One of the most pressing historical questions surrounding the death of Jesus is whether Jesus really was given a decent burial, as the NT Gospels indicate in their story of Joseph of Arimathea. Even though the story that Joseph, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, received permission to bury Jesus is multiply attested in independent sources (see, e.g., Mark 15:43-47; John 19:38-42), scholars have long adduced reasons for suspecting that the account may have been invented by Christians who wanted to make sure that they could say with confidence that the tomb was empty on the third day. The logic is that if no one knew for sure where Jesus was buried, then no one could say that his tomb was empty; and if the tomb was not empty, then Jesus obviously was not physically raised from the dead. And so the story of the resurrection more or less required a story of a burial, in a known spot, by a known person. For some historians, that makes the story suspicious.

There are real grounds for the suspicion.

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