DISCOVERING MORE OF THE SHROUD’S EARLY HISTORY

A promising new approach....

Ian Wilson
circa AD 30
Brought from Jerusalem to Edessa – quickly to disappear
circa 525
Rediscovered above gate of Edessa
944
Transferred from Edessa to Constantinople
1204
Second disappearance, this time from Constantinople
Circa 1355
Mysterious appearance in Lirey, France
1453
Bequeathed to the House of Savoy, who initially keep it in Chambéry
1578
Transferred to Turin
Artist’s copy of the Image of Edessa, 13th century
Early texts describing the Image of Edessa as imprinted on a *sindon*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Text Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6th century</td>
<td><em>Epistula Abgari</em></td>
<td>King Abgar’s messenger is instructed ‘hand over the <em>sindona</em>’</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th century</td>
<td><em>Acta Thaddaei</em></td>
<td>‘...his image having been imprinted on the <em>sindona</em>...’</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th century</td>
<td>Story of Mari Mari</td>
<td>Jesus ‘took a linen <em>sindon</em> and printed his face on it...’</td>
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<tr>
<td>circa 780</td>
<td><em>Nouthesia Gerontios</em></td>
<td>‘Christ our Saviour took hold of a <em>sindona</em> and ... placed it on his undefiled face’</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.800</td>
<td><em>Vita Alexius</em></td>
<td>Alexius arrives in Edessa ‘where the image of our Lord Jesus Christ made without human hands is on a <em>sindona</em>...’</td>
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</table>
‘Tetradiplon’ (a unique Greek word used for the Image of Edessa) = ‘Doubled in four’

The Turin Shroud ‘doubled’....

Now ‘doubled in two’

Now ‘doubled in four’....
16th and 17th century artists’ copies of the Shroud face showing the eyes open and staring as if Jesus was alive.
Depiction of Image of Edessa

Church of St Nicholas Orphanos, Thessaloniki
The Variety of Depictions of the Image of Edessa
Types of the Image of Edessa: Type 1

THE ROUND SHIELD TYPE c.550-944

**1. circa 550-650**
SANLIURFA (formerly Edessa), TURKEY
Mosaic fragment discovered in foundations of unidentified Sanliurfa house, 1972

**2. circa 550-650**
ST. CATHERINE’S MONASTERY, SINAI, EGYPT
Detail of icon of Ss Sergius & Bacchus, now in Kiev

**3. Circa 800**
CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, TELOVANI, GEORGIA
Badly damaged wall-painting, identified only in 1989

**4. Circa 900-944**
CHURCH OF THE HOLY VIRGIN, DEIR AL-SURIAN, EGYPT
Badly damaged wall-painting uncovered circa 2001

In 1935 the Byzantine scholar Andre Grabar suggested this depicts the Image of Edessa.

Georgian inscription identifies this as depicting the Image of Edessa.

Syriac inscriptions identify the composition as depicting king Abgar holding the Image of Edessa.
Parthian art of the early Christian period (left), showing the then popular fashion for featuring faces in sculpted relief over gateways. (Below) Suggested reconstruction of how the Image of Edessa may have been found above Edessa’s gateway, overlaid with the relief portrait of Jesus in ceramic that had been ordered by Edessa’s king Abgar V.
Types of the Image of Edessa: Type 2

PREDOMINANTLY PLAIN RECTANGULAR TYPE, c.944-1300+

- circa 950, ICON, ST. CATHERINE’S MONASTERY, SINAI, EGYPT
- 1063, MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION, MOUNT ATHOS, GREECE
- 1175-1200, WALL-PAINTING, KATO LEFKARA, CYPRUS
- 1190, WALL-PAINTING, EPISKOPI, GREECE
- 1192, WALL-PAINTING, LAGHOUDERA, CYPRUS
- circa 1250, WALL-PAINTING, TRABZON, N. TURKEY
Types of the Image of Edessa: Type 3

RECTANGULAR WITH DECORATIVE ROUNDELS, c.1050-1100

1054
MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION, ALAVERDI
GOSPELS, GEORGIA

circa 1050-1075
WALL-PANTING, ST. CATHERINE'S CHAPEL,
GOREME, CAPPADOCIA, TURKEY

circa 1075-1100,
WALL-PANTING, SAKLI CHURCH,
GOREME, CAPPADOCIA, TURKEY

circa 1075-1100,
WALL-PANTING, KARANLIK CHURCH,
GOREME, CAPPADOCIA, TURKEY
Types of the Image of Edessa: Type 4

RECTANGULAR WITH DECORATIVE LATTICE, circa 1100-1300+

- circa 1100, MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION, ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT
- circa 1100-1118, MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION, ST CATHERINE’S SINAI
- circa 1230, ICON, PROBABLY SERBIA
- circa 1150, WALL-PAINTING, KASTANIA, GREECE
- circa 1200-1235, WALL-PAINTING, STUDENICA, SERBIA
- circa 1282, MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION, NOVGOROD, RUSSIA
Types of the Image of Edessa: Type 2

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- circa 950, Icon, St. Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai, Egypt
- 1063, Manuscript Illumination, Mount Athos, Greece
- 1175-1200, Wall-Painting, Kato Lefkara, Cyprus

- 1190, Wall-Painting, Episkopi, Greece
- 1192, Wall-Painting, Laghoudera, Cyprus
- circa 1250, Wall-Painting, Trabzon, N. Turkey
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Types of the Image of Edessa: Type 5

LARGE, BILLLOWING SUSPENDED TYPE, circa 1265-1335

1265 Sopocani, Serbia (part reconstructed)

1285 Djurdjevi Stupovi, Serbia

1310 Thessaloniki, Greece

1300 Brika, Greece

1310 Studenica, Serbia

1335 Decani, Serbia
1303, Image of Edessa and the Annunciation
St Euthymios, Thessaloniki
The Shroud in Serbia? *(13\textsuperscript{th}/early 14\textsuperscript{th} century)*

Gradac, c. 1270

Djurdjevi Stupovi, c. 1285

Sopocani, c. 1265/70

Banjska – c. 1320

Decani, 1335
Left, Epitaphios of King Milutin Uros II created Serbia c.1320

Right, Shroud which appears Lirey, France, c.1355

A Missing Connection?
Geoffrey de Charny and the East...

Geoffrey de Charny’s semi-autobiographical poem the Livre Charny mentions his seasickness on a voyage to the East – but exactly when did he go, and how did he return?
Izmir, formerly Smyrna, the strategic harbour fortress of which Geoffrey de Charny and William de Beaujeu helped seize from the Turks late in the year 1344
Arms of William de Beaujeu, Grand Master of the Knights Templar, died 1291

Territory of Edward de Beaujeu in the early 14th century

Arms of Edward de Beaujeu, 1316-1351
Mediterranean World c.1345 showing political boundaries

Islam-held territories

Smyrna
8 June 1351.
Ardres, near Calais.
Death of Edward de Beaujeu

(Reconstruction, based on near contemporary mss. Illumination)

During a skirmish in which Geoffrey de Charny and Edward de Beaujeu are together in action against English troops, although the French are victorious, Edward de Beaujeu is killed...
September 19, 1356, the death of Geoffrey de Charny, seen in the red tunic at left, in the closing moments of the battle of Poitiers... (reconstruction by present-day British artist Graham Turner)
Church of St Leger,
Les Terres-de-Chaux, Doubs, Franche-Comte, France

Shroud-related wall-paintings of the 15th century discovered in 1997
Humbert de Villersexel, Count de la Roche (d.1437)

The second husband of Shroud-owner Margaret de Charny, Humbert is depicted carrying a casket, seemingly the container of the Shroud?
1453 – the year of Constantinople’s final fall to the Turks – and Margaret de Charny’s strangely undocumented bequest of the Shroud to Duke Louis I of Savoy
Mere coincidence?
1453 - Duke Louis of Savoy commissions a special musical Mass in honour of the Shroud.

This is Guillaume Du Fay’s ‘Missa Se la face ay pale’, specially venerating Jesus’ face on the Shroud. Louis also commissions from Du Fay two laments on the fall of Constantinople...
Mere coincidence?
1453 - Duke Louis of Savoy also commissions a commemorative medal – featuring a most unusual way of displaying the Shroud, reminiscent of the Byzantine *epitaphioi* and the Image of Edessa?
Mere coincidence?

The Savoys make the Shroud their dynasty’s palladium, or protective device, again reminiscent of the role played by the Image of Edessa as the city of Edessa ‘divine protection’ in the early centuries of the Christian era...
According to Princess Gabriella of Savoy, speaking of her father ex-King Umberto of Savoy, the last of his line to own the Shroud:

My father enjoyed setting the dynasty of the Christian King Abgar ...alongside ours, in that both had for centuries been jealous guardians of Christ’s winding sheet...
Mere coincidence?

Aymon of Geneva (who married Geoffrey de Charny’s widow Jeanne de Vergy)

Geoffrey II de Charny

And Humbert de Villersexel, husband of Geoffrey II’s daughter Margaret de Charny,

- all were made members of the highly exclusive Order of the Collar of Savoy – alias the Order of the Annunciation – founded by Geoffrey de Charny’s contemporary Amadeus VI of Savoy