

Speculations On The 14th Century Origins Of The Turin Shroud

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Abstract:

This paper is based on the assumption that the Shroud is of 14th century origins consistent with its radiocarbon date and thus must be explained within the technology and historical context of that era. Avoiding the controversy surrounding the date, the author presents a plausibility argument to reconcile its visual and forensic properties with extent 14th century printing technology, geographical circumstance and historical context. The observed 3-d properties of the image are discussed in relationship to physical image formation processes and a plausible explanation for this extraordinary effect is given based printing techniques known to exist at that time and in that locale. Further the argument is reinforced with analytical results showing that under any reasonable assumption about the surface bi-directional reflectance distribution function (BRDF) including the use of measured human skin data, the observed 3-d properties cannot be reconciled with any known radiative imaging process and thus must be a contact process.