

THE SHROUD: A FORGERY?**Remarks on the Results of the Radiocarbon-Dating****by Prof. Dr EBERHARD LINDNER, Karlsruhe, Germany**

On Thursday, October 13, 1988, Cardinal Ballestrero (Archbishop of Turin) published the results of the radiocarbon-analysis of the shroud: the linen was to be only about 600 years old. But in my opinion, it is too early to say that this consequence is clear, because the higher level of C 14 which has been measured can be the result of two different circumstances:

- 1) The Shroud was made in the 14th century and not 2000 years old; therefore it must be a forgery.
- 2) The radioactivity of the original material was higher, and therefore, it is today still so high that it simulates the shorter age of 600 years; then it is indeed 2000 years old, and the true Shroud of Jesus Christ.

A higher radioactivity cannot be caused by the normal (natural) content of C 14, because we have significant results by comparing the dendrochronological dating with the radiocarbon dating [1]. A higher initial amount of C 14 may be possible, if we assume a neutron-radiation during the event of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, i.e. during the disappearance of the material which formed the corpse crucified: this must have been a radiation which turned the isotopes C 12 and C 13 into C 14. It is possible to explain this theory in the following manner:

Surely it was necessary that the material which formed the corpse of Jesus Christ disappeared from existence, so that the message of the resurrection could spread: It was not possible to preach the gospel of the resurrection in Jerusalem if the cadaver was putrefying in the tomb.

By what Manner could a radiation of neutrons occur? Here is a possible theory: During the disappearance of the corpse of Jesus Christ into the "nothingness", there disappeared the matter for ever (in the opposite direction to God having created the matter from the "nothingness" at the beginning of the world), and during this event (only in a small amount of these atoms) on the surface of the corpse only the protons disappeared. In this way, the electrons of the atoms gave a directed "electron-radiation" which caused the traces of the body-image (which are today known by many investigations as a degradation of cellulose) [2]; we can see the same effect by simulation-experiments which are investigated with x-rays [3].

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On the other hand this could be caused by electrical discharge of the traces of coins (placed on the eyelids) which belong to the time of Caesar Tiberius [4]. Finally, the remaining neutrons are captured by other atoms; and in this way the C14 is built up from C12 and C13. It is possible to test this theory by isotope-analysis in the cellulose of the Shroud: The atoms of oxygen and hydrogen of the cellulose then must be also transformed into higher isotopes, into O17, O18 and H2. If one can find a higher amount of these isotopes in the Shroud than we find normally, this would be a remarkable verification not only for the theory given here, but it would also give new and unexpected stimulus to interpret the historical resurrection of Jesus Christ. The amount of C14, O17, O18 and H2 then also would be higher in the proximity of the body-image than it would be in the border of the Shroud. What an excellent possibility to verify this theory!

A statement that, as a result of the radiocarbon-analysis, the Shroud is from the 14th century, and therefore, is a forgery, is a premature conclusion which is in disagreement with more than twenty other pieces of evidences for the possible authenticity of the Shroud. It is therefore not possible to disprove all the other results of investigations by only one research method, moreover with results that are ambiguous. The interpretation of the radiocarbon-results proposed here should be considered and its relevance should be tested by analysing the higher isotopes of oxygen (O17 and O18) and hydrogen (H2)

References

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