

# Modern Scholarship and The History Of The Turin Shroud\*

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8:30-9:30 am

## Authors

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## Abstract:

In 1902, Paul Vignon sadly observed that the case which he was then seeking to make for the authenticity of the Turin Shroud was damaged by the lack of a narrative detailing the relic's post-sepulchral history. Although more than a century has come and gone since Vignon's lament, an entirely fact-based accounting of the relic's missing past has yet to emerge. A suggestion that the Turin Shroud is to be identified with the famous sixth-century Image of Edessa has, rightly or wrongly, been rejected by several leading experts in Byzantine history and Syriac studies on the grounds that the Edessa icon was merely a painted object and that the single textual reference to it having been an *acheiropoietos* (not made by human hands) image was the invention of agenda-driven, eighth-century iconophiles. Nevertheless, a select group of esteemed modern art historians have reportedly identified the Shroud of Turin with the Shroud of Constantinople, a cloth bearing a full-length image of Jesus which was publicly exhibited in 1203-1204, thereby demonstrating that academe may be open to the possibility that the relic indeed possesses a yet-to-be discovered provenance. In this paper, the author, drawing substantially upon the work of modern scholarship, recounts the movements of the imaged cloth which would ultimately become the Shroud of Constantinople, accounts for the extended periods of its historical obscurity, and documents the fact of its existence many centuries prior to the earliest radiocarbon birth date ascribed to it in 1988.