

Prof. Dr László BODA, Hungary.  
H-1113 Budapest, Dávid F.u. 7. fsz.3.

## THE HANDS OF THE MAN OF THE SHROUD

The great masters of painting could control the quality of their disciples, especially by considering how they are able to form the fingers. The title of one of Titian's masterpieces is: "Coin used for paying the tax". This painting is famous not only for the two faces / of Jesus and of the scribe / but also for the two hands. It is possible to cover the faces and the two opposite hands tell us the drama.

The hands and fingers of the Man of the Shroud preserve the drama of a crucifixion. But how can we interpret this drama in connection with the events? For this it is necessary to make a "three-dimensional" consideration. We need the experience of the history of fine art, the opinion of experts of medicine and a special hermeneutical method with the capacity of synopsis. The experts of the fine art are able to see spontaneously how different the two shoulders or the two hands are on the "screen" of the Shroud. The asymmetry is striking in all respects. The right shoulder seems obviously in a lower position opposite the left one. The fingers of the right hand are remarkable in a double rigor mortis. In the same way the position of the arms must not have been parallel in the agony. Is it possible to find the reason for all this?

It is already demonstrated in the sindonology that not the whole cross just only the patibulum was supported by the Crucified on the road to the place of execution. The vertical part of cross was dug in the ground on the spot. The Man of the Shroud having a fall is scientifically proved in the sindonology. *But the enigma was not yet cleared and the solution was not yet accepted what kind of consequences could have followed this fall with the patibulum.* The question is even the coincidence of the subsequent effects concerning the asymmetrical position of shoulders and hands. It is not yet answered enough. Then a special problem is still waiting for the solution: *how can be the various phenomena of the mentioned asymmetry of the shoulders and hands as a logical consequence of the fall connect and - from the other side - what is the reason for the X like position of the hands?*

1/ The first enigma is **the problem of the consequences of the fall** which can be observed on the Body. The immediate consequences were researched by prominent experts of chemistry / as e.g. Alan D. Adler US etc. /. The rests of grains of sand and the traces of bruise on the face and knees could be demonstrated. But it is not enough to have a really sufficient solution to the injuries of the hands caused by the fall. Considering some specific traces of injury we must come to the conclusion: *the right hand had been so injured that it became inert.* What could have happened? After the flagellation the patibulum was too heavy and the way too long. But if the fall could have really happened, how did it happen? If the arms of the Condemned were bound to the patibulum - it is already demonstrated by the experts of sindonology - the fall can be revived in our imagination. If the Man of the Shroud wanted to save his face from the fracture, it was only possible to turn his right hand together with the patibulum, because only the hand could save the face in this special situation. But why just with the right hand either? The answer to the question can be given by the reflexiology. If the physical reaction of a man moving his hand needs a spontaneous decision - as in this situation - he swings the arm which he uses in general. It seems to be obvious that the man of the Shroud used the right hand to save his face for a fracture with a rapid reflex. But what is the calculable effect? The break of hand can be precluded, because the arm could be saved by the patibulum. The broken hand can be fixed even by a splint. But this "splint" is given by the patibulum. Then if a possibility of break of the right shoulder can be precluded what other reason remains? What is the opinion of the experts of sindonology at all?

The unexpected idea came at first from my lay student. She is a teacher of hygienical gymnastics. She considered the reconstructed Body of the Man of the Shroud and said: "*Dislocation of the shoulder*". Studying the sindonology I have never heard this theory as solution to asymmetry of the shoulders. Therefore I have sent a letter to Rome to Miss Ilona Farkas who is the editor of

Collegamento pro Sindone having great experience concerning the results of the researches of the Shroud of Turin. I received information that this idea is not quite new. But an idea without the proper scientific arguments is not worth much. I have had the possibility to ask an expert of orthopedy and this theory seems to him acceptable. Later the question was clearer answered from another physician in writing and with a signature. His opinion: it is probable a dislocation of the shoulder in a moderate form, i.e. an "inferior subluxatio" and as for the fingers: "plexus laesio". But I hope the continued examinations, perhaps even in this World-wide Congress of the Shroud of Turin in Orvieto.

2/ **The assymetry of the arms and hands.** This phenomenon is well known in the sindonology. But the best reconstruction of the Body - considering my works - can perhaps give a more possibility to have the opinion of some experts. / viz. the by measurements reintegrated Body-picture with 178 cm size /. So can be see the assymmertry of the shoulders clear, opposite the original, on which even the shoulders were almost burned down through the fire of Chambéry. And it is most probable that this assymmertry is the consequence of the fall of the Man of the Shroud. But it is at the same time a logically understandable consequence of the fact that the arms were not in a symmetrical position in the agony / viz. the book of Emanuela Marinelli, entitled: La Sindone, 1996, ed San Paolo, 64.P. /. This could be deduced with a physical certitude from the traces of blood on the arms. My measurements in the process of reconstruction of the upper arms could be based on the line of shoulders from the back-side of the Shroud. It is an accepted opinion in the sindonology that the right arm is stronger then the left one. How is curious that the left arm must have been just stronger in the agony then the inert right one. It seems that the right arm can only assist in the supporting of weight of the Body. This right hand is namely striking inert. As regards the assymetry of arms I have still remarked something. Cleaning the chests of the Body an unknown sign of assymmertry became visible. It was perceptible that the traces of blood on the right chest are more extended then on the left one. / viz. the reconstructed Body together with the original /. - As for the hands and fingers the theory of dislocation of the right shoulder seems to be the most plausible reason and all this must have been the consequence of the fall. The fingers are totally stiff. The thumbs are most probably hidden under the palms as it is demonstrated in an article of Collegamento pro Sindone. The real problem is not this but the striking assymmetry of the hands. The fingers of the left hand are "living" though they belong to a dead Body, in opposite of the right one which shows the sign of a double rigor mortis. This one has the reason similarly through the "dislocation of shoulder". The investigation of the consequences of the fall are here finished.

3/ But there is still another enigma or a special problem, too, concerning the arms of the Man of the Shroud, namely **the X like position of the hands**. It is of course not the consequence of the fall. It is a sign of a special burial-custom. But what reason for this burial-manner can be found in a scientific orientation? The physicians are not yet competent to give an authentic answer to this question. The help of Bible-scientists and archeologists is necessary. Concerning this enigma a peculiar case is merited special attention: the discussion between Werner Bulst and Joseph Blinzler, in Germany, in the 60-ies last century. The issue of this discussion was the originality of the Shroud of Turin. Professor Blinzler as Bible-scientist published a book about his skeptical opinion examining the origin of the Shroud / in 1953 /. He argued in this manner: the burial-custom with bandage was applied that time by the Jewish people, as e.g. in case of Lazarus. Later he contributed an article of the same skeptical opinion / in 1955 /. One of his arguments was even this X like position of the hands, what is - as he formulated - "not practical" and not the burial-manner of the Jewish people. But in 1955-56 were excavations in the two minor cemeteries of Qumran and this was the counter-argument of Werner Bulst S.J. who was a prominent expert in the sindonology / died in 1995 /. It was remarkable that a part of the 50 skeletons was discovered with this X like hand-position / the skeletons can examined in the Rockefeller Museum of Jerusalem /. What a convincing argument! Werner Bulst wrote about this discussion in his excellent book / co-author Heinrich Pfeiffer, cf. Das Turiner Grabtuch und das Christusbild, Frankfurt am Main, 1987 /. The superior winner was of course the expert of sindonology with reference to the fact of the excavations of Qumaran. From the Bible-scientists nobody suffered such a defeat through the archeology as Blinzler. The conclusion is obvious: the burial-manner of the Jewish people must have been variable. The funeral-custom with

bandage was a cultural heritage from Egypt. But there were other manners, too. The simple burial-manner could be the following: after the sponge-bath the dead body was bound in a shroud though the position of hands was not always the same / cf. the skeletons of Qumran /. The burial-form with a shroud was probably not the privilege of the Qumran-community. The motiv of the applying this manner could be poverty, humility and especially the emergency / e.g. after a crucifixion before a feast-day /. By the way, the burial-manner at the Hungarian in the 9-ies century was in some point of view similar: coffin for the wealth and mat-felt shroud for the poor.

We can accept with fairness of intellect that the Shroud of Turin is the Shroud of Jesus Christ. The arguments of this opinion have an explicit predominance. But how can we find the reason for this burial-manner and for the X like position of the hands? Answer: the Man of the Shroud was crucified and the situation of the burial was just a special emergency / the evening was the vigil of sabbath of Easter as it is cleared by the Bible-scientists /. But who must have put the hands in this X like position what was used at the Qumran-community? The single aspirant to this is John the Apostle. He must have studied in Qumran as e.g. Josephus Flavius. It is accepted from various prominent Bible-scientists. Then we have got the "missing link". So the unified picture of the events and phenomena after the fall of the Man of the Shroud can be contemplated by a hermeneutical synopsis. Yes, this X like hand-position is not the sign of chastity as Doctor Hynek has belived / in the 40-ies last century /. It is a burial-manner of 1. century especially at the Qumran-community. Therefore it is a recent argument for the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin considering the chronology. It is most probable that the various representations of art of the dead Christ expressively with this X like hand-position - paintings, statues - were inspired by the Man of the Shroud / E.g. the famous representation of the Codex Pray of Budapest, from the 12.c. and the picture of Ceccarelli in Lichtenstein, from the 15.c. /.

**Conclusion:** The arms and hands of the Man of the Shroud have two difficult problems: *the enigma of the consequences* of the fall, from the bruises of the face and knees through the assymetry of the shoulders and hands just to the end of fingers. As you can see, I have tried to demonstrate - also with the help of my picture of reconstruction - that the best solution to the problem is a presumable dislocation of the right shoulder. - *The other enigma* claiming the authenticity is the X like position of the hands of the Man of the Shroud of Turin. This burial-manner gives for us the possibility to conclude the following: *the origin of the Shroud of Turin can be dated to the 1. century A.D.*

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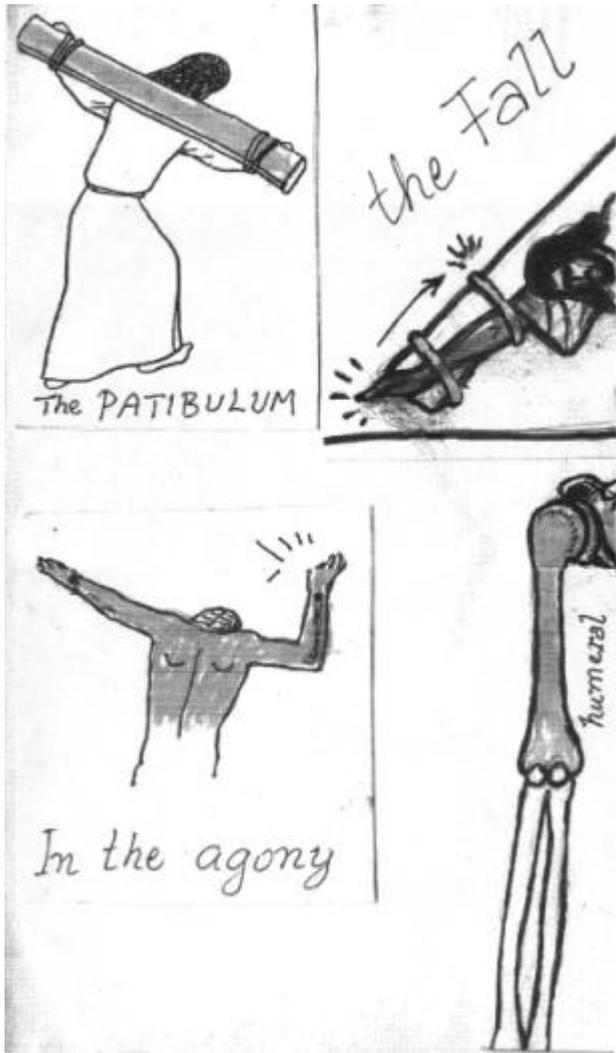


Figure 1

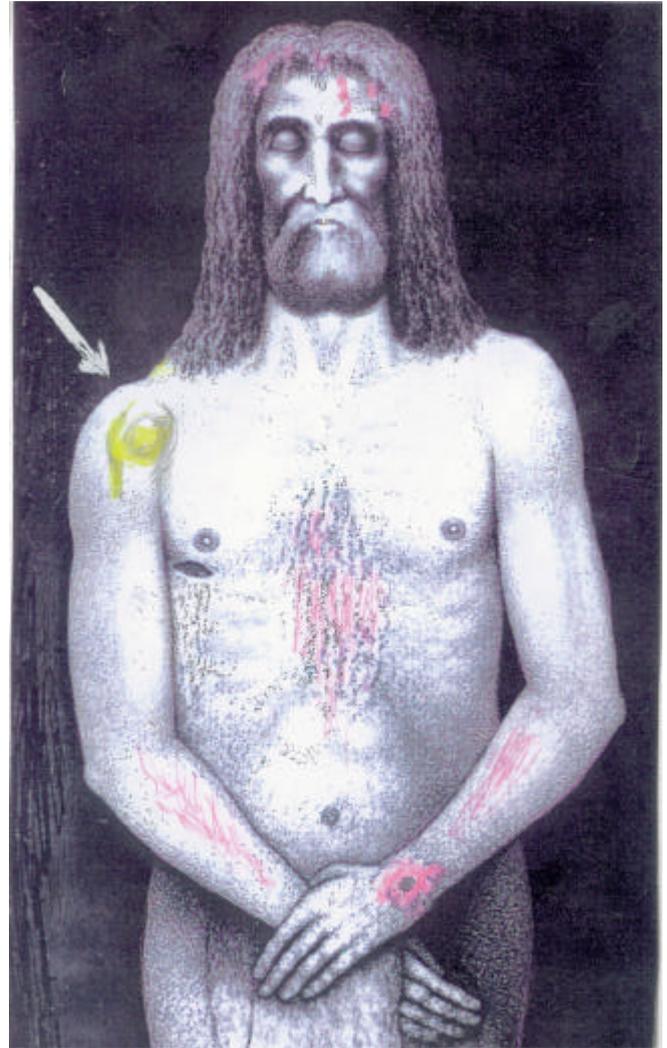


Figure 2

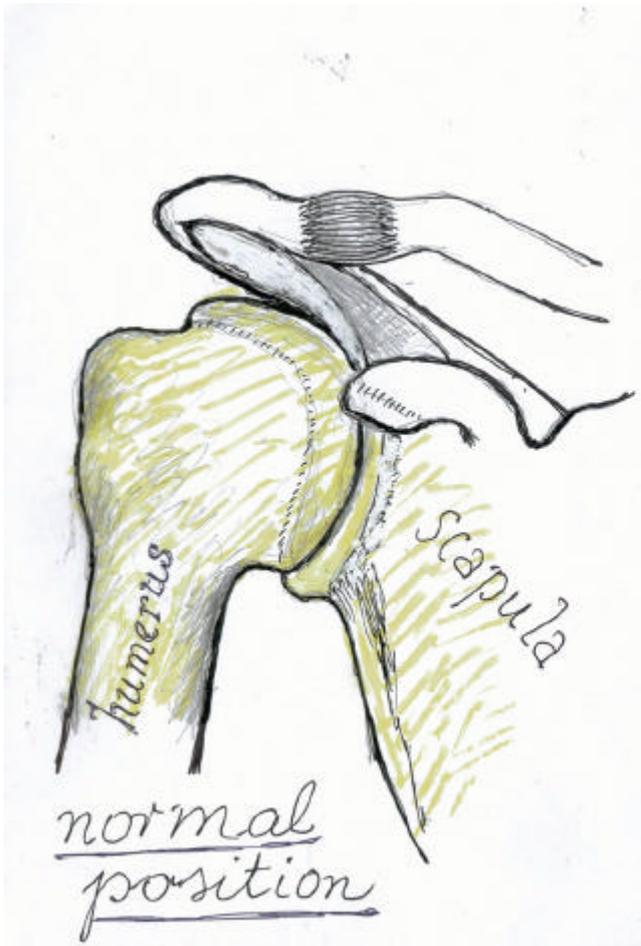


Figure 3

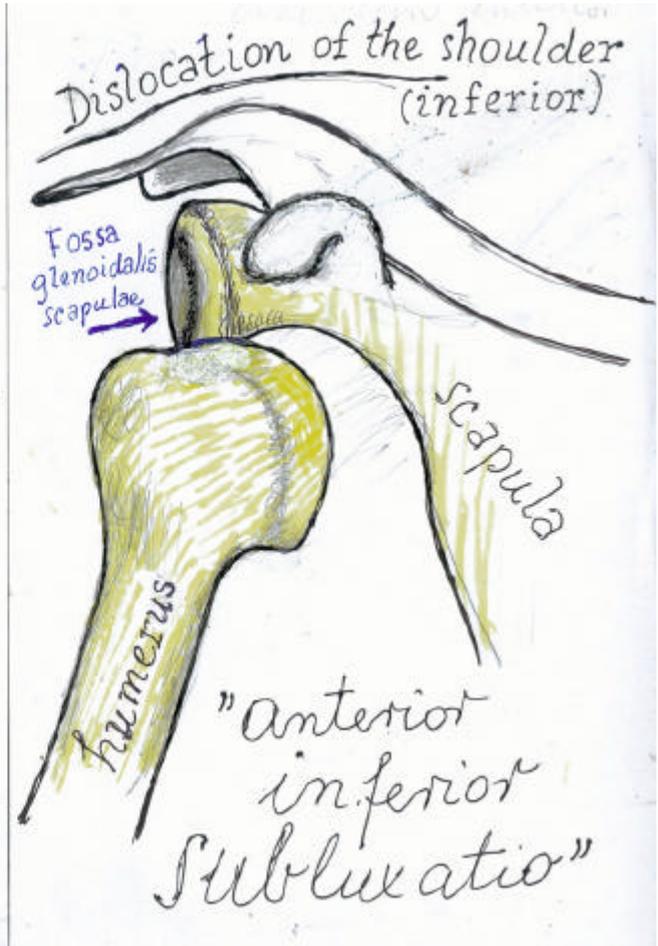
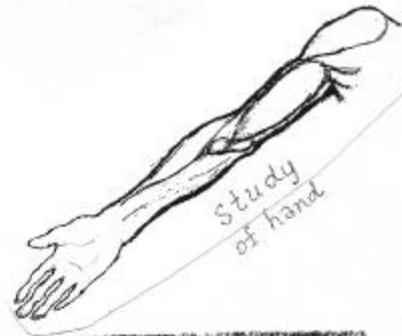


Figure 4



**Figure 5**



X like position  
of the hands



Burial-manner with bandage  
/ Egypt /

△ The reintegrated Body  
/ 1998 /

Figure 6

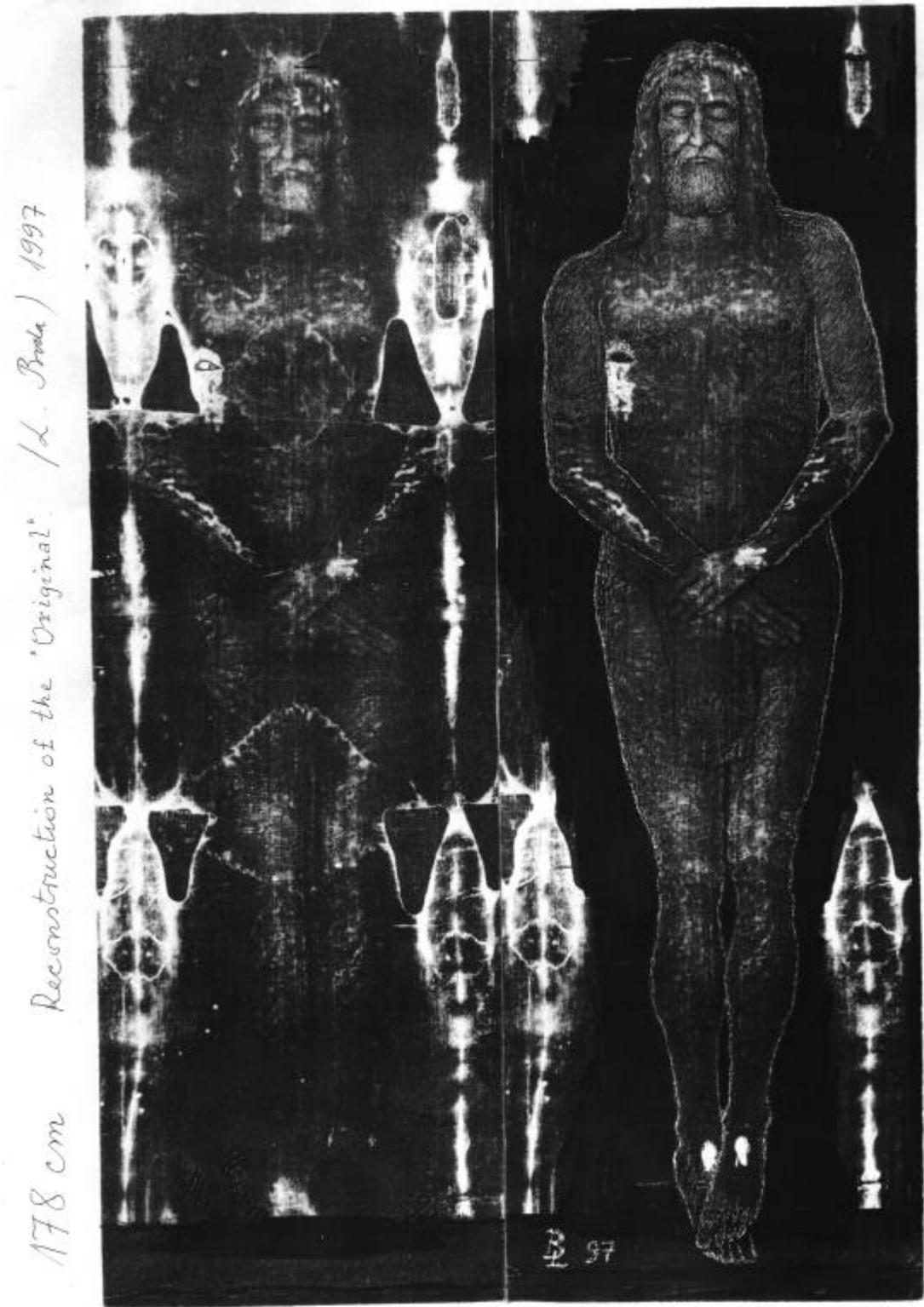


Figure 7