

Evidence for the presence of **THREE** distinct Christ burial linens in Constantinople.

Based on my article *Ile było płócien pogrzebowych Jezusa („How many burial linens of Christ were there?”?)¹*

We have several documents indicating the presence of the relics of burial linens in Constantinople. Partial list of them is available in Daniel Scavone’s article.²

The problem is that those descriptions are usually very brief and vague, so the confusion appears. The burial cloth are described in various documents as *sindon* (*syndon*), *sudarium* (plural *sudaria*), *linteum*, *spargana*, *fasciae*, *othonia*, *entaphia*, just to name a few. The Mandylion, considered by some as identical to the Shroud of Turin, Has also some own specific terms, like *mantile*, *himation* or *tetradiplon*.

Among the most important testimonies are those by Nicholas Mesarites from 1201 (Document XI in Scavone), and Robert de Clari (Document XII) from 1204.

The testimony of Mesarites:

Εντάφιοι σινδόνες Χριστοῦ: αὐται δ’ εἰσὶν ἀπο λίνου ὕλης εὐώνου κατὰ τὸ πρόχειρον, ἐπι πνεύσαι μύρα, ὑπερτεροῦσαι φθορᾶς, ὅτι τὸν ἀπερίληπτον νεκρὸν γυμνὸν ἐσμυρνημένον μετὰ τὸ πάθος συνέστειλαν. . . . τῆν νομοδότην ἀὐτῆν ἥς ἴν προτοτύπᾳ τετυπωμένον ἐ χεῖρομάκτρα καὶ τῆς ἐκθρύπτα ἴγκεκολαμμένον κεράμα ἥς ἴκ •χειροποιήτᾳ τέχνῳ τινᾷ γραφικῆ. . . . τὸ σουδάριον σὺν ταῖς ἐνταφίσις σίνδοσιν . . . ἐν τούτῳ περ καὶ ἀνίσταται, καὶ τὸ σουδάριον σὺν ταῖς ἐνταφίσις σίνδόσιν εἰς ἔκδηλον.

the Burial sindones of Christ: these are of linen. They are of cheap and easy to find material, and defying destruction since they wrapped the uncircumscribed, fragrant -with -myrrh, naked body after the Passion. . . . In this place He rises again and the sudarium and the burial sindons can prove it . . .

Let’s notice, there are separate mentions of *sudarium* and plural *sindones*, which *are of cheap and easy to find material*. This description hardly fits expensive material of the Shroud of Turin. There are probably some allusions to the image present on one of the linens, but they are (deliberately!) referred in vague terms. Anyway, this is Mystery of the Faith (and I don’t have to explain what means Mystery to the Orthodox).

The Robert de Clari’s testimony:

Et entre ches autres en eut un autre des moustiers que on apeloit medame Sainte Marie de Blakerne, ou li sydoines la ou nostres sires fu envelopes, i estoit, qui cascuns desvenres se drechoit tous drois, si que on i pooit bien veir le figure nostre seigneur, ne seut on onques ne Griu ne Franchois que chis sydoines devint, quant le vile fu prise

And among those other there was another church [lit. another of the churches] which was called My Lady Saint Mary of Blachernae, where there was the SYDOINES in which, [lit. where] Our Lord had been wrapped, which every Friday, raised itself upright, so that one could see the form of our Lord on it [lit. there], and no one, either Greek or French, ever knew what became of this SYNDOINES when the city was taken.³

Thus Robert de Clari, a poor vulgar Frankish knight, reported what the greatest notables of Byzantine Church dreaded to say openly: **THERE WAS WITHOUT A DOUBT A SHROUD WITH THE IMAGE OF CHRIST IN CONSTANTINOPLE!**

Robert de Clari claimed that this shroud disappeared from the city, after it was captured by the 4th crusade. Nevertheless, several members of the Crusade brought back home several fragments of the burial cloths as a spoil. Bishop of Halberstadt, Konrad von Krosigk brought back portions *de sindone eiusdem et de sudario* (from *sindone* and *sudario* –**THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT –HERE WE HAVE TWO SEPARATE THINGS**), bishop of Soissons, Nivelon de Cherisy part *de sindone munda* (from the “clean shroud” Matt 27:59), also Hugon, abbot of the monastery at Clairveaux brought a part *iterum in eadem tabula .. de sindone*.⁴ Also „Robillard de Clari”, (as Robert was named in the inventory of the monastery In his local town Corbie) brought parts *de sudario Domini in duobus locis* (“from two places of the sudario”), among circa 50 other spoils.⁵

So, as the Robert de Clari claimed that the Shroud with the Image (either the Shroud of Turin or the Shroud of Besançon, destroyed 1794) disappeared, and he himself participated in the loot, there had to be at least **THREE DISTINCT BURIAL CLOTHES PRESENT.**

Further evidence:

If we accept as authentic the Theodore Angelus’ letter from 1205 (Document XV in Scavone), the missing Shroud, the holiest of Byzantine relics, was in Athens at that time.

The list of relics sent by Latin Emperor Baldwin II to king Louis IX (via César Barta’s article⁶):

1. – The crown of thorns as the most valuable
2. – A piece of the cross
3. – Blood of Christ
4. – The nappies of the infant Jesus
5. – Another piece of the cross
6. – Blood from a picture of Christ
7. – The chain
8. – **Sacred cloth inserted in a picture (*sanctam toellam tabule insertam* aka the Mandylion, or rather just only its frame)**

9. – Stone from the tomb
10. – Milk of the Virgin Mary
11. – The spear
12. – A victorious cross (this is most probably reference to Titulus)
13. – The purple mantle
14. – The reed
15. – The sponge
16. – **A part of the shroud (sudarii) in which Christ's body was wrapped in the sepulcher (*partem sudarii quo involutum fuit corpus eius (scilicet Domini nostri Iesu Christi) in sepulchro*⁷, size about 25-30 for 35-40 cm)**
17. – The towel used to dry the Apostles' feet
18. – Moses' rod
19. – A part of John the Baptist's head
20. – St. Blas' head
21. – St. Clement's head
22. – St. Simeon's head.

In May 1248 Louis sent to Toledo, among several other relics, *pretiosa particula de Sindone, qua Corpus ipsius (Domini) iacuit in sepulcro*, in June 1267 he also sent to the monastery in Vèzelay in Burgundy part *de ipsius Salvatoris sudario* (**this is also important, we see that the terms *sindon* and *sudario* were used interchangeably in the medieval!**), on 30th December 1269 another part *de sudario Domini* was sent to Clermont.⁸

Many older publications assumed those were parts of the Shroud of Turin. **This has been disproved!** We know also that over a century later, circa 1380, another fragment was sent from Constantinople to the bishop of Suzdal, and later Metropolitan of Moscow Dionysius I.⁹

Anyway most of those fragments disappeared during the French Revolution, fragments from Sinate Chapelle, Corbie, Soissons, Clairveaux and Vèzelay.¹⁰ In Halberstadt, where Konrad von Krosigk brought *sindone eiusdem et de sudario* only the latter was found, according to Kersten, who examined it on 15.08.1991, **it is made of cotton.**¹¹ Also the fragment of Toledo has been examined. It is **linen taffeta, distinct from the Shroud of Turin (as we see, as well as from Halberstadt fragment):**¹²

	Toledo	Turin
Texture	taffetta	herringbone
Fiber	flax	flax
Threads/cm	26x33	26x37
Twist	S	Z

Summary:

We can be certain that in Constantinople, there were stored **at least, and most likely** three alleged burial cloths of Jesus:

- The Shroud with an image of Christ, as reported by Robert de Clari (either the Shroud of Turin, or the Shroud of Besançon –they were the only known alleged shrouds with the image of Jesus on them in history)
- One cotton *sudarium*
- One (or more) *sinдон* made of flax, with common weave, fragment of which is currently stored in Toledo. It fits better Nicholas Mesarites description as being *of cheap and easy to find material*.

It is quite likely that several other fragments are dispersed among many churches of Europe. According to Joan Carroll Cruz “pieces of burial cloths of Jesus are held by at least four churches in France and three in Italy”.¹³ One should catalogue them and compare their tissues and examine their history.

¹ <http://ok.apologetyka.info/ateizm/ile-byo-pocien-pogrzebowych-jezusa-cz1,749.htm>

² Daniel Scavone: *Acheiropietos: Jesus Images in Constantinople: the Documentary Evidence* <http://shroudstory.wordpress.com/about/acheiropietos-jesus-images-in-constantinople-the-documentary-evidence/>

³ Peter F. Dembowski, *Sinдон in the old french chronicle of Robert de Clari*, Shroud Spectrum International, Issue No 2 <http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/ssi02part5.pdf> Note that Robert uses plural form *sydoines*, but this is probably mistake, as he used term derived from Greek.

⁴ Stanisław Waliszewski, *Całun Turyński Dzisiaj*, WAM, Kraków 1987, pg. 29-30 (Waliszewski based on Pietro Savio's *Richerche Storiche sulla Santa Sindone* from 1957). Alfred J. Palla, *Całun Turyński: Wielka historia czy wielka mistyfikacja?*, Świat Książki, Warszawa 2008, pg. 59, Holger Kersten, Elmar R. Gruber *Jezus Ofiarą Spisku* (the polish edition of *The Jesus Conspiracy*), Wydawnictwo URAEUS, Gdynia 1995 pg. 213, 331-334.

⁵ Introduction to the *Zdobycie Konstantynopola, z języka starofrancuskiego przetłumaczył, wstępem i komentarzami opatrzył Zdzisław Pentek* (the polish translation of Robert de Clari's chronicle), Poznań 1997 pg. XIII-XIV, Waliszewski pg. 29, Kersten & Gruber pg. 206-207, Michael Hesemann, *Milczący Świadkowie Golgoty* (the polish edition of *Die stummen zeugen von Golgatha*), Wydawnictwo Salwator, Kraków 2006, pg. 89.

⁶ César Barta, *What the Shroud is and it is not*, I Congreso Internacional de la Sábana Santa, Valencia 2012-01-28 <http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/bartaveng.pdf>, also the earlier article: *The Shroud sent to Louis IX of France by Baldwin II, the latin emperor at Constantople*, British Society for the Turin Shroud Newsletter No 56 <http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/n56part5.pdf>

⁷ Waliszewski pg. 30.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Barbara Frale, *Całun Jezusa Nazarejczyka* (the polish edition of *La sindone di Gesù Nazareno*) WAM 2012, pg. 109.

¹⁰ Kersten & Gruber pg. 333.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See footnote 6.

¹³ Joan Carrol Cruz, *Relics*, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing 1984, pg. 55