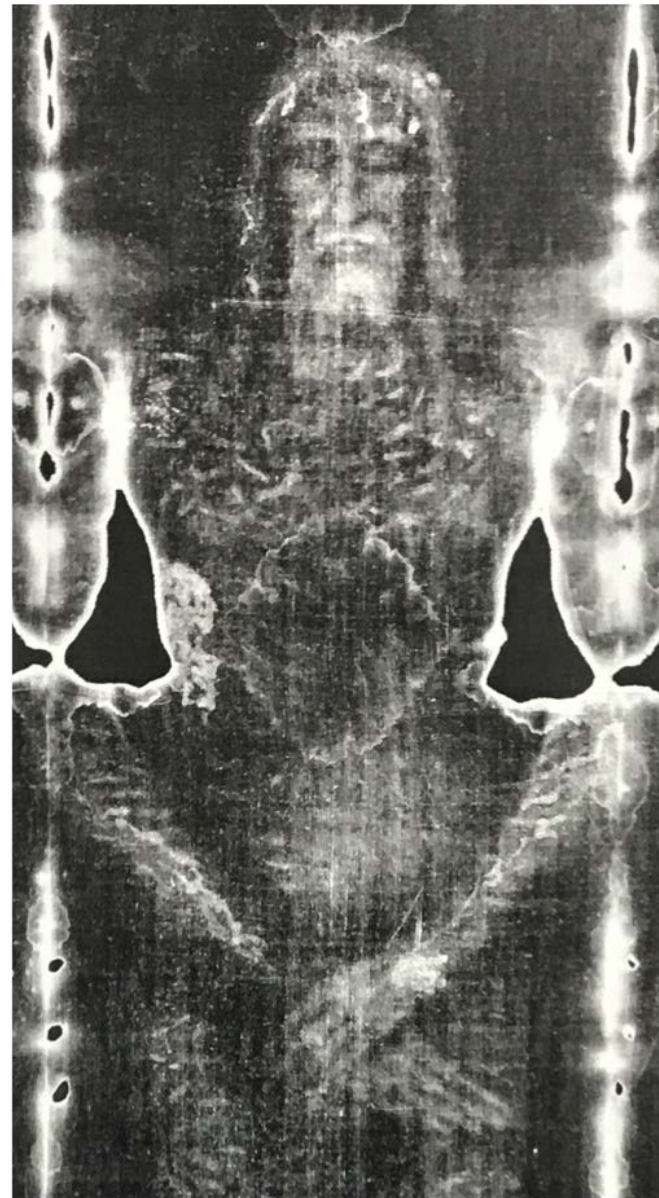
PHOTOGRAPHER SECONDO PIA TAKES A PICTURE OF THE SHROUD...



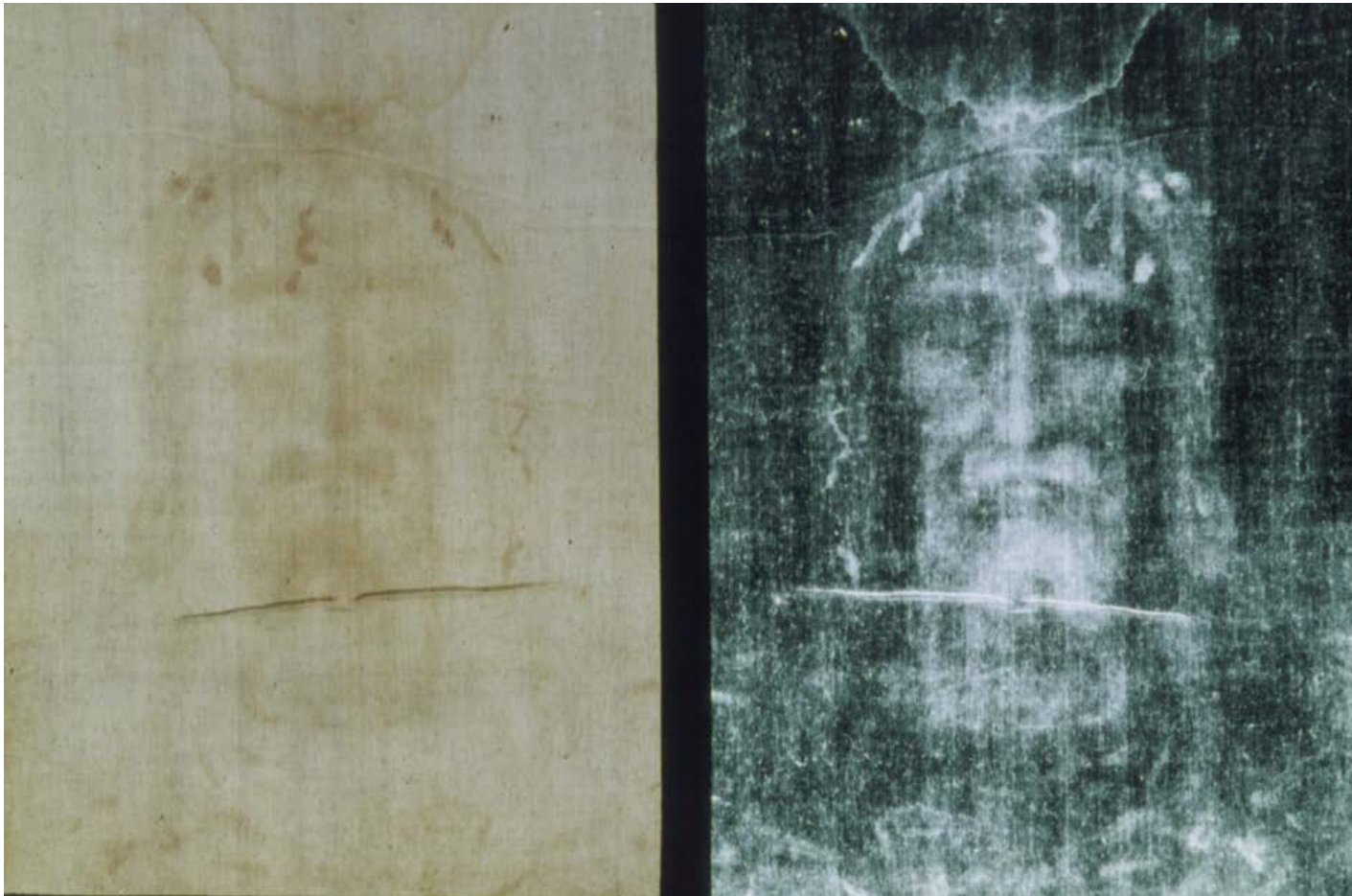
AND WHAT DID HE DISCOVER?



POSITIVE



NEGATIVE



The face of the crucified appears much clearer on the negative image, as if the image of the Shroud was a negative and the photographic negative was the positive! The technical characteristics of the image are therefore clearly impossible to reproduce by any counterfeiter.

It is as if we had to wait 2,000 years before the true face of the crucified got revealed to us, thanks to the invention of photography. The image of the Shroud has therefore acted like a time bomb!



On the photographic negative we distinguish more clearly the fracture of the nose.



Reproduced in 3D, the photographic negative is even more striking.

IN 1988... A NEW SHOCK

THIS TIME AN OPPOSITE ONE!



In 1988, three laboratories perform Carbon-14 dating tests. Their conclusion is categorical... The shroud dates back to a period between 1260 and 1390. It is then considered a forgery created in the Middle Ages!

WEAKNESSES OF THE CARBON-14 TEST

The Carbon -14 method used for dating artifacts is not always reliable, especially when it is used on textile. Besides, the Carbon-14 dating method is based on two very strict hypotheses: the first one is that the amount of Carbon-14 in the object has decreased at a fixed and constant rate over the years. The second hypothesis is that **the object must have been preserved in the same environment over the years**, which we know has not been at all the case of the Shroud. The Carbon-14 method is efficient to date an object that was buried underground during its entire history, **but surely not to date an object like the Shroud that was moved, manipulated, burned, altered and patched several times over centuries!**

Any technique has a margin of error. So why should we consider that the Carbon-14 method is infallible in this particular case, since the dating obtained does not solve the problem of knowing how the image could have been formed if it was indeed created in the Middle Ages?

Some of the elements that could explain why the carbon dating is not accurate are:

- The sample of the dating was taken from the edge of the Shroud, **which could be part of the patched areas** that were added later through history (as we know that the Shroud has been patched several times, especially following the Chambéry fire).

- **The Shroud suffered several alterations** due to at least two well-known and listed fires which left visible traces on the Shroud. The exposure of the fabric to very high temperatures altered its chemical composition, and therefore its Carbon-14 content.

- Carbon-14 measures the radioactivity content of an object. The higher the radioactivity, the more recent the object. What if the flash of the resurrection had increased the radioactivity of the fabric, which therefore “rejuvenated” the Carbon-14 content of the Shroud?

- There are historical traces of the Shroud which date back to a period before the Middle Ages: the Codex of Pray, the iconography and testimonies of the time, the Mandylion...

- The methods of collection and analysis of the fabric were also very doubtful. Moreover, the announcement of the test results showed a deliberate intention to question the authenticity of the Shroud, especially through the dubious triumphalism exhibited by the scientists in charge of the dating. (The exclamation point on the screen, the statement of Dr. Hall that there is “no doubt” anymore on the non-authenticity of the Shroud and that “those who say the opposite can agree with those who continue to say that the earth is flat”).

- Coincidence or deliberate manipulation? The dates (between 1260 and 1390) fall exactly during the period when the trace of the Shroud was lost, after the sacking of Constantinople in 1204 and before its reappearance in Lirey in 1348!

AUTHENTICITY OF THE SHROUD

FAVORABLE ARGUMENTS

- Three-dimensional “photographic” image impossible to reproduce even nowadays.
- “Negative photographic” aspect of the image
- Historical and iconographical proofs of the existence of the Shroud before the Middle Ages
- Anatomical details impossible to imagine or to reproduce by a forger: oversized lungs, retracted thumbs, nails in the wrist, nails in the heel, constantly flowing blood of the post-mortem wound, broken nose, swollen cheek, blood of the arms flowing upwards, traces of Roman whip...
- Image insensible to fire and water !

UNFAVORABLE ARGUMENTS

- Carbon-14 dating

OTHER FAVORABLE ELEMENTS

- The image is formed using a “photographic” technique (most probably by radiation) but with a **uniform source of light spread all over the body** (and not from a single source of light like it is the case for a normal photography). As if a light irradiated the whole body vertically (like a scanner).

- **The spear wound kept on bleeding.** It did not coagulate like all the other wounds that appear on the Shroud. This is because this wound was inflicted after death. No counterfeiter could have thought about such precise detail.

- **Absence of traces of putrefaction** of the corpse. Hence, the corpse did not stay more than two days in the Shroud.

- **Absence of traces of tearing of the Shroud’s threads.** So the corpse was not extracted from the Shroud. It is as if it had evaporated. This shows a **dematerialization of the body** rather than a removal.

- There is no image under the blood which means that **the blood had impregnated the fabric BEFORE the image was formed.** No forger would think of putting the blood traces BEFORE creating the image!

- It is a **three-dimensional image** that takes into account the distance between the Shroud and each part of the body (example: the nose

appears more marked than the cheeks, the knees more than the legs, the chest more than the belly ...). How has a “medieval forger” been able to create such three-dimensional image?

- Although the fabric is very thin (3mm), there is no image on the back of the Shroud, only traces of blood.

Why would a forger bother himself with so many tiny details that do not meet the eye immediately but appear only when the image is analyzed with microscopes and scanners? It would be rather surprising if a forger from the Middle Ages wanted to surprise scientists from the 20th Century!

HISTORICAL JOURNEY OF THE SHROUD

YEAR 30 – 1204

- St John the Evangelist saw the Shroud folded apart (and took it?) when he visited the tomb with St Peter after the Resurrection. As he mentions it in his gospel : “He saw and believed”. What did he see? Is it the image of the Shroud?

- Disappearance of the Shroud for a long period (by fear of persecution and because it is considered impure)

- Appearance in Edessa in the year **525** of an image of the face of Christ “not made by human hand”, the Mandylion. From this date, there is a massive diffusion of an iconography that resembles in several points the face of the Shroud. This proves that the Mandylion is the Shroud folded in a way to show only the face. Traces of the folds over the face are still visible on the Shroud. It is important to note that Edessa is the city where St John spent the last period of his life.

- Edessa falls into the hands of the Arabs. In **944**, a military campaign was led by Constantinople to save “the Mandylion”. After the siege of Edessa by General Jean Curcas, the Mandylion got exchanged with the caliph Al-Mustakfi against 200 Arab prisoners. The triumphal entry of the Mandylion to Constantinople in 944 is attested by several writings.

- Veneration of the Mandylion in Constantinople as “miraculous image of the Face of Jesus” but also as “altar cloth” (which is at the origin of the Orthodox Epithaphios)

- In **1204**, disappearance of the Shroud following the sacking of Constantinople by the Crusaders. Description of the Shroud by the Crusader Robert de Clary.

- Pray Codex dating from **1195**: manuscript with an engraving representing the burial of Jesus, undoubtedly inspired by the image of the Shroud (This codex still exists at the Budapest Museum).

1348-1997

- Appearance of the Shroud at Lirey in **1348** held by a descendant of Templars, Geoffrey de Charny.

- Transfer of the Shroud from Marguerite de Charny (descendant of Geoffrey) to the family of Savoy in **1453** (documents attesting the transfer).

- **June 11, 1502**: Transfer of the Shroud to the Holy Chapel of the Chambéry Castle belonging to the Savoy family. Official Feast of the Shroud is set on May 4 under papal blessing.

- **December 4, 1532**: Fire at the Holy Chapel of Chambéry. Traces are still visible from this fire. Zones of patching undertaken by the Poor Clares are still very visible too.

- In **1578**: Providential transfer of the Shroud from Chambéry to Turin to allow St. Charles Borromeo to venerate it (This transfer will allow the Shroud to escape the ravage of the French Revolution a few centuries later).

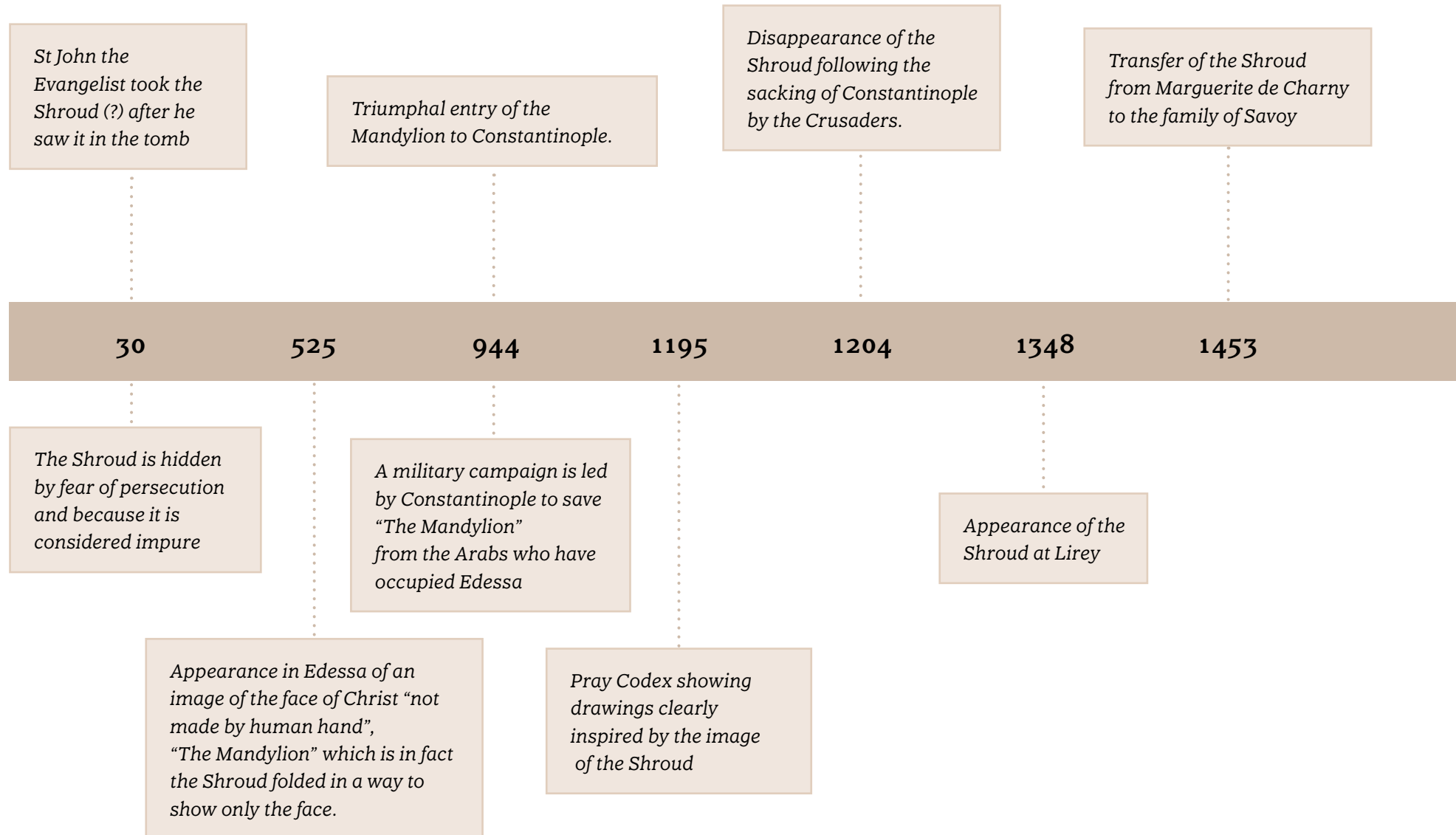
- In **1983** the Shroud is given by the Savoy family to the Holy See. The Shroud will however be kept in Turin.

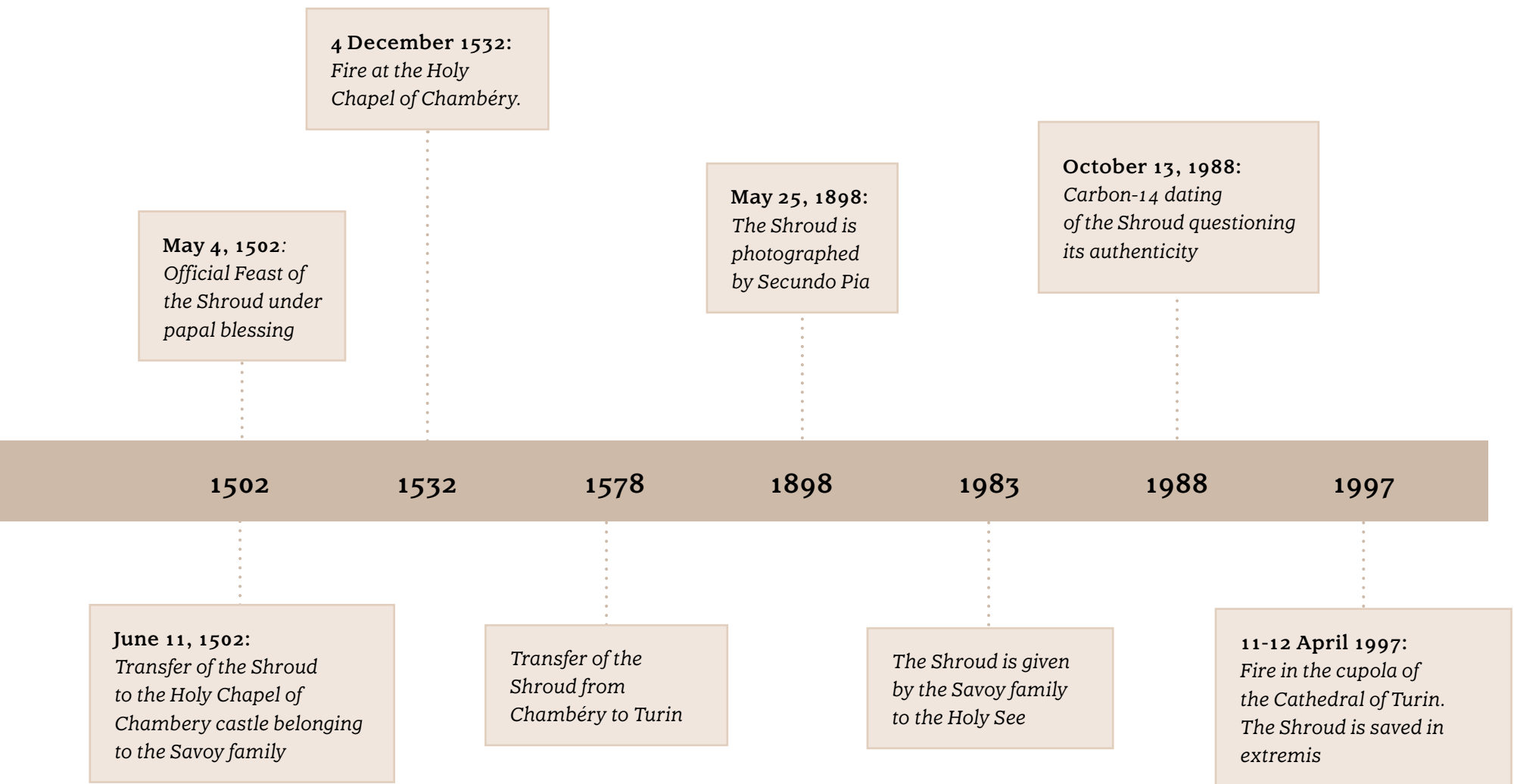
- **May 25, 1898**: The Shroud is photographed by Secondo Pia - The picture appears sharper on the negative.

- **October 13, 1988**: Carbon-14 dating of the Shroud: the results date it from the Middle Ages, which questions its authenticity.

- **11-12 April 1997**: Fire in the cupola of the Cathedral of Turin. The Shroud is saved in extremis by firefighter Mario Trematore.

HISTORICAL JOURNEY OF THE SHROUD





WAS THE SHROUD TAKEN BY ST JOHN ?

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, 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 stooping 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**.

Gospel according to St John, Chapter 20, 2-8

NO TRACES OF THE SHROUD BEFORE THE YEAR 525. WHY?

After the Resurrection, the apostles were scared. They were sought after by the Romans. It is therefore absolutely normal that they had to hide the Shroud because:

- 1- It would surely be confiscated and destroyed
- 2- It would be used by the Romans as a proof that the apostles have stolen the body

Besides, showing the Shroud would have been problematic because it was considered IMPURE under Jewish law. Keeping a shroud was scandalous, especially if it is stained with blood!

The Shroud thus had to be kept in the **highest secrecy** by the first Apostles.

REAPPEARANCE IN THE YEAR 525. WHY?

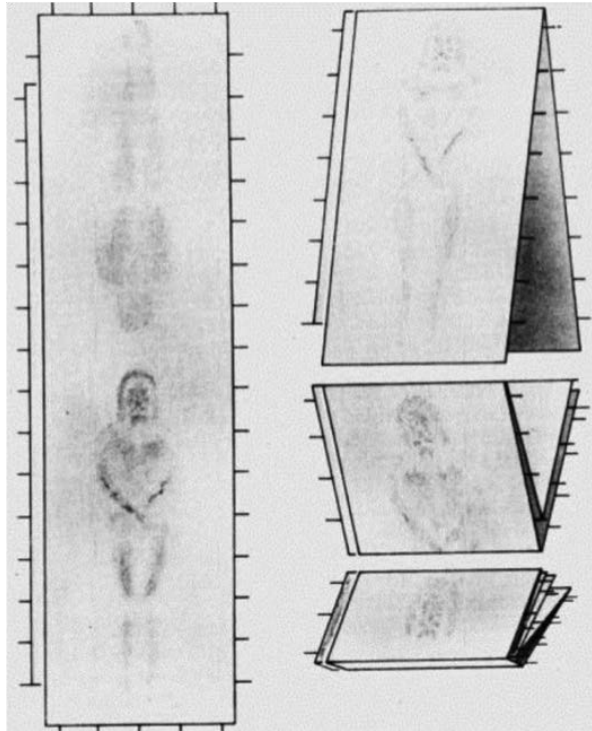
In 525, Christians are not as persecuted as they were previously. They even have their first State... Edessa! So, they are able now to bring out the Shroud and to keep it safe in their first State.

But it is still scandalous to show the image of a **naked** man on a **Shroud** stained with **blood**, even if it is that of Christ.

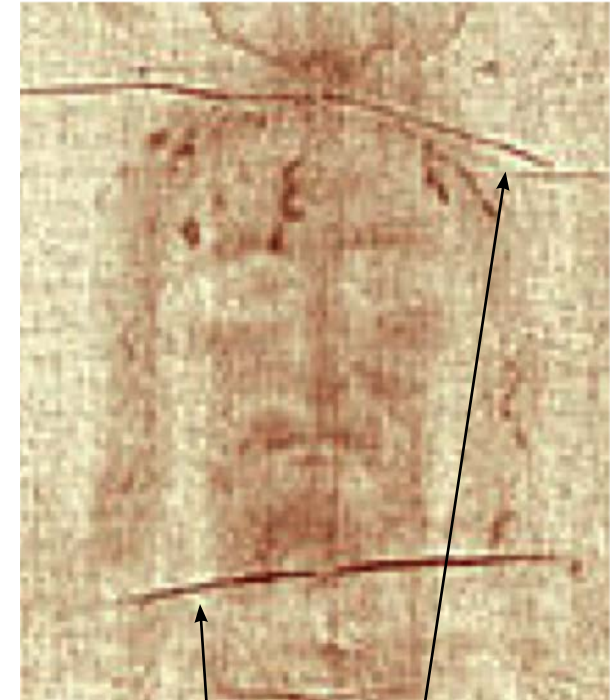
This is why it is very likely that the Shroud was folded in eight in a way that we can only see the face. Legends were invented to explain the miraculous formation of the image (to avoid having to declare the true nature of the Shroud), namely the legend of King Abgar of Edessa and the Veil of Veronica (Vera Icona)...

It is worth noting that St John the Evangelist spent the last period of his life in Edessa. He is probably the one who brought the Shroud to Edessa since he is the one who found it in the tomb.

REAPPEARANCE OF THE SHROUD IN 525 IN EDESSA IN THE FORM OF THE MANDYLION



King Abgar V holding the Mandylion
(10th century icon)



Two folds well-marked and still visible, because the Shroud was folded at this level for a long time

The hypothesis of the Shroud being folded in eight to form an image of the face alone is supported by the **Acts of Thaddeus** (a disciple of Jesus who evangelized Edessa). His writings refer to the image as tetradiplon (which means “four times double”)

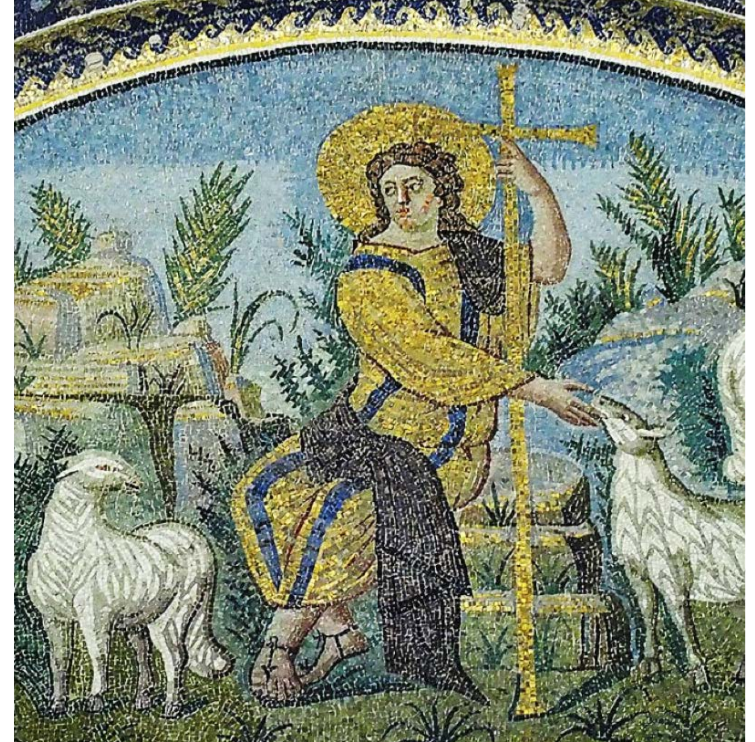
IMAGE OF THE FACE OF JESUS NOT MADE BY MAN

ICONOGRAPHIC EVOLUTION FROM 944

With the arrival of the Mandylion to Constantinople in 944, the representation of Jesus changed radically in Christian iconography: we go from the young beardless shepherd, to a bearded Christ, with a long face, a long thin nose, a lock of hair on the forehead, an inflated right cheek... exactly following the **features of the face of the Shroud**.

Since Byzantine iconography was largely inspired by the Mandylion, and since the Christ of Byzantine iconography resembles in **every aspect** the face of the Shroud, it seems clear that the Mandylion is nothing else than the folded Shroud.

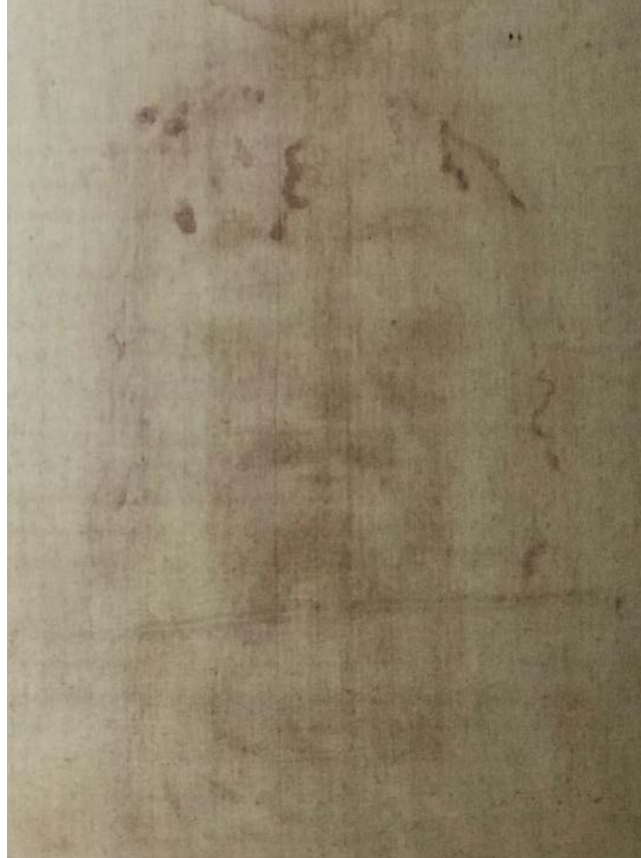
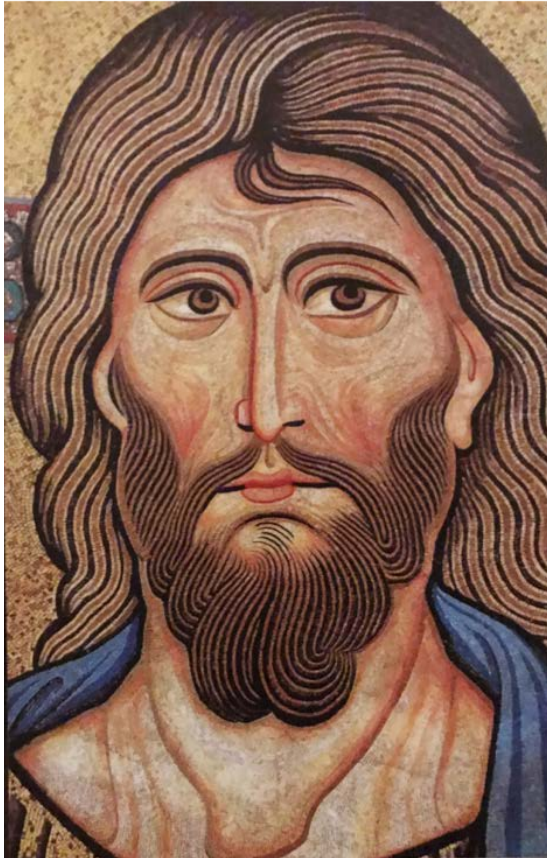
ICONOGRAPHY BEFORE THE 10th CENTURY



REPRESENTATION OF JESUS AS A YOUNG BEARDLESS SHEPHERD

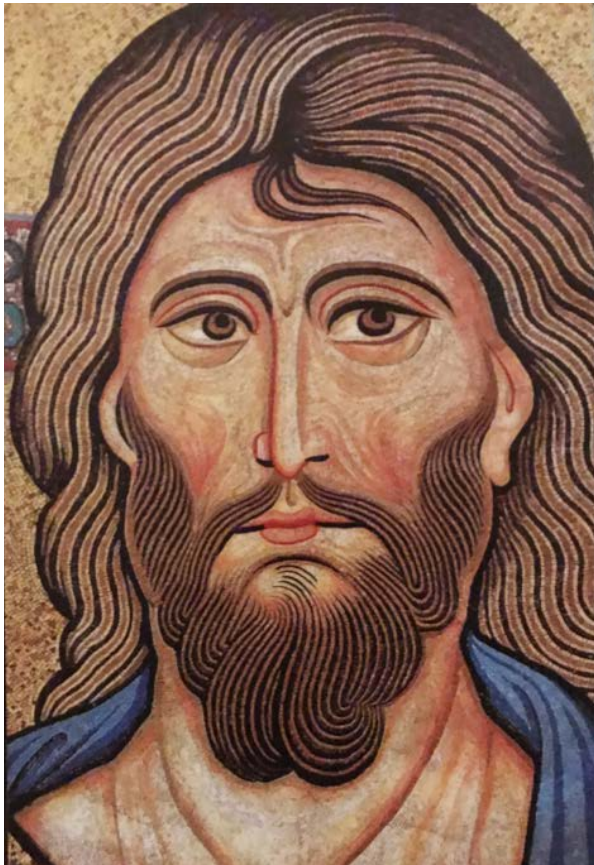
— ICONOGRAPHIC EVOLUTION FROM 944 —

ICONOGRAPHY AFTER 944



Both images share the same long face, same double pointed beard, same eyebrows, same thin and long nose, same wavy hair, and especially the **swollen right cheek** and the **strand of hair on the forehead** that was confused with the trace of blood (which has the shape of an inverted 3).

This “strand of hair” has even become a well-known feature of Byzantine iconography!

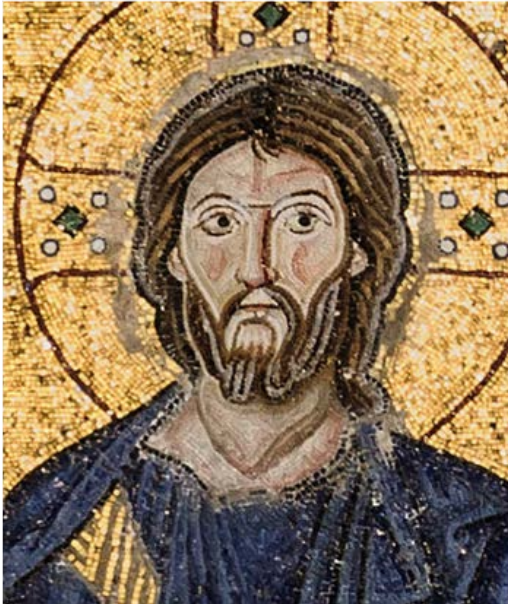


This mosaic of the Christ Pantocrator of the Cathedral of Cefalù in Sicily resembles **in every aspect** the face of the Shroud. It was made **in 1131** by artists specially brought **from Constantinople** by Roger II King of Sicily...

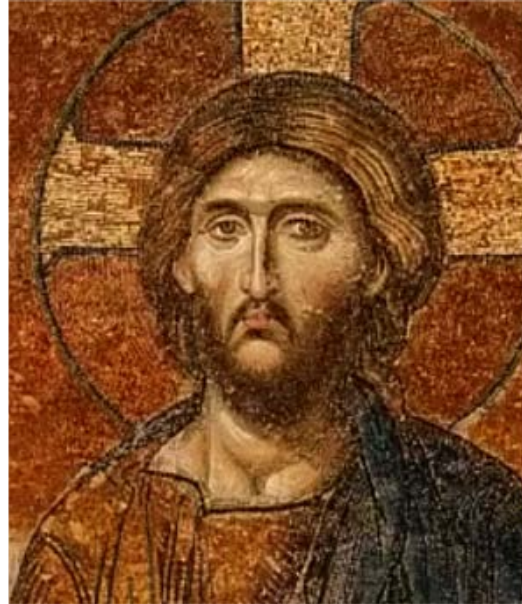
These artists from Constantinople had surely seen the face of the Shroud (in the form of Mandylion). This is a proof that the Shroud existed test way before the period set by the Carbon-14 test.

ICONOGRAPHY AFTER 944

- THE 5th GOSPEL -



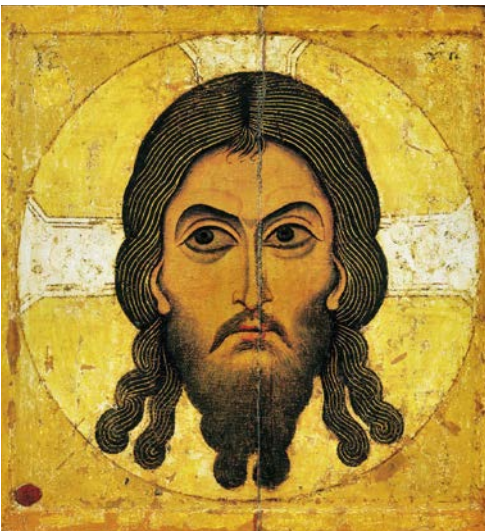
Constantinople (St Sophia) | 9th century



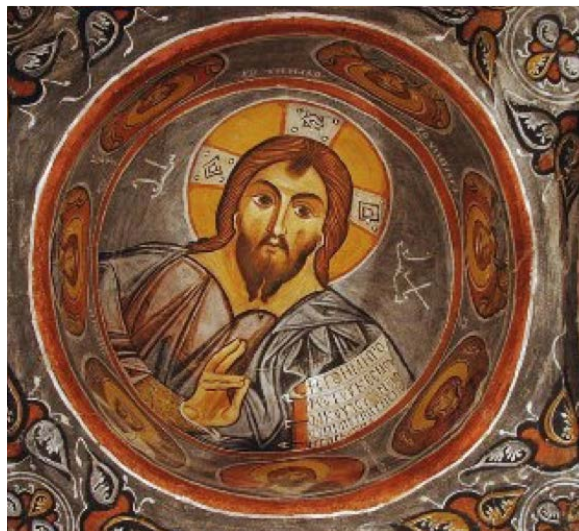
Constantinople (St Sophia) | 9th century



Constantinople | 10th century



Icon | 1100



Cappadoce | 10th century

Long face, double pointed beard, thin and long nose, long wavy hair, **swollen right cheek** and the famous **“strand of hair”** on the forehead.



Byzantine Empire Coin (1071-1078)



Byzantine Empire Coin (1059-1067)



During the same period in Constantinople, even coins showing the image of Jesus possess the same characteristics as the face of the Shroud... Always with the famous "strand of hair" on the forehead.

DID THE SHROUD INSPIRE THE TRADITION OF THE EPITAPHIOS?

The Shroud has most probably inspired the tradition of the Epitaphios that is still followed in some Orthodox Churches where on the Holy Saturday the altar is covered with a cloth showing Christ buried in the same way as shown in the Shroud.

In the 10th Century, a shroud was used in Constantinople to cover the altar of Hagia Sofia Cathedral every Holy Saturday as described in the Book of Ceremony by Constantin Porphyrogenete (905-959). It thus seems clear that it is the Shroud that inspired the tradition of the **Epitaphios**, which dates back well before the period stated by the Carbon-14 test.



Epitaphios dating from 1354: still preserved in the Vatopedi Monastery in Greece.

THE PRAY CODEX PRINTED IN 1195 ...

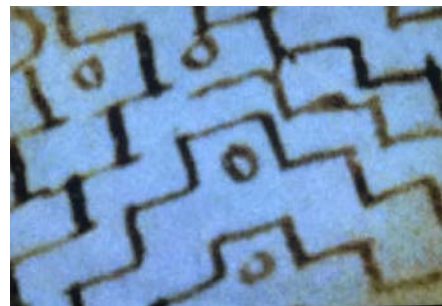
The Pray Codex is the first document written in Hungarian language, discovered in 1770. It **dates back to 1195**, so well before the period obtained by Carbon-14 dating (1260-1390!). It includes an illustration representing the burial of Christ. The drawing bears striking similarities with the image of the Shroud. Christ is represented in his burial, **completely naked**, hands crossed **with only four fingers**. The burial cloth has a weaving similar to that of the Shroud as well as L-shaped holes exactly like the burns present on the Shroud!

It is clear that the author of the Pray Codex was inspired by the image of the Shroud (displayed in full size and no longer as the Mandylion). The Shroud would therefore date back from before 1195 (thus contradicting the Carbon-14 dating).

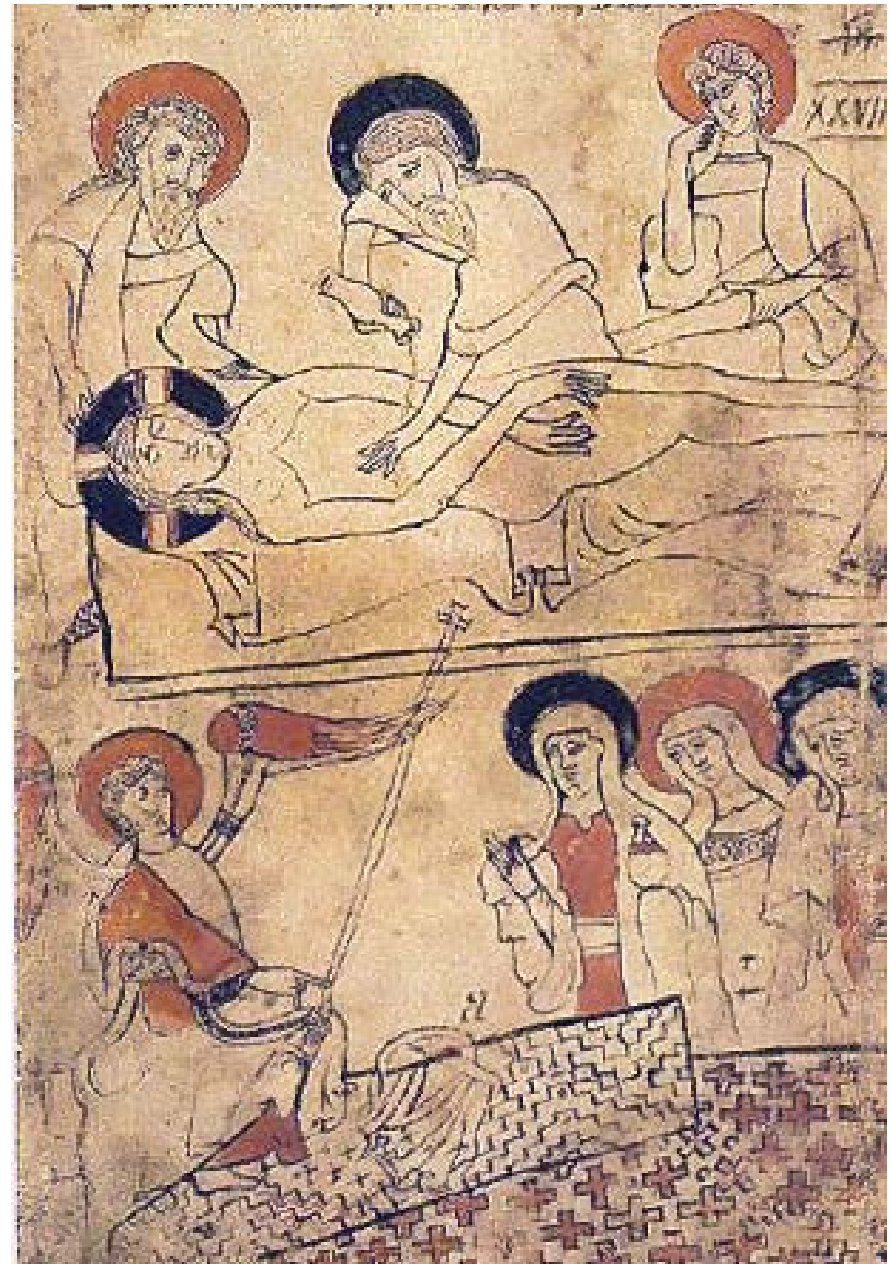
The Pray Codex is still kept at the National Library of Budapest.



Old burns on the Shroud of Turin



The same holes reproduced on the Pray Codex



IF IT IS NOT THE SHROUD OF JESUS, WHOSE IS IT THEN ?

The impossibility of giving a plausible hypothesis other than that of the Shroud of Jesus is a strong argument in favor of its authenticity.

The best element is that even the most ardent critics of the Shroud cannot define what this cloth is and how the image that is printed on it was formed! Assuming that the Shroud dates back to the Middle Ages, how was the image formed? Who is this crucified person who has all the characteristics of the UNIQUE crucifixion of Jesus because it includes the flogging, the crown of thorns, the spear wound and the unbroken legs?

If it really was a medieval forger who produced it, how could he foresee all these anatomical details that no one could know at his time (nails in the wrists and not in the palms of the hands, nail in the heel, spear wound uncoagulated because it was inflicted post-mortem, thumbs retracted, oversized chest due to suffocation, swollen cheek, broken nose...)?

Critics of the authenticity of the Shroud chose the period of the Middle Ages because it was a period where false relics were abundant. This was the case indeed. But then, why would the forger of the Shroud have perfected his work beyond imagination since it was easy for any object to pass as a relic at that time? Even by botching his job he could have achieved the same result.

If it was the work of a forger from the Middle

Ages how was he able to reproduce this image since we are sure it is not a painting but a photographic 3D impression, **unalterable by water and heat**.

If it is impossible, even with modern means, to reproduce an image that is similar to that of the Shroud with all its photographic and anatomical characteristics, how could it have been done in the Middle Ages?

The best argument in favor of the Shroud's authenticity is therefore its impossible reproducibility with ALL its three-dimensional, anatomical and photographical characteristics, even by using modern techniques!

If it were for example the toga of Julius Caesar with traces of 23 stabs, no one would question the authenticity of the fabric. But when it comes to Jesus, doubt automatically settles despite all the evidences.

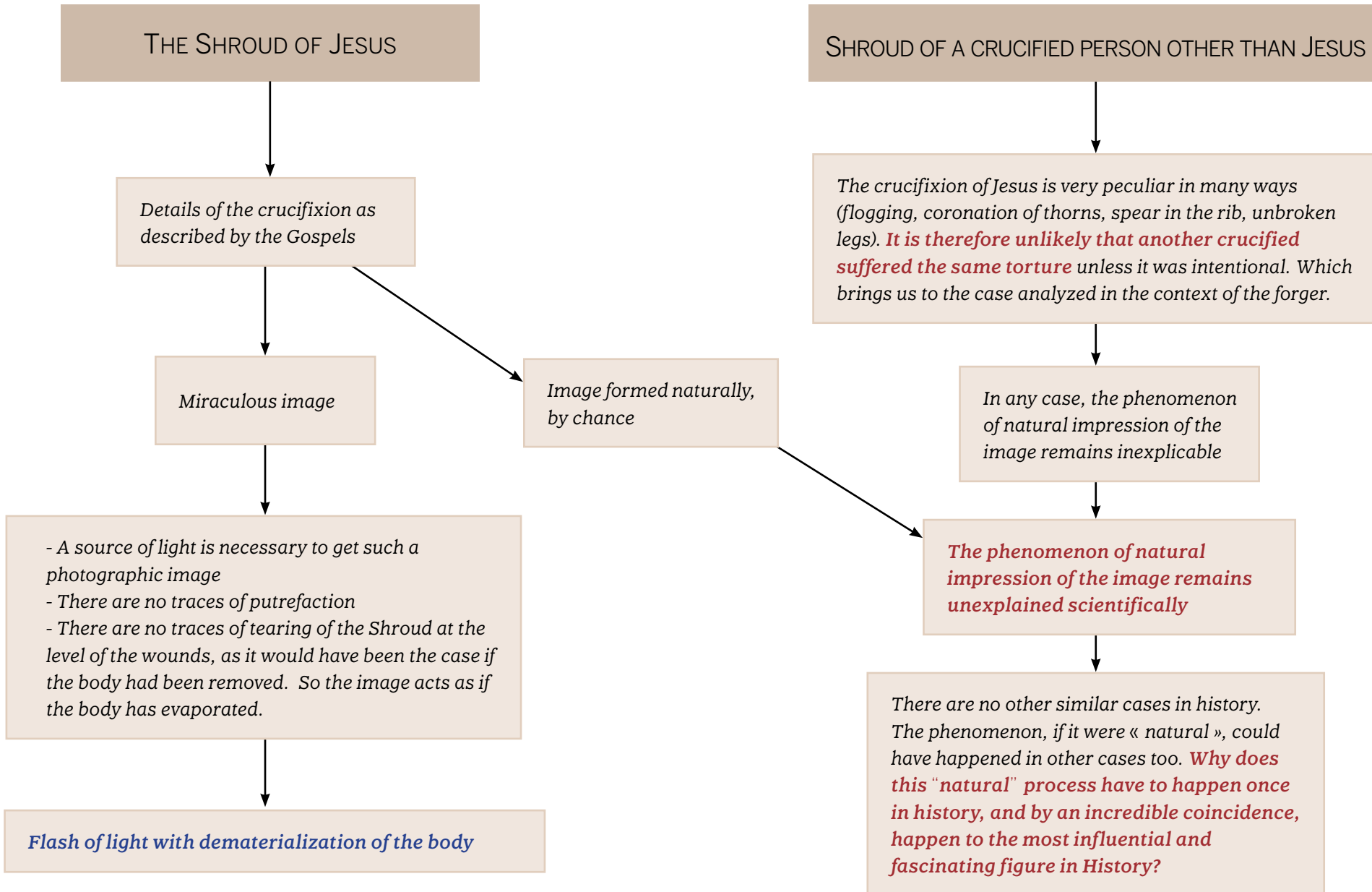
For all historical figures, we start from hypotheses that become proofs... except for Jesus' case, in which we follow the opposite path: we have proofs and evidence that we consider as hypotheses.

The problem of the Shroud is that its authenticity reveals the Truth of the Incarnation, the Passion and the Resurrection. Its authenticity would not only validate the Gospels but it would even prove the Resurrection since:

- 1- The "photographic" image of the Shroud was formed by a **uniform radiation** from the body.
- 2- There was an **evaporation or dematerialization of the body** since there are no traces of tearing of the Shroud at the level of the wounds, as it would have been the case if the body had been removed.
- 3- The body did not stay more than 48 hours in the Shroud because **there is no trace of putrefaction**.

This Truth has such implications that **in spite of all the evidence backing the authenticity of the Shroud, it will continue to be challenged by all means**.

REASONING BY DEFAULT: THE SHROUD, PROOF OF THE RESURRECTION



FORGER OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Torture of a crucified person according to the crucifixion of Jesus for the specific purpose of producing a false shroud

Painting or other artistic technique

The forger must have a precise knowledge of the slightest details of the Roman crucifixion: nails in the wrists and not in the palms, nails in the heels... **The forger must have a ROMAN whip (Flagrum)**. He must also make sure that the blood on the arms coagulates while the victim is still on the cross, and that the spear wound of the rib is made after death so it continues to flow post-mortem!

Anatomical details impossible to imagine by a forger (nails in the wrists, nails in the heels, wound of the rib that continues to flow in the back, traces of ROMAN whip, inflated chest because of suffocation, four fingers in the hands because of the severing of the median nerve ...)

Then, once the unfortunate victim is dead, the forger must wrap him in a shroud of antique texture. He should then master a **technique** (still unknown today) that **prints the whole body of the crucified photographically** (like a scanner before its time) and be able to remove the body before putrefaction and without tearing off the fabric while keeping the traces of blood!

The forger must have invented in the Middle Ages a **three-dimensional photographic technique, insensitive to water and heat**.

Why would a medieval forger perfect his work beyond imagination at a time when it was so easy for any object to be passed as a relic?

Why would the forger who invented such a revolutionary technique want to remain anonymous without seeking to make other similar works and to become famous?
If he had indeed invented a "photographic" technique similar to the scanner during the Middle Ages he would have certainly become much richer by spreading his discovery than by creating only a false relic.

REFLECTION AROUND THE SHROUD

If we believe that God undertook this unbelievable project of the Incarnation to make Himself TANGIBLE to Man, isn't it logical that He would want to keep a TANGIBLE trace of His Incarnation?

If we believe that Jesus fulfilled this incredible miracle of the Resurrection, isn't it logical that He leaves a TANGIBLE trace of this miracle?

If the Apostles who knew Him, still needed signs to believe in His resurrection, why would Christ deprive future generations of a sign if He could leave one?

If we truly believe that Jesus is the Christ, why not believe that He is able to leave us this incredible trace of His Passion and Resurrection?

If He left us this trace and the Shroud is truly authentic, would it not be sad to think that Christ has left us this incredible sign of his Incarnation, his Passion and his Resurrection and that even nowadays we still refuse to see it?

THE SIGN OF JONAH

“A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.”

(Mt 12, 38-41)

“You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times? An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah.”

(Mt 16, 3-4)

As the crowds increased, Jesus said: “This is a wicked generation. It asks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.”

(Lk 11, 29-32)

“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

(Mt 12, 40)



Jesus announced that He would leave a sign of His resurrection “**for all generations**”. According to the Gospels, He mentions it several times and calls it the Sign of Jonah, referring to the prophet that “came back to life” after spending 3 days inside the belly of a whale.

THE SHROUD AS THE SIGN OF JONAH

Could the Shroud be the Sign of Jonah announced by Jesus? The sign of his Resurrection?

When he speaks of a “bad generation”, isn’t it a way to signify that the sign will be addressed to future generations instead? Hasn’t the reality of the Shroud become more obvious nowadays through photography and science?

What could this sign be other than the Shroud?

If we believe that Jesus truly is Christ, is it not plausible that He has left us a tangible trace of His message? What could embody His message better than his Passion and Resurrection? And what could embody his Passion and Resurrection better than the image of the Shroud?

If we believe that Jesus is really “outside of time”, then shouldn’t this sign also transcend time? Hasn’t the reality of the Shroud become more obvious nowadays, with the progress of Science allowing us to see and analyze its smallest details? As if the Shroud worked like a time bomb...

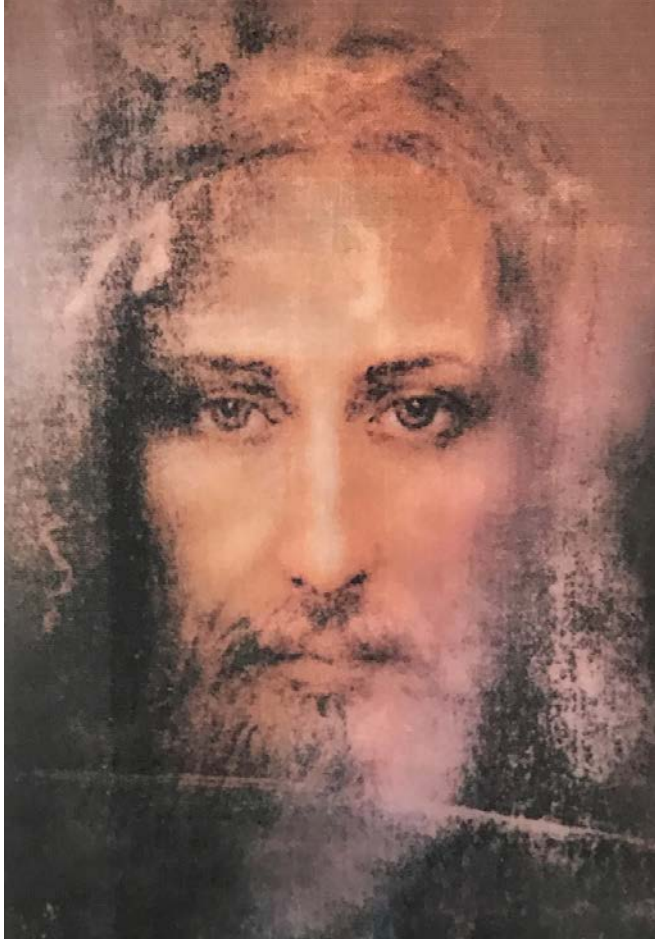
THE SHROUD, AN IMAGE OF MADNESS AND HOPE

The Shroud is an image of madness. The “madness” of God who becomes man to be closer to us and to make Himself tangible to us. A God who shows us his True Face, a face full of Love, but also full of suffering. A suffering caused by the other madness, that of men. The madness of men who are capable of torturing their fellow man because he spoke to them about Love.

But the image of the Shroud is above all an image full of hope: the hope that Love conquers all, that Love is worth fighting for until the end, because in the end there is the Resurrection. Because in the end, Love will prevail against the suffering, Love will triumph over death.

Because in the end, there is the certainty that even in the depths of darkness there is Light, the same Light without which the image of the Shroud would have never been formed.

“AND YOU ... WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?”



(Mt 16:15, Mk 8:29, Lk 9:20)



Like Christ facing the apostles with the question, “Who do you say that I am?”, the man of the Shroud asks us the same question...

Will we have the courage to answer like Peter?

IT IS NOT THE SHROUD THAT MAKES US BELIEVE IN CHRIST,
IT IS CHRIST WHO MAKES US BELIEVE IN THE SHROUD.

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For detailed photos of the Shroud you can visit the site, www.shroudphotos.com

THE 5th GOSPEL

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