

A Critical (Re)Evaluation Of The Shroud Of Turin Blood Data: Strength Of Evidence In The Characterization Of The Bloodstains *

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3:45-4:30 pm

Authors

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Abstract:

Previous studies indicate that the blood areas on the Shroud of Turin contain serum constituents and cellular proteins characteristic of real blood. Serological typing tests, including forward and reverse methods, suggest a blood type of AB. Portions of several genes have been selectively amplified from bloodstained areas, including amelogenin X and amelogenin Y, indicative of X and Y chromosomes, respectively. Additionally, sequences corresponding to betaglobin, a hemoglobin subunit, have been reported.

While initial efforts point to the detection of authentic blood on the cloth, several fundamental characteristics of the nature of the bloodstains still remain to be conclusively established. For example, although widely stated that the blood on the Shroud is of human origin, exactly how strong is the scientific evidence for such claims? Moreover, does the current data effectively exclude the possibility that blood from other species could also be present? How definitive are the current typing results and what is their overall significance in the bloodstain evaluation? Finally, how certain is the evidence that the blood present is representative of (only) a single individual, i.e. a human male? These issues will be discussed in the context of previous results and the techniques utilized to obtain them, together with the consideration of additional, more recent testing methods that could confirm and extend these initial findings. In summary, this presentation will evaluate the overall strength of evidence regarding specific immunological and molecular aspects of the bloodstains present on the Shroud of Turin.