

Fake news!

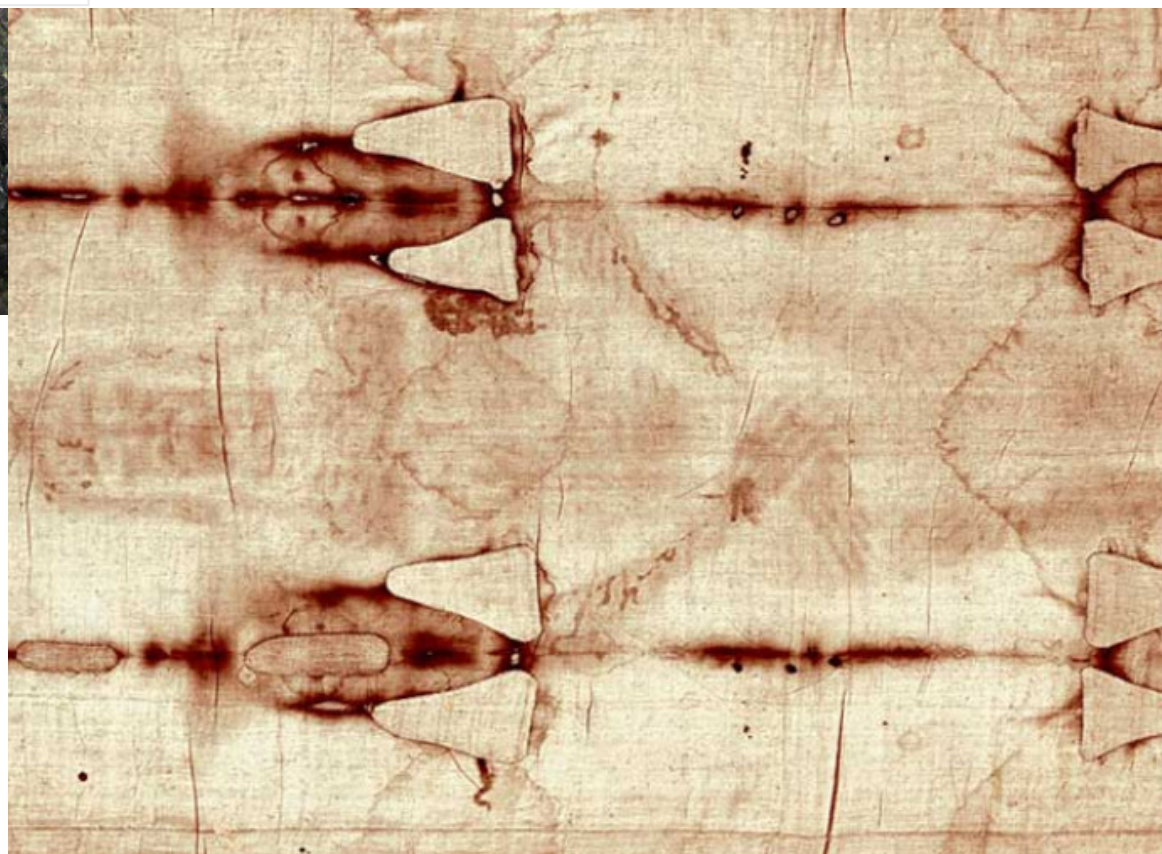
“Turin Shroud formed by a bas-relief”: same old hoax

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With truly suspicious timing, just as the important **Holy Shroud conference in St Louis**, Missouri, USA, is taking place, **ANSA** has released a sensational news item claiming that the image on the Shroud is an artistic work created using bas-relief. The claim comes

from the Brazilian Cicero Moraes, who is known for his three-dimensional computer reconstructions of the faces of historical figures.

For his claims on the Shroud, Moraes limited himself to creating a computer reconstruction of the image 'using open-source (and free) software available for download'. He published this article in [Archaeometry](#), which incredibly was accepted as a scientific work even though it does not meet the requirements of a scientific publication. In fact, it fails to consider all aspects of the Shroud: a linen cloth bearing microtraces of various kinds, including Middle Eastern pollen, aloe, myrrh and aragonite identical to that found in the caves of Jerusalem; human blood left by the corpse wrapped in the cloth; and a very superficial oxidation and dehydration of the cellulose that makes up the fabric, formed after the blood had stained the fabric. Despite the characteristics of the image on the shroud, which are consistent with those of a photographic negative and encoded three-dimensional information, Moraes states that it was created in the Middle Ages.

Moreover, he himself admits the glaring bias of his work: 'The study does not address physical or chemical aspects related to the formation of the image, such as the presence of pigments, microscopic analysis, or the properties of the fabric materials. Nor does it investigate the dynamics of bodily fluids, such as blood flow'. The focus is strictly methodological, centred on digital modelling and comparative evaluation of the contact patterns observed”.

Moraes does not even attempt to reconstruct the correct position of the hands and feet, which are mirrored on the shroud. 'The mirrored position of the model has been maintained, since the hand originally positioned above is the left hand, not the right, as in the current study model. This approach simplifies the creation of visual material”. With this minimalist approach, he is certainly not concerned about the bowed head and bent knees of the Man of the Shroud. His model is completely stretched out, with the right hand on the left and the right foot on the left, contrary to what can be deduced from the Shroud. He does not make a model of the dorsal image either, because why waste time on it? For him, it is already fine as it is.

The presence of blood does not bother him either as he believes it is fake. He is clearly referring to the summer hoax of 2018 by *Matteo Borrini and Luigi Garlaschelli*, who deemed the bloodstains on the Shroud implausible. [I also spoke about this](#) at the time, as the news was picked up by newspapers around the world. However, at least Borrini and Garlaschelli conducted experiments in an attempt to achieve something concrete. Garlaschelli himself invited people to read the article, writing on [his blog](#): 'The article

also includes colour photos of me in my underwear'. A sight we would gladly have spared ourselves! However, it is worth noting that, [according to Garlaschelli](#), he did not charge for this article, unlike the one he wrote in the past.

Moraes, on the other hand, is lazy. He merely simulates the fabric on a computer. He simply aims to deny the presence of a corpse, claiming that a contact image is distorted. However, this has been [known for some time](#) because what we see is an orthogonal projection of the body. The yellowing of the cloth is only 1/5 of a thousandth of a millimetre deep and can be explained by [orthogonal ultraviolet radiation](#). But, Moraes does not like this explanation and ignores it. Unsurprisingly, Moraes makes no mention of the numerous scientific publications by the [Shroud of Turin Research Project](#) that refute his claims.

In his stubborn attempt to prove that the Shroud is fake, Moraes also draws attention to the anatomical inconsistencies allegedly demonstrated in an [article published in Archaeometry](#) last summer and signed by Elio Quiroga Rodríguez. However, he remains silent on the [criticism of that work](#) published by Tristan Casabianca, Louis Cador and myself in *Archaeometry*. It is incredible that the *referees* of *Archaeometry* would accept this approach. It is also surprising that a scientific journal would accept a computer game as serious work without much effort.

Equally surprising is the fact that the news goes viral and bounces from one newspaper to another without any criticism of the content. Even serious newspapers are spreading it; for example, *La Stampa* and *La Repubblica* in Italy where the Holy Shroud is preserved. Everything is taken at face value and fed to the public. Journalists have reduced themselves to mere word of mouth. Sometimes, even worse, they inflate the news or give voice to another supposed expert to enlighten us further. According to *La Stampa*, the work was conducted by 'a team led by international expert Cicero Moraes'. *La Repubblica* gives space to the inevitable comment by denialist historian Andrea Nicolotti: "Cicero Moraes is right, but his research is not particularly revolutionary. We have known for at least four centuries that the image on the Shroud could not have been created through contact with a three-dimensional body".

Thus, the general public is left disoriented and in total confusion by orchestrated hoaxes and false certainties. This is the situation, but we must react — and we are doing so — in everyone's interest. One thing is certain: the Shroud is a considerable nuisance in certain circles that are allergic to Jesus Christ. This is the greatest proof that the Shroud is authentic.