

The Mystical Shroud - The Images and the Resurrection

An Ecumenical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Many believe the Holy Shroud of Turin is the linen burial shroud of Christ cited in the Gospels. The images of a crucified man appear on the Shroud. The identity of the man on the Shroud is unproven and the process that formed the images is unknown to modern science. For the most part, twentieth century research on the Shroud has been western in perspective and limited to the death and burial of Jesus Christ. This paper complements this perspective by adding the light mysticism and iconography of the Byzantine East to extant Shroud research. This leads to the positive identification of the Shroud man and a mystical understanding of the Resurrection that explains the image formation. This effort also demonstrates that the ancient icons of the church indicate that the Church Fathers knew of the Shroud and understood its mysteries. It also theorizes that the Shroud is the basis of the Pantocrator icon tradition in the East. The Holy Mandylion's relationship to the Shroud is discussed. The Shroud as the "icon of icons" is discussed as a summary of the Gospel and proof of the glorious body promised to the faithful on the last day. The mystical, eschatological relationship of the Sun of Justice miracle, which occurred in Turin in 1453, to the Shroud, is also discussed. Furthermore, the mystical meaning of the 1898 positive Shroud images is briefly addressed. Finally, the paper explains the mystical means to authenticate the Shroud both spiritually and scientifically.

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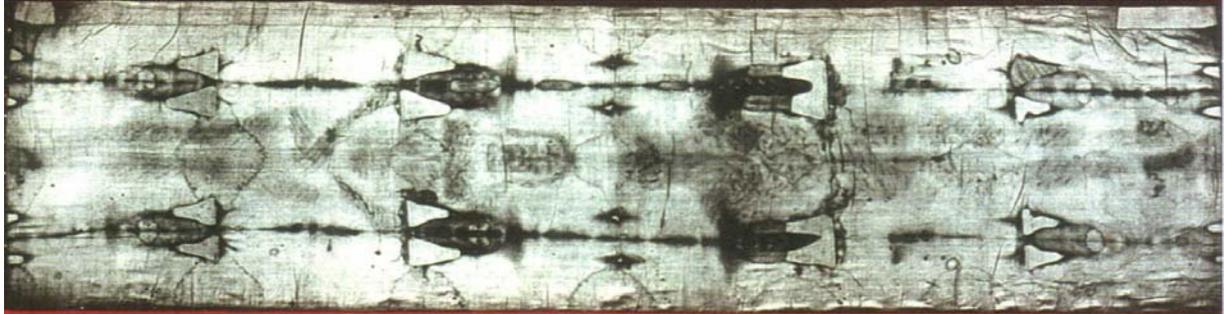


Figure 1. Full-length, black and white photograph of the Shroud of Turin



Figure 2. Painting by Giovan Battista Della Rovere (1561-1630) showing the body of Christ wrapped in the Shroud

BACKGROUND

The Shroud of Turin (Figure 1) is the most scientifically studied religious relic in history because many believe it is the burial cloth of Jesus Christ cited in the Gospels. This 14 feet, 3 inches long by 3 feet, 7 inches wide¹ (8 by 2 Assyrian cubits) linen cloth was wrapped around a man's body per Figure 2. It exhibits two images, frontal and dorsal (rear view) of a crucified man in death. It was exposed to a fire in December 1532 while it was folded and stored in a silver lined reliquary and was somewhat damaged. Hence the parallel scorch marks and the eight burned patched areas where molten silver passed through the Shroud. The Shroud was doused with water and was stained accordingly; the images, for the most part, were not damaged.

The images are like photographic negatives. When the Shroud was first photographed in 1898, the negative plates exhibited positive, mirror images (Figure 3), which sparked intense scientific study of the Shroud in the twentieth century. The researchers determined that the Shroud man was about 5 feet 11½ inches tall, weighed about 175 pounds,² had body characteristics of a Middle Eastern Semite, and was about 30 to 35 years old. Dr. Pierre Barbet, a French surgeon, studied the Shroud and published his famous book, *A Doctor at Calvary*.³ He found that the images were anatomically and medically correct, exhibiting all the injuries and wounds cited in Gospel accounts of the Passion of Jesus Christ. He noted that each wound (Figure 3) was complete with human bloodstains that were (are) distinctly red. These appear as positive images on the Shroud itself and negative (white) images on the positive Shroud images. Dr. Barbet concluded that the man had died from asphyxiation and exhaustion, the expected cause of death from a Roman crucifixion in the first century.

Subsequent scientific research in the West, using the most sophisticated analyses and equipment of the latter part of the twentieth century, mostly validated the genuineness of the Shroud. This research involved more than 100,000 man-hours and over 1000 tests, yet one scientific test appeared to refute all the others. A Carbon 14 dating test in 1988 dated the Shroud between 1260 and 1390, thereby suggesting that it was not the Shroud of Christ. Science was refuting overwhelming scientific evidence to the contrary. Intense counter investigations followed and indicated that this dating was not accurate due to non-representative sampling, contamination including microbiological growth (a “bioplastic coating”) on the Shroud, and possible Carbon 14 enrichment caused by the 1532 fire. Professor Harry Gove developed the accelerated mass spectrometer method used to date the Shroud.⁴ He, in recent years, has become aware of the microbiological growth on the Shroud and its potential to affect the accuracy of the dating. The question is how much coating would be necessary to significantly affect the Carbon 14 dating of the Shroud? “In the 1998 documentary, ‘In Pursuit of the Shroud,’ Professor Gove says openly that with the cleaning methods used in 1988 it was impossible to get an accurate dating of the Shroud.”⁵ That is, the cleaning method used did not remove the microbiological growth. Hence, the 1988 dating of the Shroud is far from conclusive. In all no archaeologist would accept radiocarbon dating when a preponderance of evidence refuted the same.

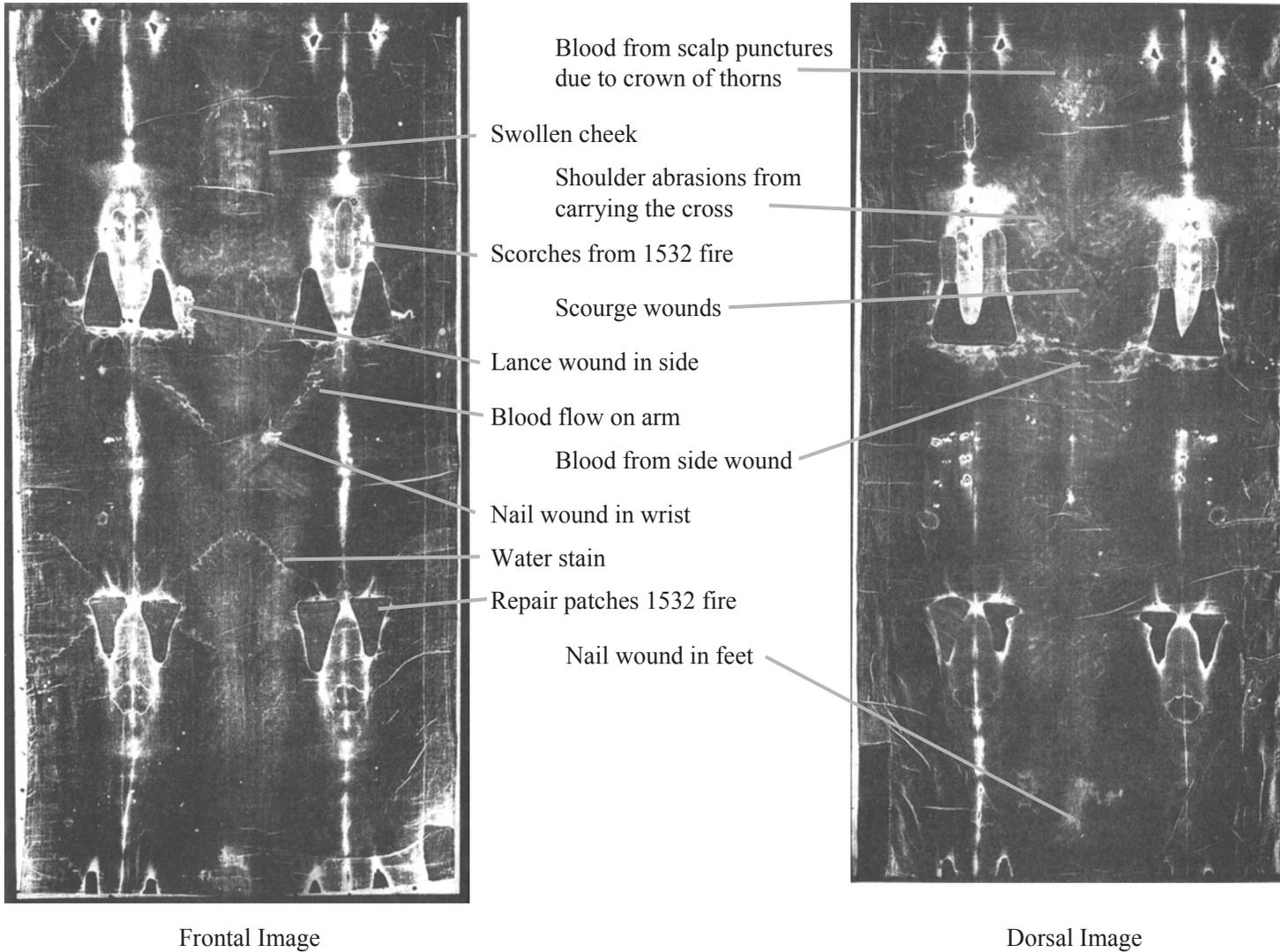


Figure 3. The 1931 Enrie positive Shroud photographs. These show the wounds of the Passion of Christ in clear detail. The red bloodstains appear as white images. Also shown is the 1532 fire damage.



Figure 4. The Sudarium of Oviedo

The Shroud first surfaced in the West, in France, in 1357. The Savoy family moved it to Turin, Italy in 1578. The history of the Shroud is known from 1357 on, as well as its locations in Europe since that time. Most experts agree French soldiers of the Fourth Crusade took the Shroud from Constantinople in 1204. Prior to this time its history is basically unknown hence the dating controversy. However another Christian relic, the Sudarium (face cloth), has shed some light on the age of the Shroud. It is reputed to be the head cloth found in Jesus' tomb with the Shroud as cited in John 20:7.⁶ The Sudarium is a 2 feet, 9 inches by 1 foot, 9 inches⁷ cloth (Figure 4) which has resided in the Cathedral in Oviedo, Spain since the mid-eighth century, and its history places it in Jerusalem in the first century.⁸ It is thought to have been folded and sewn in the form of a hood, and used to cover Jesus' head as His body was conveyed to the tomb; then removed prior to the body being placed in the Shroud. There are human bloodstains on the Sudarium, type AB, the same type as on the Shroud. Dr. Alan Whanger, the Chairman of the Council for Study of the Shroud of Turin (CSST) in Durham, North Carolina, used his "Polarized Image Overlay Technique" to compare these bloodstains with those on the head area of the Shroud and found good positional correlation^{9, 10} In addition, Avinoam Danin, a botanist at Hebrew University in Jerusalem recently identified pollen from the same plant, "a species of

thistle called *Gundelia tournefortii*,” on the Shroud and the Sudarium.¹¹ He noted this species can only be found during March and April in the Jerusalem region, hence it must be concluded that these two cloths touched the same head, in Jerusalem, in the same time frame. This means the Shroud can be dated to at least 500 years prior to the Carbon 14 dating. Also the two cloths appear to validate each other as first century in origin. This tangible evidence strongly validates the authenticity of the Shroud. Therefore, the mysteries of the Shroud remain to be solved.

THE ECUMENICAL MYSTICAL PERSPECTIVE

Science, even today, cannot deduce a completely natural explanation for the images on the Shroud nor can it define an image transfer mechanism. Science alone cannot define a test to absolutely authenticate the Shroud. The reason is that modern inquiries have been limited to the scientific body of Christ; the answers to these mysteries lie in the Mystical Body of Christ. This paper addresses each of the above mysteries from the ecumenical, mystical perspective. Included in these discussions, are historical data prior to 1357 that support the authenticity of the Shroud.

His Holiness Pope John Paul II has stated, paraphrased, that: The East and the West are the two lungs of the Church and she needs both to breathe fully.¹² East and West must meet to understand the mysteries of the mystical Shroud. The light mysticism and iconography of the East are needed to augment the West’s revelation of the “Suffering Servant” (Isaiah 52:13-53:12), Christ crucified and to reveal the “King of Glory” (Psalm 24:7-10)¹³, the risen Christ. Then science will meet the faith in truth. Then the image formation and the Resurrection as revealed by the Shroud will be understood. Then tests to absolutely authenticate the Shroud can be defined. The first step on this mystical journey is to identify the man on the Shroud. For this we turn to the Byzantine East, referred to as the East in this effort.

POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION: THE KING OF GLORY

The Eastern Church uses icons (images) to express her faith. This faith is written upon them, hence they are “written” rather than painted. Writing an icon is an act of great devotion involving fasting and prayer, and an icon must be theologically correct. Icons are sacramentals in the Eastern Church and are held in the same regard as the Holy Scriptures.

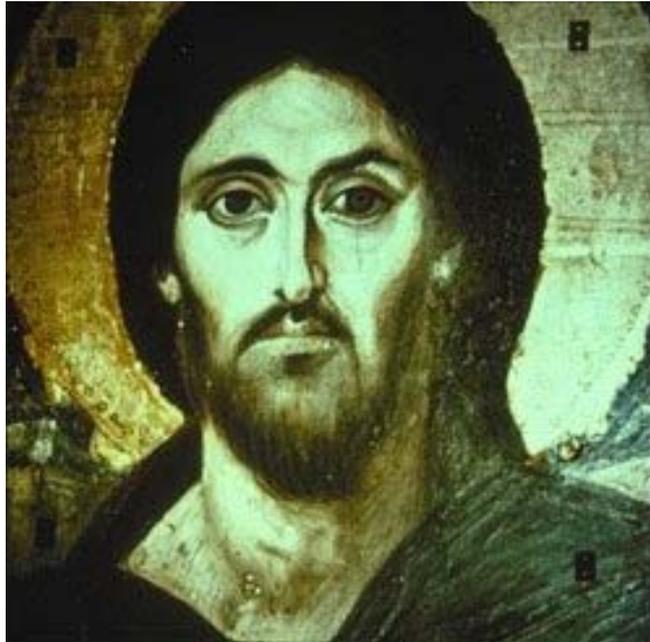


Figure 5. The Sinai Pantocrator Icon

The Pantocrator

Portrait icons of Jesus Christ are considered to be accurate depictions of our Lord for reasons that shall be subsequently explained. One class of these icons of particular interest, in relation to the Shroud, is the Pantocrator icons. These icons represent Jesus Christ as the resurrected Christ, with the marks of the Passion, enthroned in heaven as the King of Glory, the Lord of Hosts. This icon is preeminently and prominently displayed in every eastern church, either as a full body image seated on a throne or as a portrait showing the upper body, as shown in Figure 5. Comparative research was conducted on the face of the man on the Shroud and the faces on Pantocrator icons by a Frenchman, Paul Vignon in the 1930s and then by an American, Edward Wuenschel in the 1950s.¹⁴ They noted a consistency with sixth through twelfth century Pantocrator icons with the Shroud and “found some twenty [20] in all, oddities originating from some accidental imperfection in the Shroud image or weave, and repeated time and again in paintings, frescoes and mosaics of the Byzantine period.”¹⁵ Furthermore, “some were reversed right to left, perhaps because of understanding of the reversing effect of an ‘impression.’”¹⁶ This suggests these icons were based on the Holy Shroud and that the master iconographers, who were (are) excellent theologians, understood the mirror image aspect of the Shroud as will be explained.



Figure 6. Byzantine solidus coin showing the face of Christ

The most famous Pantocrator icon (Figure 5) resides in St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai. Professor Kurt "Weitzmann, the foremost authority, considers the icon to have been in Constantinople at the beginning of the sixth century and that it was probably a gift to St. Catherine's from its founder, the Emperor Justinian,"¹⁷ the Great, who reigned over the Byzantine Empire between 527 and 565. Dr. Alan Whanger, Chairman of CSST, learned that this icon was traditionally based on the Holy Shroud. If this were so, it would have been written with great reverence and accuracy, with meticulous attention to the details on the Shroud. Hence, Dr. Whanger used his "Polarized Image Overlay Technique" to perform a detailed comparison of the Shroud's and the Sinai Pantocrator's facial areas. He plotted "points of congruence (PC)," and noted that, "In a court of law forty-five [45] to sixty [60] PC are enough to declare the faces to be the same."¹⁸ He found 170 points of congruence on the faces and 250 points of congruence when the area surrounding the faces was included in the comparison.¹⁹ He had positively identified the man on the Shroud as the resurrected Christ, the King of Glory and had verified the tradition of the Sinai Pantocrator. Dr. Whanger's work strongly indicates that the Shroud is at least 700 years older than the 1988 dating results.

To further support this conclusion, Dr. Whanger compared the Shroud face with a Byzantine gold solidus coin bearing a high quality image of the face of Jesus Christ (Figure 6), which was minted between 692 and 695 by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian II. The inscription on this nickel-sized coin reads "*Jesu Christu, Rex Regnantium,*" which translated is "Jesus Christ, King of Kings." The comparison revealed 145 points of congruence²⁰ again identifying the man on the Shroud as Jesus Christ.

The time frame of Dr. Whanger's analyses appears to coincide with the origin of the eastern tradition of venerating the Holy Shroud each year at Vespers of Great (Good) Friday.²¹ This ritual is based on the known veneration of the original Shroud in Jerusalem, possibly as early as the fifth century. "According to the *Typikon of Jerusalem*, revised by Patriarch St. Sophronius [elevated in 634] (d. ca. 638), the liturgical veneration of the Holy Shroud took place during Matins for Holy Saturday, usually celebrated in the evening of Good Friday."²² The "*Typikon*" is the Order of Divine Services in the Byzantine tradition. The Moslems took Jerusalem in 637. In the seventh century, this veneration was introduced in Constantinople when, "in all probability," the original Holy Shroud was brought there. The gold solidus coin in Figure 6 may have been minted to commemorate this translation. A French soldier, Robert de Clari reported seeing the Shroud in Constantinople in August 1203 in "a church, 'which they called My Lady St. Mary of Blachernae, where was kept the sydoine in which our Lord had been wrapped, which stood up straight every Friday so that the *figure* of our Lord could be plainly seen there.'"²³ This information suggests the Shroud was in Constantinople from the seventh century to 1204 when it was believed to have been taken, by Crusaders, to France. This inference should be further researched.

The Holy Mandylion

According to eastern tradition, King Abgar of Edessa, who reigned between 13 and 50 AD, received a towel upon which our Lord had miraculously imprinted His face prior to His Passion; this relic became known as the Holy Mandylion. Edessa became a Christian city and then lapsed into idolatry. The relic was hidden and rediscovered in the early sixth century. Eventually the Holy Mandylion arrived in Constantinople on the evening of August 15, 944.

Beginning in the sixth century, eastern icons of Christ underwent a radical change and followed the form set by this relic. Iconographers cannot follow their own inclinations but must be guided by the pattern provided by the Lord Himself. Hence, the icon of the Holy Mandylion (Figure 7) is used to commemorate the triumph of icons each year and to emphasize that icons must express the living and absolute truth of the Revelation given to the Church. Early copies of the icon are reported to have "thirteen of the features" identified on the Pantocrator icons which coincide with the Shroud as identified by Paul Vignon.²⁴ History also reports that in 944 Christ's features on the Mandylion were not clear, the image was "extremely blurred."²⁵ Some

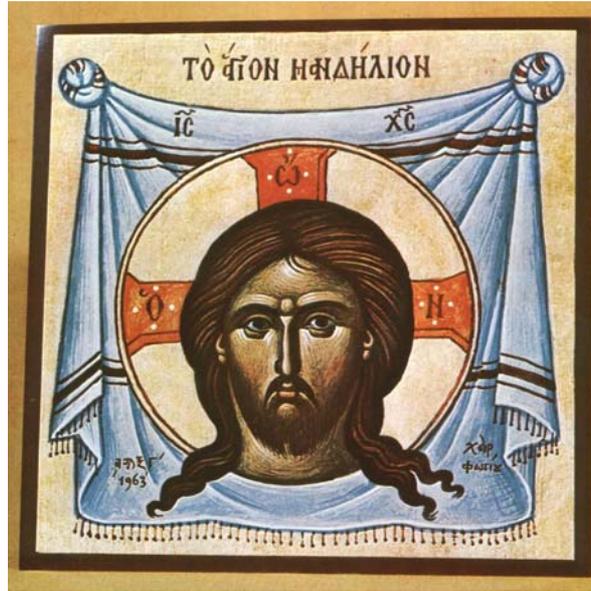


Figure 7. The Holy Mandylyon Icon

western researchers then speculated that the Shroud and the Mandylyon were one and the same, and the history of the Shroud became the history of the Mandylyon with its first century origin. They theorized the Shroud had been folded in half, and then in fourths, leaving the face exposed, and was venerated in this configuration.

However, prevailing eastern tradition^{26, 27} is that the Holy Mandylyon remained in Constantinople until 1362, five years after the Shroud surfaced in the West. At that time the Byzantine Emperor John V Paleologue gave it to General Leonardo Montaldo of Genoa, Italy because the General had reclaimed some Byzantine territories from the Turks. Just before his death, the General gave the Holy Mandylyon to the monks of St. Bartholomew in Genoa; there it remains to this day and is publicly venerated each year at Pentecost. The relic has been painted over to show the Holy Face more clearly; however, subsurface investigations have revealed a blurred image per tradition.²⁸ Furthermore, Greek Orthodox Bishop John Kallos wrote: “I am definitely convinced that the Holy Mandylyon and the Turin Shroud are not one and the same.”²⁹ Irene Economides of Athens, an authority on the Holy Mandylyon wrote, “The Holy Mandylyon has nothing to do with the Shroud of Turin.”³⁰ Hence further study will be required to establish the Shroud’s history prior to 1357; the Eastern Church will be the best source of historical data. However, the correlation between the facial images on the Shroud and the Holy Mandylyon further attests that Jesus Christ is the man on the Shroud.

THE MYSTERIOUS IMAGES

The icons of the East have identified the man on the Shroud as the risen Christ. Now the science of the images must be reviewed in order to understand the mystical image formation on the Shroud as part of the Resurrection. Also this review is required in order to show that science and theology meet in the Holy Shroud. Hence the physical image characteristics are provided below:³¹

- The images reside only on the very surface fibrils of the Shroud surface.
- “Dehydration and [carbonyl] conjugation, along with oxidation are the primary characteristics of the cellulose fibers of the Shroud image.”³²
- The images are very detailed, for example, the lips on the face and the scratches in the scourge wounds are discernable.
- The frontal image's intensity varies inversely with the cloth's distance from the body.
- These variations in intensity have made it possible to discern and display a superficial three-dimensional frontal image.
- The intensities of the frontal and dorsal images are nearly equal with the latter being slightly greater.
- There is no pigment on the images or binder cementation between the various surface fibers.
- The images are non-directional, which is impossible in the case of a painting, and this is a scientific mystery.
- The images are chemically stable and “cannot be dissolved, bleached or changed by standard chemical agents.”³³
- The images are thermally and water stable as demonstrated by the 1532 fire experience.
- The images do not fluoresce like the burns on the Shroud.

Scientists have concluded the images were generated in a real tomb, from a real body, which radiated either heat or light to form the images by means of a scorch. They have noted that a scorch on linen cloth at temperatures less than 536°F (280°C)³⁴ could produce the known chemical characteristics of the images. However, no one could explain how a “dead” body could generate heat or light.

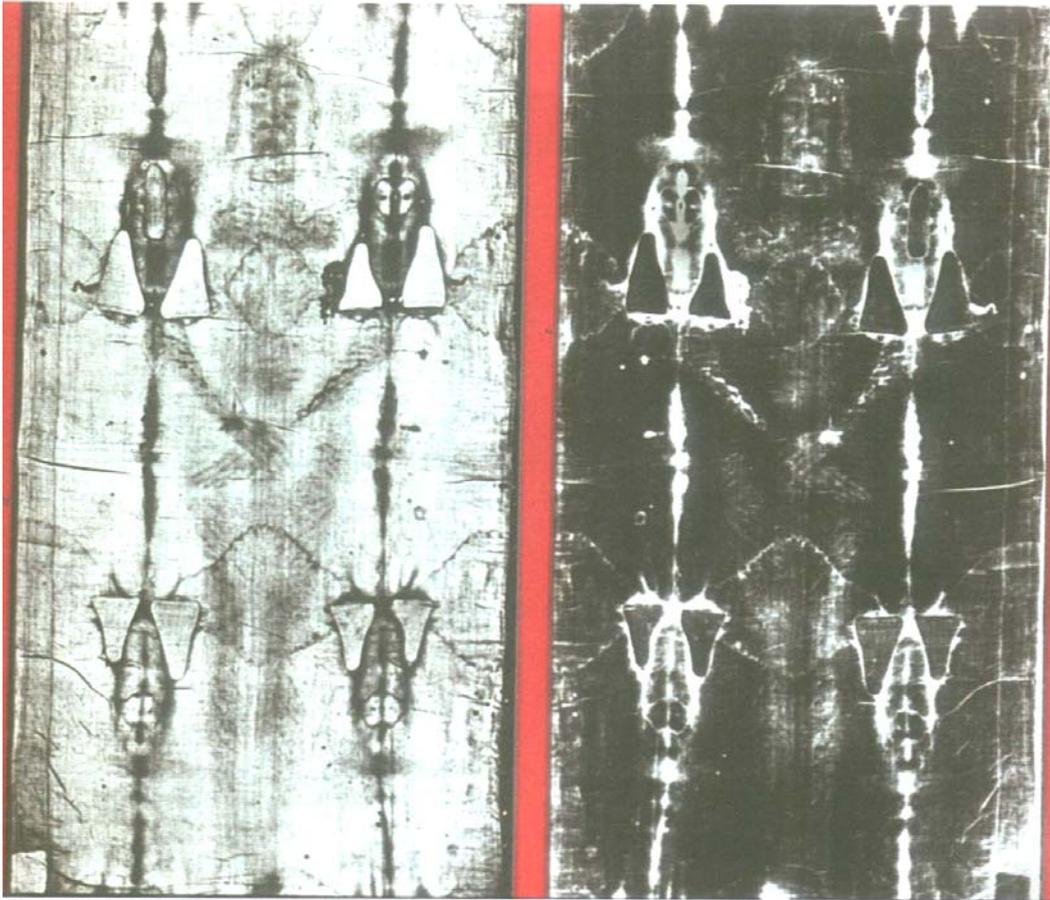


Figure 8. The original (left) and positive (right) frontal Shroud images

To better understand the theory that the images emanated from the body enveloped by the Shroud, consider Figure 8, which shows the original frontal image on the left, and the mirror imaged, positive frontal image on the right. Then think of the positive image as the body in the tomb and mentally fold the original over it. It can then be seen that the original image was “projected” onto the cloth in mirror image form. The lance wound, and bloodstain which appear to be on the left side on the original image, are in fact on the right side of the body. This agrees with all Christian tradition and eastern iconography consistently maintains that the lance wound was on the right side of the body. Hence this is a major point of validation for the Shroud’s authenticity.

Now that the basic image characteristics have been reviewed, the limit of scientific understanding of the Shroud image formation will be reviewed in the form of the “Fall Through Theory.”

“THE FALL THROUGH THEORY”

Dr. John Jackson, a physicist and well-known Shroud researcher, has recently proposed the “Fall Through Theory”³⁵ to explain the image formation on the Shroud. In addition to the previously cited image properties, he noted:

- The intensity of the images is independent of body composition such as skin and hair.
- There are no side images on the Shroud.
- The frontal image aligns vertically over the corresponding features of the body.
- “The absence of substances in the image areas that might have chemically browned the cloth.”³⁶
- “The observed lack of pyrolytic products expected from a high temperature cellulose degradation.”³⁷

The latter property rules out heat scorch as the cause of the images. The elimination of heat scorch is also verified by the facts that the images do not fluoresce like the burns on the Shroud and that the images do not penetrate beneath the top most fibrils of the cloth.

Dr. Jackson noted that all conventional image formation theories thus far proposed failed to satisfy all the known aspects of the images. Hence he suggested something unknown to science might have caused the images. He noted, suggested, and concluded the following:

- The images and the bloodstains were formed from the body enveloped by the Shroud.
- There were two different draping configurations for the Shroud; the first being the natural draping when the bloodstains occurred; second, the Shroud flattened out (collapsed) when the images were formed. (Note there is no image beneath the bloodstained areas on the Shroud.)
- He noted the misregister of the bloodstains on the Shroud with reference to the body image to support this theory. He particularly noted that the irregularity of facial bloodstains, which appear in the hair images on either side of the face (see Figure 9), suggests lateral displacement of the cloth during image formation.
- He inferred that the body must have become mechanically transparent to allow the flattening of the cloth. (That is, the body was mysteriously transformed not dematerialized.)
- He then suggested that gravity forced the flattening cloth into the body, causing the vertical alignment of the body features on the cloth.



Figure 9. The positive image of the face of Christ on the Holy Shroud

- He then theorized that light (electromagnetic radiation), highly absorbing in air, was volumetrically emitted from inside the body to record the surface topography of the body.
- He noted that short-wave ultraviolet light or soft X-rays are highly absorbing in air and “in cellulose over fibril-like distances.”³⁸
- He further theorized that ultraviolet light photochemically modified (bleached) the cellulose to form the image; this process is known as photolysis. The result was the “conjugated, carbonyl structure associated with dehydration.”³⁹
- As the cloth passed superficially through the body surface, the radiation dose accumulated, and the intensity of the image was dependent upon the contact time with the body.
- Since ultraviolet light is highly absorbed in air, its affect could not begin until vertical intersection of the cloth and body. Blurring of the image was thereby prevented.
- It was theorized that as the Shroud collapsed, the outer edges of the cloth flared up and out, flexed behind the head, thereby preventing side imaging; hence the absence of side images.
- The time for this process was long enough to allow the image formation, but short enough to prevent the cloth from passing further into the body than the body’s surface, thereby preventing image blurring.

- “ A white (bleached) image [appeared] on a less white cloth,” and “image browning” occurred “by natural aging at ambient temperatures over a long period of time.”⁴⁰

Dr. Jackson stated: “Direct chemical or spectroscopic testing of the Shroud would probably be required to determine if the image cellulose was modified by a radiation event.”⁴¹ He further stated: “The major problem with the hypothesis is, of course, to explain why a human body would behave in such a manner.”⁴² The limits of science are where faith begins; to understand this mystery we turn to the Transfiguration.

TRANSFIGURATION: THE RESURRECTIONAL BODY

The Transfiguration of our Lord, Jesus Christ, on Mount Tabor is reported in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36). During this event Jesus radiates great light from His body, prior to the Passion and Resurrection, to prepare his disciples for both. Peter, James and John are in awe of this radiance but not physically affected by it. The East counts this experience as a Theophany:

The Holy Trinity is manifest here, for Christ is transfigured (Matthew 17:2), the Father speaks from heaven testifying to Jesus divine sonship (Matthew 17:5) and the Spirit is present in the form of a dazzling light surrounding Christ’s person, overshadowing the whole mountain (Matthew 17:5).⁴³

Liturgically, the West and East cite theology pertinent to the Transfiguration. The Liturgy of the Hours, in the West, states: “O Christ, before your passion and death you revealed the resurrection to your disciples on Mount Tabor.”⁴⁴ The Divine Office, in the East, states:

O Lord, as a preparation to your crucifixion, You led some of your disciples to a high mountain and became transfigured before them, enlightening them with the light of your glory. In this way, You showed the reality of your resurrection You are to grant to us in your love for all and in your almighty power as God. Make us worthy of this resurrection, O God for You are gracious and the Lover of Mankind.⁴⁵

We pray what we believe and believe what we pray. From the above we learn that the body of light revealed at the Transfiguration prefigured the resurrected body of Christ. The prototype of the glorious body each faithful Christian will receive on the last day per the Scriptures: “He [Jesus Christ] will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself” (Philippians 3:21). St. Paul revealed even more about this “glorified body” (1 Corinthians 15:36-49); he stated that

we now have the first Adam's body, but then we shall have that of the second Adam, the resurrected body of Christ. This body shall be incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual. The image of man shall be renewed and "we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *Man*"⁴⁶ (1 Corinthians 15:49). He further stated that on the last day "we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51,52). Hence we learn that the resurrected body is glorious, a body of light (i.e. divine energy as will be explained) in the eastern mind, spiritual and beyond science's understanding, and this transformation will take place in the "blink of an eye," which is finite time. Hence, this is the mystical, mechanically transparent body of light theorized by science, which can only be understood by faith and cannot be scientifically analyzed. In order for science and faith to meet in truth, it is necessary to examine the mystical light and then the mechanically transparent body.

THE DIVINE LIGHT

Light is the term most associated with God in the Eastern Church, even more so than love, power or wisdom. St. John wrote, "God is light and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). The Nicene Creed states that Jesus Christ is "Light of Light, true God of true God" yet the light of Christ was only visible to the temporal eye, during His earthly life, at the Transfiguration and the Ascension, at which times it obscured the natural light. This light is called the "divine light" and is generally invisible to normal sight but Saints with sanctified senses can see it. To better understand it, it is necessary to briefly review eastern mysticism⁴⁷ per the early Eastern Fathers of the Church, namely St. Basil the Great, St John Chrysostom, and St Gregory of Nanzianus, all Oriental Doctors of the Catholic Church.

The East differentiates between the essence and the energies of God. The essence is the "supra-substance"⁴⁸ of God, the proper nature of divinity. The Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are one undivided essence but are Three Divine Persons (*hypostases*)⁴⁹ who are equal to each other. "Yet God is one, not composite but simple, one divine nature."⁵⁰ The essence of God is inaccessible, incomprehensible, insensible, unknowable and unnamable; yet we know God and have named Him. This is made possible through the unchangeable energies of God: the "operation, powers . . . through which He manifests, communicates, and gives Himself."⁵¹ These energies do not diminish the essence and are never separated from it but are

“non-hypostatic.”⁵² The East deems them uncreated. Among these energies are love, power wisdom, and light. “The distinction of substance [essence] and energy does not introduce composition or plurality.”⁵³ “Simplicity does not exclude distinction, only separation and division.”⁵⁴ The distinction between the essence and the energies upholds the transcendence of God while at the same time allowing creation to experience real communion with God.

St. John of Damascus, an Oriental Doctor of the Catholic Church, and a Father of the Eastern Church stated:

The word ‘God’ in the Scriptures refers not to the divine nature or essence, for that is unknowable. ‘God’ refers to the divine energies – the power and grace of God which we can perceive in this world. The Greek word, *theos*, comes from a verb meaning ‘run,’ ‘see,’ or ‘burn.’ These are energy words, so to speak, not essence words.⁵⁵

Hence, “God is light” means the uncreated, invisible God is uncreated, invisible light. One eastern commentator states: “This uncreated, eternal divine and deifying light is grace, for the name grace also refers to divine energies insofar as they are given to and accomplish the work of our deification.”⁵⁶ Deification, which corresponds to full union sainthood in the West, is union with the energies of God and the Saints witness this as the inner vision of divine light. There can be no human union with God’s essence, except the hypostatic union of the “Son of Man” – Jesus Christ, because this would be pantheism. It is important to note the West believes the light is created; the Holy Shroud will arbitrate this matter as will be discussed.

The eastern faithful know that the deified believer experiences transfiguration. The divine light permeates the Saint’s being. One of the great moments of Christian mysticism occurred late in the life of Saint Seraphim of Sarov (1759-1833), a Russian Orthodox Saint, who His Holiness Pope John Paul II calls “Saint.”⁵⁷ On this occasion,⁵⁸ one of the Saint’s friends “wanted to know the goal of Christian life.”⁵⁹ The Saint’s response was, the goal “is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit,”⁶⁰ and he prayed that his friend would see the manifestation of the Spirit “with the eyes of the flesh.”⁶¹ The Saint told him to look at his face. His friend responded, “I can’t . . . because the light flashing from your eyes and face is brighter than the sun and I’m dazzled!”⁶² This Saint’s transfiguration occurred in a snowstorm and the snow blanket and flakes were irradiated by the light. The divine light did not melt the snow on the Saint and his friend⁶³ – heat was not outwardly manifested during this mystical experience.⁶⁴

Catholic Saints also radiate the divine light. Some examples are: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Jean Marie Vianney, St. John Bosco (incorrupt in Turin, Italy), St. Therese of Lisieux, Pope St.

Pius X, St. Francis Cabrini, and St. Maximilian Kolbe.⁶⁵ The Congregation for the Causes of Saints recognizes the divine light as one of the supernatural signs of sainthood.⁶⁶ Hence our Lord's words, "the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43), are not merely symbolic. In truth, *Oriente Lumen* and *Occidentale Lumen* are one, the eternal manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

In this brief discussion, the "volumetric light" of science inferred by the "Fall Through Theory" has been defined. However it is necessary to understand how the uncreated, immaterial, invisible divine light could have affected the images on the Shroud. To do this, the light was translated into the created, visible realm.

TRANSLATION OF THE INVISIBLE TO THE VISIBLE

Christians reciting the Nicene Creed profess belief in the "seen and unseen" (West), "visible and invisible" (East). The unseen realities of our faith are far superior to those, which are seen. St. Paul states: "we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18), and "we walk by faith not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). However, at times the invisible realities of our faith become visible, our faith becomes sight. This is called the translation of the invisible to the visible. The epitome of this experience is the Incarnation of the invisible God. St. Paul states, "He [Jesus Christ] is the image [icon] of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). Icons are a translation of the invisible to the visible. The icon called the Shroud of Turin reveals Jesus Christ, who is truly man and truly God, as the Incarnation; it clearly shows His body and the injuries of the Passion which meet the exacting requirements of medical science. This teaches that those invisible realities translated into the visible realm comply with the laws of nature and the requirements of science.

Another example of such a translation occurs in the case of the Holy Eucharist, which the West calls the "Real Presence" because it is the "unseen" true presence of the physical body and blood of Christ. The East agrees with this doctrine.⁶⁷ This is faith in the unseen. On rare occasions, in the East and in the West, the invisible true presence becomes visible. One well-known instance occurred in Lanciano, Italy about 700.⁶⁸ A priest-monk, who doubted the Real Presence, was celebrating the Eucharist at St Longinus Monastery. Then before his very eyes, just after he had spoken solemn words of Consecration . . . the host was suddenly changed into a circle of flesh, and wine transformed into visible blood.⁶⁹ The revealed flesh and blood were

placed in a reliquary, and exist to this day residing in the Church of St. Francis in Lanciano. In 1970 scientific analyses were performed; the blood and flesh were found to be of human origin and had the same blood type as the blood on the Shroud, type AB. The flesh was clearly heart tissue. Even though the reliquary was not hermetically sealed, the relics remained incorrupt, per science, over the intervening centuries. Again when the invisible was translated to the visible, the resulting relics conformed to the laws of nature; except in the case of the Eucharist, the body and blood of our Lord was (is) incorrupt in agreement with Scripture, “He whom God raised up saw no corruption” (Acts 13:37).⁷⁰ That is the relics were not subject to decomposition. Spiritual law supersedes natural law. The theological justification of such translations is honored, both East and West, by the principle that God is not bound by sacrament or theology.

The divine light is also subject to translation. Such is the case of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, later known as St. Paul (Acts 9:1-19, 22:4-21, and 26:12-20). Saul is literally an antichrist at the time of his conversion. He persecuted, imprisoned Christians, and even consented to their deaths. Yet his unsanctified eyes saw the divine light and the Lord on the road to Damascus. The translated light had a tangible effect; it blinded him. After three days Ananias of Damascus, a Christian miraculously healed him and “Immediately things like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight” (Acts 9:18). A review of this experience, with an ophthalmologist,⁷¹ revealed that high intensity ultraviolet light, without heat transfer or elevated temperature, could photochemically blind a person. The effect would be burning and blistering of the cornea and burning of the retina of the eye thereby inducing blindness. In addition, flakes or scales could form on the eyelids, which are considered part of the eye. This explanation correlates with St. Paul’s conversion experience (cf., Galatians 4:14, 15). Faith and science meet in truth.

The above interpretation of St. Paul’s experience assumed no heat transfer occurred. This was also the case in Saint Seraphim of Sarov’s transfiguration as well as in the many Marian apparitions. In these apparitions the Mother of God always manifests the light, whether on an invisible basis to a visionary or visionaries as at Lourdes and Fatima, respectively; or visibly, to many, as was the case in Zeitoun, a suburb of Cairo, from April 1968 to 1971.⁷² In this latter experience, the *Theotokos* (God Bearer) appeared to millions, unbeliever and believer alike, as “Our Lady of Light” on the roof of St. Mary’s Orthodox Coptic Cathedral. The Orthodox Coptic Patriarch at the time, His Holiness Pope Kyrillos VI, deemed the appearances, accompanied by many miracles, genuine.⁷³ Cardinal Stephanos investigated these appearances,

as requested by His Holiness Pope Paul VI, and reported: “It is no doubt a real appearance.”⁷⁴ These sightings revealed a three dimensional aura of light about the Blessed Virgin but scientific investigations indicated that no heat emanated from this light. As in all such visible visions of Saints’ light: “the luminosity of the holy [was] . . . clear and white.”⁷⁵ Thus even in the modern era such translations occur and from these we gain knowledge about the translated divine light.

The overall experience of the translated divine light seems to reconcile the differing views of the divine light, East and West. The divine light is uncreated, immaterial light, but at times is translated into the visible realm and conforms to the laws of nature, and thus can be created light as well.

In order to understand the translated light’s affect on the Shroud, the properties of this light must first be understood. The temporal properties of the translated divine light, specific to the image formation on the Shroud, appear to include the following:

- It is electromagnetic radiation.
- It is clear and luminous like sunlight.
- It is visible and therefore includes the visible light spectrum.
- It includes ultraviolet light and possibly x-rays.
- Elevated temperatures and heat transfer are not evident.
- This ineffable light has a potentially infinite intensity, which is controlled per the divine purpose; e.g., the Transfiguration and St. Paul’s conversion.
- It can have a photochemical effect on the temporal realm.
- In the context of the glorious body, it is “volumetric” in scientific terms.

Thus the translated divine light meets criteria of the “Fall Through Theory” and its ultraviolet component could have affected the images on the Shroud. Now the mechanically transparent body must be addressed.

THE SEALED TOMB

After Jesus was buried, a large stone was rolled against the entrance of His tomb. A Roman seal was placed on the stone and a Roman guard was set to prevent a staged resurrection.

Violation of this seal and/or failure of the guards to perform their duty were capital offenses.

The women who came to anoint the body on the first day of the week were not strong enough to roll the stone away from the entrance. The tomb was opened miraculously, the Scriptures state:

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightening and his clothing as white as snow. The guards were shaken with fear of him and became like dead men. Then the angel said to the women in reply, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay." (Matthew 28:1-6)

Catholic commentary on the above Scripture states: " 'angels.' Rolled back the stone . . . not to allow the risen Jesus to leave the tomb but to make evident the tomb was empty."⁷⁶ Orthodox commentary on the same event states:

According to the Gospel, the angel removed the stone from the doors of the Sepulchre, not to enable the risen Christ to come out, as had to be done in the raising of Lazarus [cf., John 11:38-44], but "on the contrary, to show that He was no longer in the sepulchre (that the sepulchre was empty) 'He is not here: for He is risen,' and to enable those who sought 'Jesus, who was crucified' to see with their own eyes the empty sepulchre, 'the place where the Lord lay.' This means the Resurrection had already taken place before the descent of the angel and before the stone was rolled away: it was an event inaccessible to any eye and beyond all comprehension."⁷⁷

Thus the Scriptures and the associated commentary establish that the glorified body of Christ, a body of divine energy, passed mystically through the walls of the tomb prior to its being opened. Hence the "mechanical transparency" of the resurrected body of Christ is established theology, East and West.

THE RESURRECTION AND IMAGE FORMATION

Ostensibly the Resurrection is incomprehensible. However, the Holy Shroud, the only "record," brings understanding to this mystery. In the Holy Shroud the faith meets science in truth. This meeting suggests the following scenario of the Resurrection and the image formation:

- The body of Christ was taken down from the cross and transported to the tomb, a short distance away. The Sudarium in the form of a hood covered the bloody head.

- At the tomb, the Sudarium was removed and deposited therein. The body was placed on the Shroud and wrapped in it per Figure 2.
- The holy, crucified, dead body of Christ was perfectly incorrupt. Hence no decomposition products were deposited on the Shroud.
- The incorrupt blood of Jesus collected on the Shroud from the various wounds and injuries manifest on the body. The blood is red, due to its increased Bilirubin content, caused by the traumatic death.
- On Resurrection morning, the body became alive and was transformed into the glorious body “in an instant, in the blink of an eye” (1 Corinthians 15:52). Note, “The resurrected body is the fulfillment of what God intends for our present body. It is material fulfilled, not dematerialized.”⁷⁸ Therefore science will not be able to define this “process.”
- The divine light was translated into the visible realm, for the instant of transformation only, at the proper intensity to affect the images on the Shroud without blurring. The light emanated from every atom of the glorious body regardless of composition and caused one to one mapping of the body onto the Shroud as it contacted the body.
- During this same instant, the force of gravity rapidly flattened the Shroud, as the body became “mechanically transparent.” The Shroud superficially penetrated the front surface of the glorious body and the intensity of the image varied directly with the time that the Shroud was in contact with each bodily feature. The superficial body penetration accounts for the superficial aspect of the three dimensional Shroud frontal image.
- During this time, the edges of the Shroud flared up and the cloth against the back of the head flexed outward, hence there are no side images. An alternative explanation is that the image forming light was only projected orthogonally, up and down, without any side radiation; hence no side imaging resulted. This is entirely possible in the mystical realm.
- The process that caused images is called photolysis, using short-wave ultraviolet light to “bleach” the images onto the cloth. The images remained “invisible” for a time until aging at ambient temperatures made them visible.
- The images were mirror imaged onto the Shroud; as a result the bloodstains also appear mirror imaged. For example, the lance wound and bloodstain on the right side of the body appears on the left side of the frontal image.

- Due to the superficial penetration into the body and the nature of the light, some subsurface aspects of the body are manifest on the images.⁷⁹ “The reason the fingers look so long is because the metacarpal bones (those in the palm of the hand) are visible, as well as the bones in the fingers.”⁸⁰
- After the instant of transformation the divine light ceased to be visible, and the Shroud descended to its resting-place, in a configuration that indicated that the body had left it in an inexplicable manner. The rapid cessation of the light prevented image blurring by the inner glorious body.
- The invisible resurrected Lord then passed through the wall of the sealed tomb.
- Then the resurrected Lord translated into His visible incarnate body but, at first, His disciples did not recognize Him. Then they saw Him, as they knew Him, except for the wounds of the Passion that were also visible. He ate food to prove He was flesh and blood and not a spirit (cf., Luke 24:36-43).
- Finally He is in heaven, after the Ascension, in His glorious body (cf., Revelation 1:9-20).

The images on the Shroud were purposely made by our Lord and the Holy Spirit to provide scientific proof of the Resurrection. This was an act of divine mercy for the people of this time who seem to have a driving need for absolute, scientific proof in order to accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Finally, the images were also provided for the edification of the faithful and to prepare them for the future journey of the Church to “Zion.”

ICONS TELL THE TALE

Icons rigorously convey theological truth and revealed the faith of the Fathers of the Church well before East and West split. The mystical Resurrection revealed in the Shroud is also revealed in a series of icons. A review of these will verify the previous analysis of the Resurrection.

Figure 10, the Transfiguration icon, shows Jesus in the center radiating the divine light. An elliptical envelope, which surrounds His entire body, indicates the visible manifestation of His glory; this symbol is called a “mandorla” and is the key to understanding the Resurrection through the icons. About the Lord’s head is a golden nimbus, which symbolizes the radiation of the invisible, divine energies. All Saints have nimbuses on icons, however; the Lord’s nimbus is

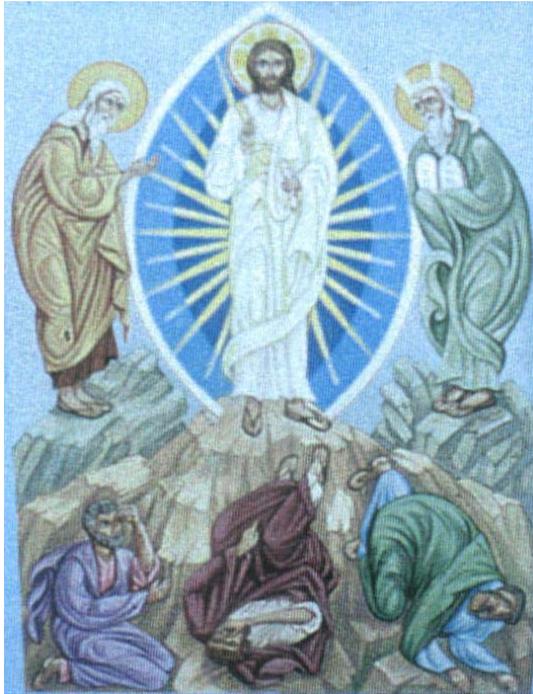


Figure 10. The Transfiguration Icon

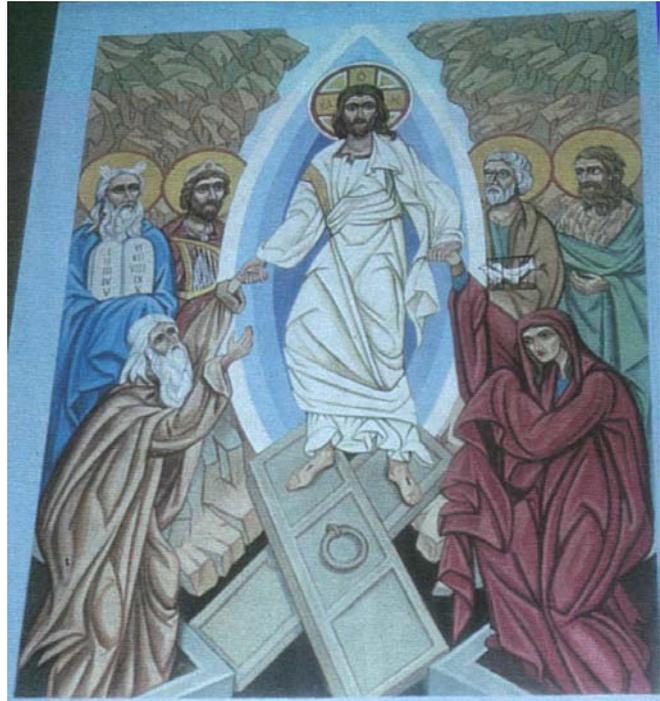


Figure 11. The Decent into Hades Icon

distinct because it includes a cross and Greek letters which mean “I am who am” (cf., Exodus 3:14) which declares Him to be God as well as man. On either side of our Lord stand Elijah and Moses. The disciples Peter, John and James are in disarray, overwhelmed by this experience. Note they do not have nimbuses; they are not Saints at this point, yet they see the light. However, the light does not blind them because the Lord limits it to their capacity to endure it, per the Troparion (eastern hymn) of this feast.

Figure 11 is an icon called both “The Descent into Hades” and “The Resurrection” and is displayed on Pascha, Easter Sunday in the East. While our Lord’s incorrupt body remains in the tomb, His soul descends into Hades, the place of the dead. This is the very limit of His degradation and also the beginning of His glory. The Lord, having overcome Hades and Death, frees the righteous souls of the Old Testament and opens the gates of Heaven to them and all the righteous of the future. Note that a mandorla surrounds him. He appears just as in the Transfiguration icon. He manifests His glory in Hades, the divine light of the Resurrection has begun to shine.



Figure 12. The Resurrection Icon

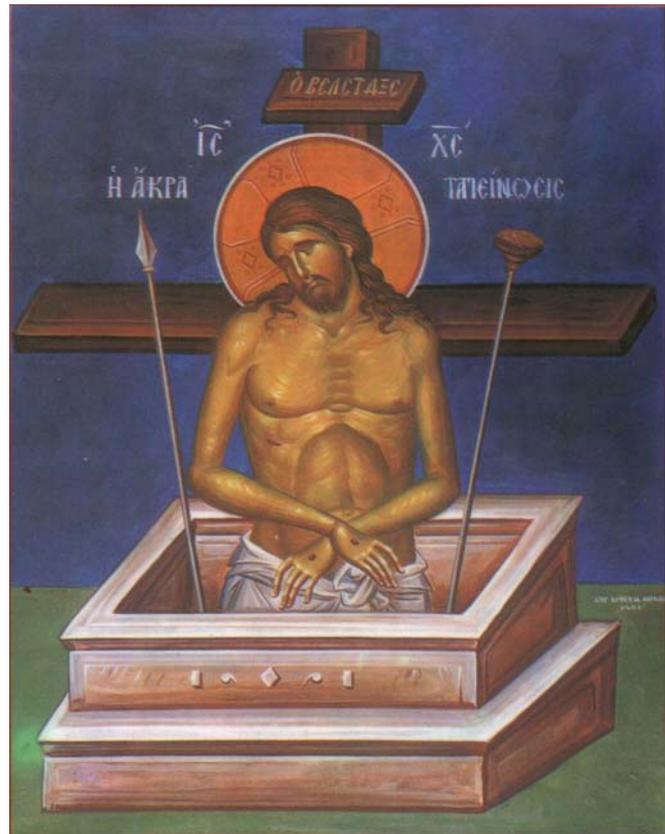


Figure 13. The Extreme Humility Icon

Figure 12 shows an icon of the Resurrection, which is rarely used in the East because this event is thought to be incomprehensible. This icon shows the resurrected Lord rising above His sarcophagus. Again, He is enveloped in a mandorla signifying His visible glory; the divine light is manifest at the Resurrection. Note He is depicted exactly as He was shown in the Transfiguration icon, indicating in this manner that the Fathers were revealing the resurrected body of light in this icon as the previously noted liturgical witness has stated.

Figure 13 is a Greek icon known as “Extreme Humility”; the Creator is put to death by the created (cf., Philippians 2:5-11). It is displayed on Holy Saturday in eastern churches. Our Lord with all the marks of the Passion is shown on this icon. However, the plaque above His head proclaims Him to be, in Greek, the “King of Glory,” who is at the same time the “Suffering Servant.” The icon shows our Lord mystically rising out of the tomb, in a state of peaceful repose, mystically passing through its walls. His glory is now invisible as compared to the previous icon of the Resurrection.

Even more importantly, this latter icon appears to be based on the Shroud itself. Note the head tilted to the right and the arms crossed over the body, see Figure 3. Comparing the various body features, beginning with the face we see a peaceful expression. Looking at Figure 9, the face of our Lord on the Shroud, a calm, serene, majestic expression is manifest. This peaceful countenance has amazed Shroud devotees because of the terrible suffering and death endured by our Lord. In eastern iconography, this expression is known as *dispassion*, a state of mind that perceives itself in heaven, “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7). *Dispassion* is always indicated on the faces of Christ and the Saints on icons. Next note the lance wound on the right side of the body with the water and blood flowing from it. The iconographer understood the mirror imaging on the Shroud as it passed through the body. Then look at the hands, only four fingers are shown as on the Shroud (see Figure 3), a prime indicator of its relationship to the same. In all, this icon appears to be a literal depiction of the Resurrection, as an iconographer would write to convey a modest exactness of the frontal image on the Shroud. Hence, this icon appears to be based on the Shroud and has been in existence, at least as early as the late twelfth century. It predates the earliest date of the radiocarbon dating and validates Robert de Clari’s Shroud sighting in 1203, in Constantinople.⁸¹

Figure 14 is the *Ointment Bearing Women* icon, which depicts the women coming to anoint the body on Resurrection day (cf., Luke 24:1). They find the tomb empty; the angel proclaims, “He is risen.” The Shroud is depicted as still containing Jesus’ body. St. John saw the same configuration and wrote, “he saw and believed” (John 20:8). One eastern authority on icons stated:

Indeed, it is precisely after seeing the linen cloths . . . that they had retained the form they had when covering the entombed body, that is, wrapped together, was an infallible proof that the body contained in them was not stolen away (Matthew 28:13), but left them in an inexplicable manner.⁸²

Hence the Church Fathers reveal that the body of Christ was transformed into the glorious body and it passed mystically through the Shroud.

Figure 15 is an icon of Mary Magdalene witnessing the resurrected Christ as reported in John 20:11-18. The Lord stands plainly before the viewer. The Shroud is shown in the background and again appears as if the body is still in it. Again the Fathers reveal that glorious body passed through the Shroud and the tomb walls. One eastern icon expert comments:



Figure 14. The Ointment Bearing Women Icon

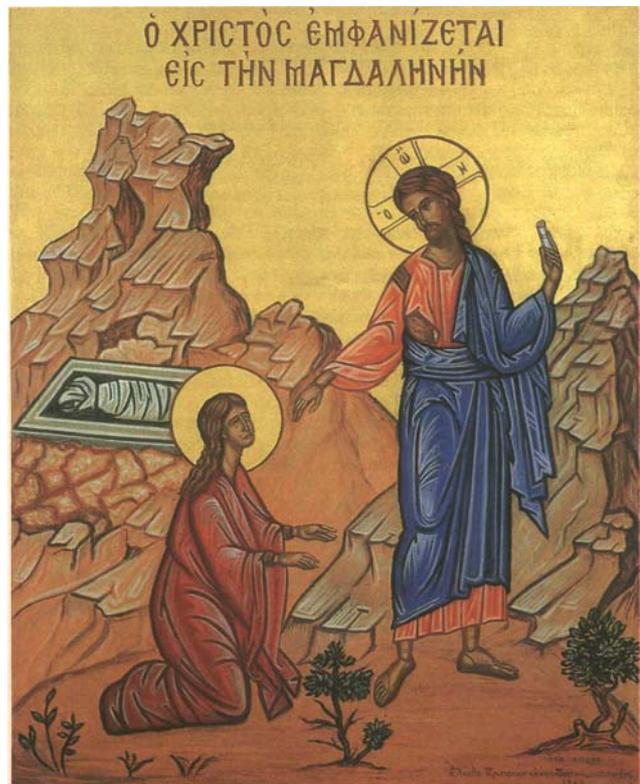


Figure 15. The Icon of Our Lord seen by Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene looks around and sees the Lord, Who stands in the centre [sic] of the icon, among small hills. Moreover since Mary Magdalene had taken Him for an ordinary man, a gardener, His glorified state is not indicated in any way and He is depicted in the usual garments He wore before the Resurrection.⁸³

From this we note that the post resurrection experiences were at times mysterious, in that Jesus was not immediately recognizable to His disciples. They would then recognize him as a flesh and blood person. This conveys the idea that He can freely translate from the glorious body to His incarnate body and appear as He chooses (cf., John 20: 19,20). In this, is the origin of many Saints' experiences of helping an unfortunate person and then recognizing the Lord before them.

In all, the Fathers have revealed the mysteries of the Resurrection in the icons. They certainly knew about the Shroud and its mystical images. This series of icons verify the Shroud theories advanced so far. However, the tale of the icons is not complete until we further discuss the Pantocrator icons.

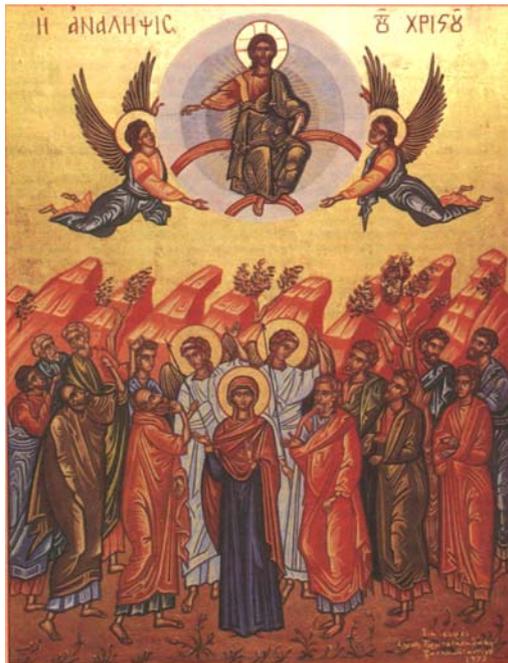


Figure 16. Icon of the Ascension



Figure 17. Icon of the Conversion of St. Paul

PANTOCRATOR: KING OF GLORY

As mentioned earlier, Pantocrator icons, which closely match the Shroud face, are prominently displayed in every eastern church. Their significance is far greater than the Holy Mandylion. This latter icon may not appear in an eastern church except on the first Sunday of Lent to commemorate the triumph of icons and on August 16 to celebrate its translation to Constantinople in 944. Hence a closer review of the Pantocrator icons is warranted to understand their overall relationship to the Holy Shroud. Therefore three additional icons will be reviewed, the Ascension, the Conversion of St Paul and the Pantocrator enthroned.

Figure 16 shows the Ascension of our Lord as reported in Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:9-11. Our Lord appears in a circular mandorla, seated, as on a throne, ascending into heaven. Below Him are Mary, two angels and the Apostles. The Lord blesses them continually and all the faithful, for all time, with His right Hand. In His left hand, He holds the Gospel, the source of knowledge communicated to the Church through the Holy Spirit. He rises in visible glory as indicated by the mandorla: He is the King of Glory reigning in heaven. He is also our High Priest and mediator before God (cf., Hebrews 4:14 and 1 Timothy 2:5). His saving work on



Figure 18. Deisis, icon showing the Pantocrator enthroned in heaven with the Holy Mother of God on His right and St. John the Baptist on His left

earth is complete and He can send the Holy Spirit to the Church on Pentecost (cf., John 16:7). The pattern of using the mandorla, which began with the Transfiguration icon, is continued.

Figure 17 shows the Conversion of St. Paul, which occurred after the Ascension. Saul of Tarsus is blinded by the translated divine light and knocked off his horse; the horse is part of tradition and not reported in Scripture. Jesus is shown as the King of Glory, the transfigured Christ, as indicated again by the circular mandorla, plainly indicative of the visible manifestation of His glory.

Finally, Figure 18 the icon of the Pantocrator enthroned in heaven is shown. Pantocrator icons always appear in eastern churches, either as in Figure 18 or Figure 5, which depicts the Pantocrator at half-length. Both icons can assume gigantic proportions when they are displayed in the church dome above the nave. Figure 18, shows the Lord, the ruler of the universe, the glorious Christ of the Last Judgment. He is the King of Glory surrounded by the heavenly powers indicated by the angels within a circular mandorla, which indicates He is reigning in

“unapproachable light” (1 Timothy 6:16). Our Lord is also surrounded by “two curved squares forming an octagonal star – the symbol of the future aeon.”⁸⁴ On the corners of the outer square at the star are the symbols of the four Evangelists. An eastern icon commentator notes: “A star of this shape, but without the symbols of the Evangelists, is also met with in [some] images of the Transfiguration”⁸⁵ as early as the thirteenth century. In this, the use of the mandorla has come full circle back to the Transfiguration icon – to the King of Glory.

The prominence of the Pantocrator tradition, in the East, is based upon the transfigured, risen Christ who is the very focus of eastern spirituality. No longer is Christ merely identified with the Jesus of history. The emphasis of the East is not on the “Suffering Servant” but on the resurrected Christ noting that the East fully realizes there is no glory without the cross. In the King of Glory the hope of the new creation is realized. St. Paul writing about the risen Christ stated this principle as follows: “even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him no longer. So whoever is in Christ is a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:16,17). It must be concluded that the basis of the Pantocrator icon tradition is the Holy Shroud, which is the first icon of the transfigured, risen Christ. This is attested to by the Sinai Pantocrator, which matches the face of the Shroud, and the consistency of the ancient Pantocrator icons with the Shroud’s face. Furthermore, the Extreme Humility icon appears to present a literal depiction of Christ rising from the tomb as shown on the Holy Shroud. He is clearly identified as the King of Glory on this icon.

ICON OF ICONS

The Holy Shroud is an icon made-without-hands, the work of our Lord and of the Holy Spirit. All icons reveal the fundamental truths of our faith and bring them into the present. The first truth they reveal is that God truly became man. The Holy Shroud not only reveals this truth but also proves that the Son of God, Jesus Christ became like us in every way, except sin. This relic portrays Him as a man who is medically and anatomically correct, and who suffered death by crucifixion. Icons are richer than the richest texts. The Shroud reveals the Passion more graphically and in greater detail than known in the Scriptures. It is completely theologically accurate, as an icon must be, and reveals Jesus was beaten, scourged, wore a crown of thorns and “was crucified, died and was buried.” Yet His body was (is) incorrupt per the faith, His blood is incorrupt on the Shroud and there are no decomposition products on it. The Holy Shroud makes the preeminent truth of our faith, the Resurrection manifest (cf., 1 Corinthians 15:12-19). His

resurrected body, the glorious, transfigured body is revealed. The Shroud proclaims as St. Paul states, Jesus Christ is “established as Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness through resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4). The Shroud declares Jesus Christ as “Light of Light, true God of true God,” the Pantocrator – the King of Glory.

Another great truth revealed in icons is the glorified body of the new creation. The Shroud is an icon of hope and divine mercy. It sanctions and emphasizes the glorified body, not only of Christ, but also as the spiritual goal and purpose of us all. It proclaims: “Sanctity is possible . . . and will fill even our bodies with the light of the Spirit of God.”⁸⁶ This message is eschatological in nature, a preview to the Second Coming and proof of the promised transfiguration of the faithful and of all creation (cf., Romans 8:19-21) in the age to come.

Icons make God present. The icon called “the Holy Shroud” presents Christ as “the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15). It translates the invisible to the visible, which is the very purpose of iconography. Hence it validates the use of icons to portray the Son of God, who became visible, and the Saints who are also glorified, and to convey spiritual truth.

Finally, the Holy Shroud is an icon of unity. St. Paul declares that the Gospel is the death, burial and the Resurrection of our Lord (cf., 1 Corinthians 15:3,4). Only through the ecumenical perspective of the faith can the complete Gospel be seen in the Shroud. East and West meet in the Shroud, the icon of the Mystical Body of Christ.

THE SUN OF JUSTICE MIRACLE

The year 1453 was a providential year in the history of the Church and the Holy Shroud. On March 22, 1453 the Shroud became the property of the Savoy family who would bring it to Turin in 1578 where it remains to this day. On May 29, 1453, after several weeks of siege, Constantinople fell to Moslem invaders and remains under the control of Islam to this day. On June 6, 1453 the “Sun of Justice” miracle occurred in Turin, Italy. All of these events appear to be connected to the Holy Shroud and the Second Coming of our Lord, the *Parousia*. The focal point of the events is the Sun of Justice miracle and its subtle relationship to the manifestation of the positive Shroud images in 1898.

According to the accounts of the Sun of Justice miracle,⁸⁷ two soldiers looted the church in Exilles, Italy, and they stole many valuables including “an ostensorium containing a large consecrated Host.”⁸⁸ They went to Turin hoping to sell their booty and entered the city early in

the evening of June 6, 1453. Just as they passed in front of what is now the Basilica of Corpus Domini, the donkey carrying their plunder stumbled spilling its burden to the ground with one exception: the consecrated Host which rose in the air and began to shine like the sun. The townspeople summoned the local bishop who, vested in “proper regalia,” came and adored the Host; he then held up a chalice and the glorious Host descended into it. The Host was then conveyed to the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist and remained there until 1584 when it was consumed per the order of the Holy See; the Shroud would come to the same Cathedral in 1578. This miracle is sanctioned by the Catholic Church and is commemorated each year in Turin.

This was a miracle of the divine light translated from the invisible to the visible. It plainly revealed that the uncreated, invisible divine light always emanates from the Eucharist, which is the transfigured body and blood of Christ per eastern theology. It validates the foregoing discussions of the divine light and ties it to the Eucharistic theology of the West. The miracle appears to be a memorial to the fall of Constantinople, the “City of Light,” calling the West to remember the light of the East (*Orientalis Lumen*) as part of the Gospel. Hence the Host, ostensibly retained to commemorate the miracle, was also a remembrance and witness of the divine light. In 1578, the Holy Shroud replaced the Host as the witness of the invisible divine light.

Furthermore, the story of the miracle appears to be allegorical. The two soldiers appear to represent the two sackings of Constantinople. First by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, when it is believed the Shroud was taken to France, and the second by the Moslems in 1453. The message of the allegory appears to be that of all the relics taken from Constantinople, the most precious, the Holy Shroud, the image of the body of Christ, would come to Turin and there it was to remain. The transfer of the Shroud to the Savoy family in 1453 was a harbinger of the fulfillment of this prophetic allegory.

The name of the miracle is taken from Old Testament prophecy, Malachi 3:19-24,⁸⁹ describing the return of our Lord as the rise of the “Sun of Justice.”⁹⁰ Hence the Word describes and explains the meaning of the miracle which represents the King of Glory, the Pantocrator, the unity of the Word, the Body and Light, coming “again in glory.” He is returning to the properly vested church, which is a holy Church clothed in glory, a transfigured Church. This miracle infers that the devotions to the Word, the Body (Eucharist) and the Light will be unified, and sanctified prior to the *Parousia*, reflecting the unity and holiness of the King of Glory.

The “Epiphany of 1898,” the manifestation of the positive Shroud images, which also appears to be an allegorical experience, amplifies this unity concept. The Shroud was exhibited in 1898 to honor the fiftieth anniversary of the constitution of Italy, which would unite the Kingdom of Italy under a constitutional monarchy. The positive images appear to convey the message that the King of Glory will return in the year of the Jubilee, “a year acceptable to the Lord” (cf., Luke 4:18, 19) following the unification of the Kingdom of God, the Church. In ancient Israel, the year of the Jubilee occurred every 50 years (cf., Leviticus 25:8-55). At that time Israel was reconciled to God, all lands were returned to their original ancestral owners, the Israelite slaves were set free, and it was a year of rest. The word jubilee refers to the sound of the trumpet and it is important to note that the “trumpet of God” will sound at the Lord’s return, see 1 Thessalonians 4:16. It should be particularly noted that the above allegory does not specify the time or date of our Lord’s return (cf., Matthew 24:36).

This latter allegory complements the previous description of the unified, holy Church as a necessary condition for our Lord’s return. This holy Church shall be perfected in love (*agape*). This is consistent with our Lord’s most fervent prayer “that they may all be one . . . that they may all be brought to perfection as one” (John 17:20-23). Thus it must be realized that the Lord will not return to a divided church but to one perfected in unity. He will return to the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.” The word “catholic” refers to the universal Church but does not preclude the continued existence of the various patrimonies, expressions and emphases of the “one faith” (cf., Ephesians 4:3-5), which together reveal the fullness of the faith as demonstrated herein.

The contemporary harbinger of our Lord’s return, the Holy Shroud, which is a unity of the Word, Body and the Light of Christ, resides in Turin’s Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. The Word tells us what the Shroud is and what the images represent. The body and Eucharistic blood are on the Shroud, and all that remains is for the divine light to be revealed. The authentication of the Holy Shroud will reveal this aspect of the Body of Christ.

AUTHENTICATION: THE LIGHT AND THE BLOOD

Our Lord is a merciful God who knows man often needs credible, tangible grounds for belief before he can make an act of faith. St. Paul confirms this thought: “For what can be known about God is evident to them, because God made it evident to them. Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be

understood and perceived in what he has made” (Romans 1:19,20). Even though Jesus told St. Thomas, “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.” (John 20:29), He still allowed St. Thomas to probe the wounds of the Passion so that he could believe. This He did for the other Apostles as well (cf., Luke 24:36-43). So it is with the Shroud; for many it speaks for itself and no proof is needed. However, for many other doubting Thomases and those who do not know Christ, absolute tangible proof is necessary to satisfy the cynicism of this age. Hence, God in His great mercy has provided the Shroud so that the world may know that Jesus is the risen Christ, “Light of Light, true God of true God.” In order to accomplish complete authentication of the Holy Shroud, it must be validated spiritually to edify the Church and scientifically to satisfy the world. The keys to verification are the divine light and the blood on the Shroud. The same is also true of the Sudarium.

The body of Christ is glory, and every atom of His incarnate body is glory. Hence the invisible divine light emanates from the blood on the Shroud. However, only a Saint can see this light, and this is the spiritual test. That is, certain holy persons, East and West, should observe the Holy Shroud and attest to the glory of God on the Shroud. This would verify the truth of the uncreated, invisible light and that the blood is Eucharistic blood, that of our Lord. This same test could also be applied to the Sudarium. This would spiritually prove to the Church, East and West, that the Shroud is (and the Sudarium are) genuine and set the stage for scientific proof of the same to the world.

The scientific testing would require the comparison of the blood of the Eucharist made visible and retained in reliquaries, such as that at Lanciano; and the blood on the Shroud. This comparative test could be applied to the Sudarium as well. It is already known that the blood on the Shroud and Sudarium is human, type AB; this is also true of the blood retained from the Eucharistic miracle at Lanciano. What remains is to test the human DNA, which is present on the Shroud and possibly on the Sudarium, to the extent possible, against the DNA of the Eucharistic miracles. A match would conclusively prove the authenticity of the Holy Shroud (and the Sudarium) to anyone who loves truth, believer and unbeliever alike (cf., 2 Thessalonians 2:10). Since these tests would involve the Eucharistic blood and truths, which are the very foundations of our faith, faithful scientists should perform them under the auspices of the Church. This testing should be an ecumenical event involving the East and the West.

Success in these tests will mandate the declaration of the Holy Shroud’s (and the Sudarium’s) authenticity by the Church, to the world. This would not only proclaim the validity

of the “Icon of Icons,” but of the validity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as well. Such success would be a clear call for Christian unity in the very near term. It would be a clear call for common Communion between East and West and for an Ecumenical Council to establish a completely unified Gospel acceptable to both, which the Holy Shroud represents as the unity of the Suffering Servant and the King of Glory. This unity should lead to worldwide evangelization (cf., Matthew 24:14).

CLOSURE AND PROLOGUE

To date, all studies of the Holy Shroud have focused on the scientific body of Christ and have been based on the western perspective of our faith. This research has been fruitful in showing the death and burial of our Lord, but has fallen short of revealing the Resurrection. The eastern perspective was required to go beyond the limits of science to reveal the mystical body of Christ. The inclusion of the eastern light mysticism and iconography opened the door to the mystical Shroud. The overall ecumenical perspective revealed the complete Gospel of Jesus Christ, the death, burial and the Resurrection (cf., 1 Corinthians 15:3,4). The result, the East and the West met in the mystical Shroud, the icon of icons – the icon of Christian unity.

It appears science should now attend to the Resurrection by verifying the “Fall Through Theory” based on the theology of the Church as advanced in this paper. DNA matching of the blood on the Holy Shroud with the blood of the Eucharistic miracles will provide scientific proof of the Shroud’s authenticity. However, the witness of holy persons attesting of the invisible divine light emanating from the blood on the Shroud would spiritually attest to the Shroud’s authenticity. This will also reconcile East and West. Then the Church, the true arbitrator of our faith will be able to declare the Shroud authentic.

Authentication will not end the search for the ecumenical mysteries of the Shroud but will mark the beginning of the journey. The Shroud is mystically linked to the Divine Mercy image⁹¹ and Our Lady of Guadalupe,⁹² the mystical understanding of these icons will also require the ecumenical perspective. The constant underlying message of these icons will be found to be that we, East and West, are “one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church” – the Church of Christ. The understanding of the ecumenical mysteries will unite the Church and proclaim the Gospel to the world. Then the journey to New Jerusalem will begin in earnest.

ENDNOTES

1. Metric: 4.35 meters by 1.09 meters.
2. Metric: the man was about 182 centimeters tall and weighed about 79.4 kilograms.
3. Pierre Barbet, M.D., *A Doctor at Calvary* (Fort Collins, CO: Roman Catholic Books, 1953).
4. Mark Guscini, *The Burial Clothes of Christ* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2000), p. 8.
5. Ibid, p. 9.
6. Reverend Louis Hartman C.S.S.R. et al, eds., *New American Bible* (Iowa Falls IA: World Bible Publishers, Inc., 1991). All scriptural designations and quotations herein are taken from this Bible unless otherwise noted.
7. Metric: 83.9 centimeters by 53.4 centimeters.
8. Guscini, pp.49-74.
9. Mary Whanger and Dr. Alan Whanger, *The Shroud of Turin* (Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1998), pp.56-59, 123.
10. Guscini, pp. 37-48.
11. New York Times Wire Service, "Study Adds Age to Shroud of Turin," *The Gazette* [Colorado Springs, CO] (3 August 1999): pp. A-1, A-3.
12. His Holiness Pope John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer (Redemptoris Mater)* (Boston MA: Pauline Books & Media, 1987) pp. 47, 48.
13. Psalm 23 in the Septuagint (LXX).
14. Ian Wilson, *The Shroud of Turin* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978), pp. 83-86.
15. Ibid, p. 84.
16. Ibid, p. 85.
17. Richard Temple, *Icons and the Mystical Origins of Christianity* (Rockport, MA: Element, Inc., 1992), p. 92.
18. Whanger and Whanger, pp. 18-20.
19. Ibid, p. 20.
20. Ibid, P. 20.
21. Reverend Anthanasius B. Pekar, OSBM, Byzantine Leaflet Series No. 7, *The Veneration of the Holy Shroud according to the Byzantine Rite Tradition* (Pittsburgh, PA: Byzantine Seminary Press, 1977).

22. Ibid, Section 4.
23. Wilson, p. 76.
24. Ibid, p. 96.
25. Ibid, p. 95.
26. A monk from Saint Tikhon's Monastery, ed., *These Truths We Hold* (New Canaan, PA: Saint Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1992), pp. 273-274.
27. Irene Economides, *Le Saint Voile [The Holy Mandylion]*, 3e édition (Athènes: Graphikes Technes, G. Papanikolaou, 1997), p. 24.
28. Ibid, p. 58.
29. Bishop John Kallos, *What About the Holy Mandylion and Turin Shroud?* (Minneapolis, MN: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1991), p. 34.
30. Irene Economides, letter to author, (2 May 1998).
31. Kenneth E. Stevenson and Gary R. Habermas, *Verdict on the Shroud* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1981), pp. 63-95.
32. Ibid, p. 82.
33. Ibid, p. 67.
34. Ibid, p. 94.
35. John P. Jackson, Ph.D., “Does the Shroud of Turin Show Us the Resurrection?” in *La Sindone De Turin Estudios Y Aportaciones*, ed. Guillermo Heras Moreno (Valencia, Spain: Centro Espanol De Sindonología and the Turin Shroud Center Of Colorado, 1998), pp. 217-239.
36. Ibid, p. 230.
37. Ibid, p. 230.
38. Ibid, p. 230.
39. Ibid, p. 219.
40. Ibid, p. 230.
41. Ibid, p. 230.
42. Ibid, p. 235.
43. Joseph Allen, Th.D. et al, eds., “The Transfiguration” in *The Orthodox Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), p. 48.
44. *The Liturgy of the Hours, Vol. IV* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1975), p. 1277.

45. The Sisters of Saint Basil the Great, Uniontown PA, eds., *The Festal Menaion* (Pittsburgh, PA: The Byzantine Seminary Press, 1985), p. 439.
46. Joseph Allen, Th.D. et al, eds., *The Orthodox Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993). Eastern tradition does not include inclusive language.
47. Reverend Casmir Kucharek, *The Sacramental Mysteries: A Byzantine Approach* (Allendale, NJ: Alleluia Press, 1976), pp. 358-370.
48. Ibid, p. 363.
49. Ibid, p. 366.
50. Ibid, p. 366.
51. Ibid, p. 360.
52. Ibid, p. 365.
53. Ibid, p. 366.
54. Ibid, p. 365.
55. Joseph Allen, Th.D. et al, eds., “Deification” in *The Orthodox Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), p. 561.
56. Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), p. 59.
57. His Holiness Pope John Paul II, *Crossing The Threshold Of Hope* (New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1994), p. 18.
58. Valentine Zander, *St. Seraphim of Sarov* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975), pp. 84-96.
59. Ibid, p. 84.
60. Ibid, p. 85.
61. Ibid, p. 90.
62. Ibid, p. 90.
63. Ibid, p. 92.
64. Saint Seraphim felt inner warmth, which he called “the fire of the Holy Spirit” (Ibid, p. 92). The Saints in the West experience this as the “Fire and Heat of Love.”* Blessed Padre Pio** (d.1968) experienced a measured body temperature of 125.6 °F (51.9 °C). St. Paul of the Cross (d. 1507)*** experienced the “interior furnace of the love of God” and it is reported that the “linen vestments” that touched his heart were scorched. This interior heat did (does) not injure the sanctified bodies. This occurrence is consistent with the Sacred Heart tradition of the West. The Heart of Jesus is inflamed with the fervent fire of love and is resplendent with light. Divine love and the divine light are inseparable. However, the Synoptic Gospels do not indicate heat emanations during the Transfiguration, which

revealed the glory of God. The divine light, above all, reveals the holy presence of God. Hence light and only light formed the images on the Holy Shroud to reveal the Son of God.

*Joan Carroll Cruz, *Mysteries Marvels Miracles* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1997), pp. 173-185. ** Ibid, 181-183. *** Ibid, pp.178, 179.

65. Patricia Treece, *The Sanctified Body* (Liguori, MO: Triumph Books, 1993), pp. 28-32, 53-56, 61-79.
66. Ibid, p. 40.
67. At the Institution of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday, our Lord explicitly stated, “this is my body” and “this is my blood” (cf., Matthew 26:26-28). Hence the eastern “Communion Prayer” includes the following: “O Lord I also believe and profess that this, which I am about to receive, is truly Your most precious Blood and Your life-giving Body. . . .”* The Eucharist is the focus of the Divine Liturgy of the East as it is in the Mass of the West. However, the East does not use the term transubstantiation, which means change of substance. The East refers to the Sacraments as “Mysteries” and prefers to consider them as such.

*Reverend William Levkolic, *The Divine Liturgy* (Pittsburgh, PA: Byzantine Seminary Press, 1978) p. 25.
68. Joan Carroll Cruz, *Eucharistic Miracles* (Rockford, IL: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., 1987), pp. 3-18.
69. Ibid, p. 3.
70. Allen, see endnote 46.
71. Telephone interview with Robert J. Foerster, M.D. of Colorado Springs, CO by author, (October 3, 1998).
72. Archdeacon Youssef G. Kamel, John P. Jackson, Ph.D. and Rebecca Jackson, *A Lady of Light Appears in Egypt* (Colorado Springs, CO: St. Mark's Avenue Press, 1996), pp. 45-96.
73. Ibid, pp. 61, 62.
74. Ibid, p. 58.
75. Treece, p. 41.
76. Reverend Louis Hartman C.S.S.R. et al, eds., *New American Bible* (Iowa Falls IA: World Bible Publishers, Inc., 1991), p. 1061, footnote for Matthew 28:2-4.
77. Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning Of Icons* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), p. 189.
78. Allen, p. 401, footnote for 1 Corinthians 15:35-54.
79. Whanger and Whanger, pp. 111-119.

80. Ibid, p. 112.
81. A recent analysis of the permanent creases on the Shroud * has enabled a research team to replicate the device used to house and display the Shroud in Constantinople based on Robert de clari's report. These western researchers based their research on the Extreme Humility icon, which they perceived to be a literal depiction of the display of the Shroud. In addition, this effort validated the Shroud citing in 1203 and indicates that this relic was housed and displayed this way for some time before this date, thereby strongly challenging the 1988 radiocarbon dating of the Shroud.

*John P. Jackson, Ph.D. and Rebecca S. Jackson, *New evidence that conclusively identifies the Shroud of Turin with the Byzantine Shroud of Constantinople in the First Millennium* (Colorado Springs, CO: Turin Shroud Center of Colorado, 1998).

82. Ouspensky and Lossky, p. 192.
83. Ibid, p. 192 see footnote 3.
84. Ibid, p. 73.
85. Ibid, p. 73.
86. "Icons: Images of Glory," (Anaheim, CA: Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church, 1991) pamphlet.
87. Cruz (see endnote 68), pp. 145-152.
88. Ibid, p. 145.
89. Hartman, p. 994 (note most Bibles present these verses as Malachi 4:1-6).
90. Eastern tradition applies the cited Scripture to the Nativity of our Lord; the term, "the Sun of Justice", or "the Sun of Righteousness", is used to describe our Lord in the Christmas Troparion (hymn). These same verses name Elijah as the first forerunner (cf., Malachi 3:1); our Lord stated that St. John the Baptist fulfilled this prophecy (cf., Matthew 17:10-13). However, these verses also appear to anticipate the Second Coming. "The great and terrible day" is cited and the meting out of justice is implied, consistent with our Lord's return and the Last Judgment. "Two witnesses" (cf., Revelation 11:3-14) are to precede and herald our Lord's return; eastern tradition identifies them as Elijah and Enoch.* The East also uses the cited passage to identify Elijah as the "second herald of Christ" and this supports the application of these verses to the Second Coming as well as to the First Coming.**

*Allen, p. 611, see footnote for Revelation 11:3.

**Most Reverend Joseph Raya and Baron José De Vinck, *Byzantine Daily Worship* (Allendale, NJ: Alleluia Press, 1988) p. 730.

91. Sister Sophia Michalenko, C.M.G.T., *Mercy My Mission* (Stockbridge, MA: Marian Press, 1995).
92. Francis Johnston, *The Wonder of Gaudalupe* (Rockford, IL: TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., 1981).

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