

The Shroud's "Missing Years"
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According to tradition the Shroud preserved today in Turin is the sheet in which Jesus was wrapped after the crucifixion. From the 14th century, when the Shroud appeared in France, in Lirey, there are no historical gaps. The same is not true for the previous period, even if we can approximately piece together what happened to the Holy Shroud based on historical, numismatic and archaeological research. These researches in association with scientific analysis suggest that Turin Shroud should be with high probability older than what is suggested by radiocarbon analysis.

One of the more difficult steps in writing the chronology of places in which the Shroud has been preserved is the historical gap of more or less one hundred and fifty years, from 1204 in Constantinople to its re-appearance in Lirey in the 14th century. Different hypotheses have been formulated about these "missing years".¹

One hypothesis extensively accepted is that the Holy Shroud that appeared in France, in Lirey, in the 14th century, is the same one seen in Constantinople in 1204 and taken during the Crusaders' plunder. So where was in the years in between?

The Shroud in Constantinople

In 944 the Byzantine army under John Curcuas besieged Arabian Edessa.² The inhabitants were not able to withstand and losing control of the city had to hand over the most precious treasure preserved in the city, the mysterious image of Jesus face "not made by human hands".³

This was taken to Constantinople in triumph on August 15th of the same year. Among different proofs of its arrival in the Byzantine capital there are the 13th century miniatures of John Skylitzes *Cronaca*.⁴

A crowd accompanied the Shroud in a long procession to the Pharos *Theotokos* church, near the Bucoleon, where it was placed in the oriental wing.⁵

Numerous records of ordinary travellers and famous kings in the 11th and 12th centuries⁶ mention the presence of the Shroud in the capital of the Eastern Empire, where it would remain until the Crusade in the 13th century.

Robert de Clary was a knight and a chronicler of the crusade.⁷ In August 1203, during a ceasefire, he visited the city and described in his memories the treasures of Constantinople. He wrote:

Among other astonishing things there is a church called Saint Mary of Blacherne, where there is the Shroud, in which Our Lord Jesus was wrapped and that every Holy Friday is lifted up vertically, so that the shape of Our Lord could be seen very well.⁸

Based on de Clary's description in those years the Shroud was lifted up vertically to show only the frontal image.

After a short ceasefire, on 12th April the following year there was a second plunder of the city by the Crusaders. Many treasures were stolen along with relics.

What happened to the Shroud? The answer is uncertain. De Clary wrote:

Nobody, nor Greek, neither Latin, knew what happened to the Shroud after the city siege.⁹

A trace in Athens

We can state that the Shroud disappeared from Constantinople in the period between April 1204 and August 1205.

Three elements confirm the presence of the Shroud in Athens in the summer of 1205. First of all a letter written on 1st August 1205 by Theodor Angel Comnenus, nephew of Isaac II, Byzantine Emperor, during the plunder of 1204, to Pope Innocent III. In this missive Theodor begged the Holy Father to retrieve as soon as possible precious relics that had been missing for over a year and wrote about the presence of the Holy Shroud in Athens.¹⁰

Moreover we have the statement of the papal legate Benedict of Santa Susanna, who in the summer of 1205 was in Athens to attend an inter-religious meeting.

Then, Nicolas of Otranto, the abbot of Casola, wrote in 1207 about relics stolen in 1204 and mentioned the fabric used in the burial that he saw subsequently with his own eyes. Nicolas of Otranto was indeed in Athens in 1206 and so it is possible that he saw the Shroud.¹¹

Considering all this evidence we obtain what Gian Maria Zaccone called: "*a significant global setting*".¹²

Sharing out the Eastern Empire

According to agreements existing before the siege new fiefs gained should be distributed among twenty-four dignitaries, twelve representing Venice and twelve the army. Fiefs should have a «free and absolute status», should belong completely to new owners, apart from the right and the service due to the Emperor and Empire, they should be inherited directly by sons and daughters of new owners. Moreover there was a clause according to which nobody should leave until March 1205, that is they should stay for one year.¹³

After the splitting up of the Byzantine empire came the birth of the Eastern Latin Empire, in which they would have Baldwin of Fiandra as new emperor, Boniface of Monferrato as King of Thessalonika, Geoffrey of Villehardouin (nephew of the historian)

as Prince of Morea, William de Champlitte as Prince of Achaia and Otho de La Roche, baron of Ray-sur-Saône as Lord of Athens.¹⁴

Otho de La Roche, Mégaskyr of Athens

Among the Burgundy knights taking part in the siege of Constantinople was¹⁵ Otho de la Roche,¹⁶ counsellor for Marquis Boniface of Monferrato, knight commander of the Fourth Crusade.

Born around 1170 into a branch of the noble family of Ray,¹⁷ enthusiastic about setting free the Holy Land, Otho, giving a good example to many of his compatriots «took the cross» at the Cistercian abbey of Cîteaux in 1201.¹⁸

Different sources state that in 1205 Otho married his cousin Isabelle, the last heiress of the principal branch of the family.¹⁹ Actually it is more probable that the wedding took place before the siege of Constantinople, around 1203. A few years later Otho was widowed and married Elisabeth de Chappes in Greece.²⁰

After the election of the new Emperor, on May 9th 1204, Otho was with Boniface of Monferrato, another three counsellors and an army, riding southward, toward the lands promised them as fiefs. In autumn 1204, after a stop in Thessalonica, they started their journey again.²¹ After crossing Thessaly and Thermopilae, their platoon arrived in Beozia and, after rounding Lake Copaïs, they entered Thebes. Considering the route and the battles faced, we hypothesise that they arrived in Attica, and afterwards in Athens, around the end of 1204 or the beginning of 1205.²²

Otho, with some faithful friends, stayed there to domesticate the fief, while the remaining platoon set off for the Peloponnese. Among the opposition the new lord of Athens had to face was the local church, especially Metropolitan Michael Coniatus who, after a long negotiation, agreed to participate in a religious meeting in Athens in the summer of 1205. A papal legate, Benedict of Santa Susanna was present. After the meeting, considering Otho's steadiness and perseverance Michael left the site where he had lived for thirty years and went into exile on the island of Kos in the Dodecannese.²³

In the same period the presence of the Shroud is mentioned in Athens.

Otho's lands were growing; his sovereignty was absolute in Attica, the region including Athens after the siege of Constantinople. From 1210 on, after other battles three other regions were added to his lands. A piece of Argolide, formed by the cities of Argo and Nauplie, was offered to Otho by Geoffroy of Villehardouin, as a sign of gratitude for his role in the occupancy of Acrocorinth (1209) and the south fortresses. At the end of same year, the new Emperor Henry rewarded the lord of Athens and the prince of Morea, granting them in the same proportion the Lordship of Thebes. Finally Otho also obtained Beocia and in the north the small independent region of Livadia.

Otho organised his lands on the strength of the French feudal model. Athens became the nominal capital and for this reason Otho built his house on the Acropolis while Thebes

became the political and military capital.

We still have a picture representing the tower of Otho *château-fort*, destroyed in 1879. It was square, about twenty-eight meters high with a base of seven meters on the side and was erected on the southern side of the Propilei.

Otho, as a crusader, did not ignore religion in his lands and mainly monks “colonised” his new properties. Monks from Bellevaux and La Charité settled in the Byzantine monasteries of Orchomene and Osios-Loukas while, in 1207, orthodox monks were banned from Daphne monastery, which was assigned to monks from the French abbey of Bellevaux. They converted the monastery into a Cistercian abbey, the fifth of their derived abbeys. The monastery remained Cistercian until 1458 when, after the Turkish invasion, it returned to Orthodox monks.

Despite his efforts to convert his new lands from 1216 and 1223, Otho was excommunicated because he refused to dispense clergymen from rural work and to hand over the income of some abbeys and churches to the Latin patriarch Gervasius.²⁴

Otho tried to find a remedy. In a letter dated 1217 he donated part of the income from fishing in the lands of La Roche-sur-l’Ognon and Ray-sur-Saône to the Cistercian monks of Bellevaux abbey. Four years later in another letter to Bellevaux he confirmed these grants.²⁵

Blood-line of Otho de la Roche

Extending his properties, the lord of Athens parcelled out his land to his offspring. Guy, designated successor, settled in Beocia, assisted by Nicolas de Saint-Omer, right-hand man of his father. Guillaume was elected governor of Argolide. Otho II received Argos and Nauplie, but he let his brothers control his lands while he devoted himself to Ray-sur- Saône.²⁶

King Louis IX of France, in 1258, confirmed what he had obtained from Otho during the crusade, admitting the Lordship and the noble title for his descendants. The reigning branch of the dukedom was extinguished after more or less one century, in 1311, when the fifth generation married into to the Brienne family. Gauthier de Brienne, sixth and last duke of Athens, was killed during a battle near lake Copaïs.²⁷

In order to obtain more information on Otho it was necessary to visit his castle to look for new clues.

Ray-sur-Saône castle

Ray-sur-Saône castle is today in a small village of around two hundred people. Family documents mention Guy de Ray as the first owner, a valiant knight who was alive in 1080. It was only in 1170 that his nephew of the same name first obtained the title of Baron of Ray. During this period the lands still belonged to the monks of Saint-Vincent in

Chalon-sur-Saône, to which was paid out an annual rent of a gold coin.

In fact during the medieval period the Counts of Burgundy donated some fiefs to religious orders to defend their lands. Only in 1230 did Otho buy it from Etienne of Oiselay, son of Count Etienne of Burgundy.²⁸

In the castle, restructured in 18th century, lives Countess Diane-Régina de Salverte, direct descendent of Otho de la Roche.²⁹

In the ancient tower of the castle are preserved numerous family treasures. Among these they have objects from the Fourth Crusade, taken there directly by Otho de la Roche.³⁰

Our attention is immediately caught by some cross shaped relics. One of these contains a fragment of the True Cross, taken from the Bucoleon by the first Duke of Athens in 1204³¹ and placed in a relic container from Pope Pius IX in 1863. Another two relic containers, shaped like a Greek cross, preserve a fragment of the True Cross with soil from the Holy Land, while the other contains only soil from where Christ had stepped. These relic containers could prove the direct origin from Constantinople.

Behind these objects there is a wooden coffer with a label, on which there is written:

13th century coffer in which was preserved in Ray Castle the Shroud of Christ brought by Otho de Ray from Constantinople. 1206.

The front side of the coffer is simply chiselled, while in the middle of the sides there are inlaid shields. It is parallelepiped, 45 centimetres long, 25 wide 30 deep. It is on a base and closed by a lid. A hole in the lid and four on the front side could be the place for a padlock (Picture 1). According to family tradition it could state that the Shroud, after disappearing from Constantinople, was kept in Ray-sur-Saône castle.

How, when and why the Shroud arrived in Ray-sur-Saône

We have to answer three questions. First of all how the Shroud came to Otho's hands and was then transferred to France; then when did it arrive in France and finally if the folded Shroud could be kept in the coffer just described.

As far as the first question is concerned we have two possible answers. We have seen that Otho followed the Commander in Chief of the Crusade, Boniface of Monferrato. During the siege, the Marquis of Monferrato came to the Bucoleon and found his treasure. We have seen that Otho took some relics to France. However, Bucoleon was at a certain distance from the place where Robert de Clary said he had seen the Shroud during the first siege, i.e. in Saint Mary of Blachernae. Emperors in Constantinople lived in the Bucoleon until the end of the 12th century, then they resided in Blachernae. This is the reason why the Shroud was moved from the Pharos church, near the Bucoleon where it was put in

944, to be transferred to Blachernae, near the new imperial residence.

In my opinion it is not sustainable that in the days of savage depredation Otho went to the church in Blachernae and took the Shroud. In fact, there were numerous death warrants against people who plundered. It is more plausible that during the sharing out of the plunder, Otho de la Roche was given the Shroud.³² This could explain how the pious Otho obtained the most important treasure of Christendom without illegal acts.³³

Where could the Shroud have been kept during its stay in Athens? The most logical place seems to be in the fortress on the Acropolis, a well guarded place. In the period immediately after its arrival in Athens it was certainly kept somewhere else as the tower had not yet been built - probably in a religious building.³⁴

When was it taken to France? We have a lot of data regarding this fact. Some studies state that after having obtained the Lordship of Athens, Otho de la Roche never returned to France.³⁵ We have seen before that, depending on the agreement established, nobody could leave new properties before March 1205. Moreover we know that, until the end of July the same year, the Shroud was still in Greece, as stated in the letter sent to Pope Innocent III, belonging to the *Chartularium Culisanense*, and in other witnesses. Based on family memoirs, Otho returned to France in 1206, to his castle, bringing with him the Shroud. In reality the latest record signalling the presence of Otho in Athens is a papal bull of Honorius III dated February 12th 1225.³⁶ It is interesting to note that just from this year the Lordship was transferred to Otho's son Guy. Otho returned to France with his second wife and contributed to the enrichment of Bellevaux abbey.³⁷

The presence in Europe of the Shroud after 1204 was confirmed besides the la Roche familiar tradition by another significant proof. A headstone with a cross on the top outside of the local castle reminds the visitor that the first Lord of Athens died in Ray-sur-Saône in 1224.³⁸ Actually a document in the archives of the diocese of Langres states that Otho died in 1234, while his second wife Elisabeth died two years later.³⁹ This should prove that Otho and Elisabeth lived in France to the end of their lives. In that period Langres was part of the county of Burgundy, in the region of Fouvent-Dampierre-Baujeu, west of Saône, part of the ecclesiastical ward where the Ray family had their properties. In 1236 Clérembault V de Chappes donated lands in Landelaine and some rights over Gyé to the Trinitarians of *Gloire-Dieu* in Bar-sur-Seine, for: "their souls' rest, especially for Elisabeth, his sister, Dame of Athens".⁴⁰

Otho was not buried in his own town but in the church in Seveux, a small village near Ray-sur-Saône, where his headstone is. A close replica of this is can be seen in Ray castle, in the middle of the tower floor, near to the case (Picture 2). The plate reproduces Otho's arms. He is represented with hands joined in prayer, wearing an ermine gown, a sign of royalty.

The plate has the following epitaph:

*MOLA SUB ISTA CI PREMITUR OM(ni)S RAIANI OTHO ROGATE DEUM NE
PREMAT HOSTIS EUM*

The translation is:

Under this rock is buried Otho of Ray, pray God that the enemy will never surprise him again.

It has been suggested that this plate does not represent Otho but his nephew Othenin, who lived almost one century later; because we can not imagine why on his plate there is not written “Lord of Athens”.⁴¹ Instead Bergeret thinks that this is Otho II’s tomb,⁴² but this is not possible because till the end of his days Otho II was armed as de la Roche, so it is strange that there is not a reference to the la Roche family.

Another fact is very important. Seveux is in the region of Fouvent-Dampierre-Baujeu where Otho and his wife spent their last days. So people stating that Otho never returned to France should explain why the first Lord of Athens was not buried, as his successors were, in Daphne monastery.

Now we come to the last question: could the Shroud have been kept in the coffer present in Ray-sur-Saône castle?

Once opened its inner dimensions are more or less 37.5 centimetres long, 16.5 wide and 25 deep.

The most suitable folding pattern for the coffer dimensions is in 96.⁴³ This can be obtained with twelve folds in the length and eight in the width. So we obtain ninety-six rectangles, 36.33 centimetres long and 13.75 wide. We can not exclude that the Shroud was folded in 48 rectangles, 37 centimetres long and 28 wide, and put in the coffer with a small deformation in respect to the folding obtained.

We have a lot of witnesses regarding the existence of coffers in which the Shroud was preserved during its movements in different centuries.

At the Shroud Museum in Turin we can see the coffer used for moving the Shroud from Chambéry to Turin in 1578. Its shape and dimensions are very similar to that of the one found in Ray-sur-Saône castle.

It is likely that the two coffers could have preserved the Shroud in different historical periods.

A copy of the Shroud in Ray castle

Further proof supporting the hypothesis of a link between Lords of Ray-sur-Saône and the Shroud is the fact that in the same show cabinet where the coffer is, there is a drape

50 centimetres long and 30 wide, with floral ornaments. On the fabric is painted the frontal part of a male human being, extremely similar to the man of the Shroud (Picture 3). In fact, this yellowish body is represented supine with his wrists crossed on the pubis. On his feet, on his hands and on the side the small red dots represent blood coming from wounds, caused by nails and the lance. It has a bearded face with protruding cheekbones and a crown of thorns on the forehead.

This image is a lot alike, if not completely similar, to that of the Shroud. Similar details are the bruised cheekbones, the marks of the crown of thorns and the wounds on the left side.⁴⁴ Different is the crossing of the hands, left on right, and the feet, that are separated and not overlapped.

It is surprising and it seems that the painter coupled observation of the Shroud to some beliefs of the period. More significant examples are the wounds put in the palm of the hands and not in the wrists.

This piece is a lot like the painting of the «Besançon Shroud». Copies, once realised, were for important personalities of the Church or for noble friends of the family.

All these elements suggest that the Shroud could have remained in the case in Ray-sur-Saône when Otho de la Roche returned to France, probably around 1226.

The reasons for concealing the Shroud by Otho and his family are that the 12th Ecumenical Council, the Fourth Lateran, started on 11 November 1215,⁴⁵ banned the transaction of relics, condemning it as sacrilegious. It would have been difficult to explain the presence in the family of such a treasure and so popular veneration was reserved to the copy shown in Besançon.

So the Shroud present in France from 1226 would have been shown in public only one and a half centuries later, not far away from Ray-sur-Saône.

The Shroud and the Vergy family

After one hundred and fifty years the Shroud was kept in a collegiate church, built for this purpose, not far from Ray-sur-Saône castle. Geoffroi I de Charny is considered the first owner of the Shroud in Lirey in the 14th century.

Different elements make us think this was not completely true. It is quite strange that de Charny family did not publicly show this precious treasure until the middle of the 14th century. It was not by chance that Geoffroi I, a well-known knight in France for his bravery, a friend of kings and popes, waited until 1343, a year after his wedding with Jeanne de Vergy, before building a chapel.⁴⁶

We need to point out that if Otho de la Roche had descendants, one of them was Jeanne de Vergy and not Geoffroi I. Jeanne probably brought the Shroud as a dowry for the wedding. In fact Geoffroi I became Lord of Lirey and Savoy only after his marriage to Jeanne.

Moreover, on the brass plaque found in the Seine in the 19th century, there are coats of arms of both families, not only de Charny.⁴⁷ Besides, in not even one document about Geoffroi I de Charny was the Shroud mentioned. In fact, his son, Geoffroi II, did not inherit a Shroud when his father died,⁴⁸ as in documents related to the foundation of the collegiate church a lot of relics are mentioned but not the Shroud.⁴⁹ In the end, the chance that the Shroud was property of Jeanne de Vergy is supported by the fact that in the period between 1360 and 1389 the Shroud was preserved in Monfort-en-Auxois, a de Vergy property.⁵⁰

It is plausible that the king's request was formulated in the period immediately after that in which Geoffroi I obtained the Shroud, that is after his wedding with Jeanne de Vergy.

To prove the relationship between Jeanne de Vergy and Otho de la Roche we have to analyse family trees of some noble families from Franc-County and Burgundy between the 12th and 15th centuries.

Family Trees

Otho de la Roche married his cousin Isabelle, latest heiress of the principal branch of the family and, in this way, he obtained the title of Baron of Ray. From their marriage three heirs were born: Guy, Bonne and Otho II (Family Tree 1). From the marriage with Elisabeth de Chappes Guillaume was born.

For our interest Otho II is important. He died in 1254 leaving two daughters, Guillermette and Isabelle (or Elisabeth),⁵¹ who would marry into the family of Oiselay and de Vergy respectively⁵², and a son, Jean, who would become Baron of Ray-sur-Saône.⁵³

Let see now the de Vergy family.⁵⁴ Jeanne de Vergy was Guillaume's and Agnès de Durnayn's daughter. Her father was the son of Jean I and Marguerite de Noyers. Jean I was son of Henry I de Vergy and Isabelle de Ray, daughter of Otho II de la Roche and sister of Jean, Lord of Ray.⁵⁵ These genealogical trees show how Jeanne de Vergy was related, in the fifth generation, to Otho de la Roche (Family Tree 2).

It was this woman, descendant of the man that brought the Shroud to France in the 13th century, who married Geoffroi I de Charny. It is through this wedding that «the most loyal and valorous of all knights» obtained the Shroud that, through different generations, arrived in the hands of the de Vergy from the de la Roche family.

But this relationship on its own does not explain when, how or why the Shroud changed ownership from Ray-sur-Saône to de Vergy.

While the de la Roche family declined (in 1386 we do not find any trace of la Roche-sur-l'Ognon in genealogies⁵⁶), the Lords of Ray-sur-Saône were prospering. Their apogee was in the 14th century when two barons, Gauthier (who died in 1357) and Jean II (died in

1394), became “Guardian of Burgundy County”, that is they were the people in charge during the king’s succession or during the king’s absence.

The transfer of the Shroud from the Lords of Ray could be linked to the murder of the sixth and last Duke of Athens, Gauthier V de Brienne, that took place on May 13th 1311, around lake Copais. This event ended the history of the French dukedom of Athens that the Ray family had maintained for a long time. In this period the Lord of Ray-sur-Saône was Aymé; the heiress of Ray and Henry I de Vergy were already married, so the link between the two families was already established. The fact that the Shroud arrived in the hands of the de Vergy family could be linked to the fact that in 1191 the de Vergy family became *Senechal* of Burgundy.⁵⁷ The transfer could also have taken place while Jeanne was going to marry Geoffroi I de Charny, a well known man in France.

In the 15th century another wedding would link the two families (Family Tree 3).

Conclusions and unsolved questions

Based on elements collected up to now we can state that the Shroud was in France from the 13th century, when Otho, Lord of Athens, brought it to his fief, after having acquired it during the Fourth Crusade. After his death in France in 1234, the Shroud remained in Ray-sur-Saône family hands, preserved in a case in the family castle. I think that this rules out its public exhibition in France for many years, to avoid an excommunication coming from the fact of having stolen memorabilia from the crusade. So the Holy Shroud remained in the castle, apart from some movements following the Lords of Ray, until its handing over to the de Vergy family.

Jeanne de Vergy married Geoffroi I de Charny, a valiant knight and friend of clergymen and kings, and then decided to show the Shroud and asked her husband to build a church for this purpose, a collegiate church, in Lirey. Her second wedding with a relative of the antipope Clemente VII allowed Jeanne de Vergy to eliminate doubts about the authenticity of the Shroud.⁵⁸

What I have tried to prove in these pages about the «Shroud’s missing years» would be one more piece in the puzzle of the history of the Shroud.

I do not think we can say that the missing period is definitely solved as we still have a lot of research to do. First of all we need to understand if in the period in Ray-sur-Saône the Shroud was shown, even privately, and try to obtain further confirmation of what the genealogical trees suggest.

I think that this research should be performed only *in situ*.

This work has to be considered as the seeds of ongoing research, not the end but just the beginning (Picture 4).

Bibliographical notes

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2. For complete information about the Holy Shroud before Constantinople see: Dubarle A.M., *Storia antica della Sindone di Torino sino al XIII secolo*, Edizioni Giovinezza, Rome 1989.
3. This *acheiropoietos* relic was also known as the Mandylion and we have numerous links between the Image of Edessa and the Holy Shroud. According to the most reliable hypothesis, the Mandylion was the Shroud folded in eight, to show only the face. For a comparison between the Shroud and Mandylion see: Wilson I., *op. cit.*.
4. Giovanni Skylitzés, *Cronaca* (XIII secolo). Madrid, National Library, cod. gr. Vitr. 26-2, f. 205 r., f. 131 r. *De immagine edessena Costantini Porfirogeniti traslata* (*Codex Ambrosianus* D. 52s, 69).
5. Barbesino F., Moroni M., *Lungo le strade della Sindone*, San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo 1998, p. 21.
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7. Robert de Clary, coming from Amiens, left Clary-les-Pernois fief in 1202 to follow Pierre d'Amiens in the crusade.
8. Roberto di Clari, *La conquista di Costantinopoli*, a cura di Nada Patrone A. M., Genoa 1972, p. 227 and following.
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10. *Chartularium Culisanense* f. CXXVI. Si veda: Rinaldi P., *Un documento probante sulla localizzazione in Atene della Santa Sindone dopo il saccheggio di Costantinopoli*, in *La Sindone. Scienza e fede*, Atti del convegno di Bologna 1981, Bologna 1983, p. 109-113.
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12. Zaccone G.M., *Sulle tracce della Sindone*, Elledici, Leumann 1997, p.40.
13. Meschini M., *1204: l'incompiuta. La quarta crociata e le conquiste di Costantinopoli*, Ancora, Milan 2004, pp. 123-124.
14. Monk Aubry de Trois-Fontaines, in his *Chronicon*, addressed Otho de la Roche as Duke of Athens (Aubry *Chronicon* is mentioned from Vignon P., *Le Saint Suaire de Turin devant la science, l'archéologie, l'histoire, l'iconographie, la logique*, Paris 1938, p. 107-108.). Really it is from Jean de la Roche (1263-1280) that the title of Duke is used as an alternative to *Mégaskyr*. Under Guillaume (1280-1287), his successor, only the title Duke of Athens was used.
15. de Villehardouin G., *Histoire de la conquête de Constantinople*, a cura di de Wailly N., Librairie Hachette, Paris 1872, p. 146-149.
16. Lord of La Roche-sur-l'Ognon, village located around Ognon river, not far away from Besançon.
17. Noble family of Ray-sur-Saône, village of Franc-County in department of Haute-Saône.
18. de Salverte H., *Historique du Château de Ray*, Ed. Sequania, Besançon 1999, p. 15.

19. Dunod F. I., *Histoire des Séquanais*, XVIII secolo. Quoted also in family trees.
20. Born from Clérembault IV de Chappes and Elissande de Trainel, coming from the noble families of Bar-sur-Aube region, related to Guarnieri of Trainel, bishop of Troyes, took part in the Fourth Crusade as a spiritual leader.
21. Girard J., *La Roche et l'épopée comtoise de Grèce*, L'Atelier du Grand Tétras, Mont-de-Laval 1998, p. 71-73.
22. According to Scavone (Scavone D. C., *La Sindone di Torino, Otho de la Roche, Besançon, e il Memorandum d'Arcis: Un'elaborazione e una sintesi*, in *Collegamento Pro Sindone*, Genuary-February 1993, p. 37) he arrived in Athens between the end of October and the beginning of November 1204.
23. Girard J., *op. cit.*, p. 73.
24. Lognon, *Les premiers Ducs d'Athens et leur famille*, in *Journal des Savants*, Genuary-March 1973. There are almost twelve letters addressed to Otho from Pope Innocence III, between 1208 and 1213 and another eight to Pope Honorius III, from 1217 to 1225.
25. The two documents are preserved in Departmental Archives of Haute- Saône: Abbaye de Bellevaux, H 119.
26. On his father's death Otho II reached an agreement with his cousin Pons de Cicon and gave up his rights over La Roche-sur-l'Ognon fief. In the "Nauplie Charter", dated April 19th 1251, Otho II gave up his fiefs of Argos and Nauplie for some money and some rights of Guy over family properties in Burgundy and Champagne, thus centralising power in Ray-sur- Saône.
27. Other dukes of Athens were: Guy (1225-1263); Jean (1263-1280); Guillaume (1280-1287); Guy II (1287-1308); Gauthier V de Brienne (1308-1311).
28. Departmental Archives of Doubs, B 485
29. The name of de Ray disappeared in 1623 on the death of Claude François de Ray, who did not have male heirs. Women from the family married into the Marmier family and, thereafter, with de Salverete.
30. Chamard F., *Le linceul du Christ, étude critique et historique*, Oudin, Parigi 1902.
31. Based on de Salverte (de Salverte H., *Petit Guide pour les Visiteurs du Château et du Parc de Ray*, Gray 1980, p. 3) fragments of True Cross were found in Blacherne palace.
32. Dunod F. I., *Histoire de l'église, ville et diocèse de Besançon*, volume I, p. 408.
33. According to Scavone (Scavone D.C., *op. cit.*, p.38) Otho could have obtained the Shroud from the new Emperor Henry following his wedding with Agnese of Monferrato, celebrated in February 1207, as acknowledgement for his services. That is in contrast with attestations about the Shroud's presence in Athens in the summer of 1205.
34. Religious buildings probably are: a church in Athens, Parthenon and Daphni monastery (Raffard de Brienne D., *Le ducs d'Athènes et le Linceul*, in *Actes du IIIème Symposium Scientifique International du CIELT*, Nice, 12-13 May 1997, p. 171).
35. Scavone D. C., *op. cit.*, p.40. Raffard de Brienne D., *op.cit.*, p. 171.
36. Regesta honor. II papae III, 332-986, 1819, 3924-4503-4514.
37. Hopf, *Chronique gréco-romaine*, Weidman, Berlin 1873.
38. Also quoted in de Salverte H., *Historique du Château de Ray*, Ed. Sequania, Besançon 1999, p. 17.
39. Jacques Vignier: *Décade historique du diocèse de Langres* - Tomo III -f. 6- France National Library FR 5995.
40. Girard J., *op. cit.*, note 30 p. 102.
41. *Mémoires de la Commission Archéologique de la Haute-Saône*, 3-4, Per. 257.

42. Bergeret M., *Linceul de Turin- le trou historique: 1204-1357*, in *L'identification scientifique de l'homme du Linceul, Actes du Symposium Scientifique International du CIELT*, Rome 10-12 June 1993, p. 347.

43. *Ibidem*. And also: Barta C., *Hipótesis para el vacío histórico de Constantinopla a Lirey*, in *Linteum* n. 36, June 2004, p. 32.

44. The side wound that on the Shroud we see on the left side on the negative that reveals royalty is on the right side.

45. Rendina C., *I Papi. Storia e segreti*, Newton & Compton, Rome 2005, p. 448.

46. National Archives of Paris, *MS. J.J. 1174*, n° 315.

47. Musée National du Moyen-Age Thermes et hôtel de Cluny, Paris.

48. The Shroud is not mentioned in the funeral memorial written by the Dean of the collegiate church (Legrand A., *Le Linceul de Turin*, Desclée de Brouwer, 1980).

49. de Gail P., *Histoire religieuse du Linceul du Christ*, Editions France-Empire, Paris 1973.

50. Bergeret M., *op. cit.*, p. 347. It seems that on the initiative of Jeanne de Vergy, in 1360 the Shroud was moved to Monfort-en-Auxois castle where it stayed until 1389 (*Pays de Bourgogne*, n. 199, March 2003).

51. In the Middle Ages the names of Elisabeth and Isabelle were equivalent (Bergeret M., *op. cit.*, p.348).

52. Girard J., *op.cit.*, p. 225.

53. de Salverte H., *Historique du Château de Ray*, Ed. Sequania, Besançon 1999, see following genealogical table.

54. Piana A., *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

55. Père Anselme de Sainte-Marie (Pierre de Guibours), *Histoire généalogique et chronologique de la maison royale de France, des pairs, grands officiers de la couronne et de la maison du roy et des anciens barons du royaume*. (Reprod. de l'éd. de Paris : chez Estienne Loyson, 1674: Num. BNF de l'éd. de Paris: *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, 1987).

56. Departmental Archives of Doubs, B 435

57. Curren-Briggs N., *The Shroud and the Grail*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1987.

58. Amedeo IV de Genève married Jeanne de Vergy in 1357, was related to anti-pope Clemente VII who attended to the Lirey controversy.