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## ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD, ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE IMAGE OF THE PANTOCRATOR AND THE PROBLEMATIC RELATIVE TO THE PHISIONOMIC PORTRAIT

### A b s t r a c t

This short essay has two objectives:

a) to assert that the physionomic portrait (even if it was born in Greece only after the classical *Society*, around the middle of the IV cent. B.C., obtained the full *secularization*) is indirectly always present in the classical figurative art (and even in those of the other cultures), because the author, even if he was refusing to give *eternity* to a man, to a *mortal*, that means offering him a way to compete with the *divinity*. I am convinced that he certainly was referring to *models*, physical or mnemonic – from which take the elements of human anatomy, face enclosed, without, however, that this obliged him to lower the individualistic and personal element in the *schematization* and *standardization* of the subjects;

b) to assert that the *Holy Shroud* is the *archetype* of the many representations of Christ Pantocrator in the *apses* of the *byzantine* and *highmedieval* churches.

The existence of a direct relation among the Holy Shroud and the many images of Pantocrator Christ seem completely plausible even if one has to consider that the *general typology* of this latter derivates from the heads of *philosophers* and *poets* of classical Greece, that are marked by *lengthened faces*, *severe gaze*, *fluent moustaches* and *beards*.

It's undoubted that between the image on the Holy Shroud and that on the Pantocrator of the *byzantine* and *highmedieval* Churches there is a strict iconographic relation. In case one accepts – and this is my opinion – that the face appearing on the *sudarium* is *Christ's* authentic one it must be dated to the I cent. B.C, in the *age of Tiberius*, being that the historical period during which He lived.

In such a case, the artist who created the *archetype* (or the archetypes) of the Pantocrator, took certainly the physionomic features from the knowledge of the *Holy Shroud*. It is important, therefore, to know date and place in which the Mandylion, the *sudarium* would have appeared for the first time. The most plausible date would be the IV cent. A.D. and the place *Edessa* (Urfa), in Turkey. One speaks about the Mandylion that *Christ* Himself should have placed on His own face to leave on it His imprint (adding details on details) at least from the IV cent. A.D., and therefore nothing changes about the fact that the *Holy Shroud* could be the assumed *archetype* of the Pantocrator, that belong to a later period.