

STIGMATA REPLICATED? CAN THE MIND CREATE THE MARKS?

Some Christians claim to have got the gift of sharing in Christ's crucifixion by being given nail wounds from God as if they were crucified themselves. These marks are called the stigmata. Some experts feel the wounds are self-induced by the way a sick mind can influence the body. The evidence is in how some Muslim mystics seem to carry the marks of Muhammad's sufferings and how some people reproduce long healed injuries as if from nowhere when there is a trigger.

In *The Word as a Physiological and Therapeutic Factor* by V Finne written in 1927 we read,

Subject M, 35 years old, easily suggestible, was put up into a state of suggested sleep after which a copper coin was applied to the inner side of her left forearm with the suggestion that it was a burning-hot metal disk; as a result the subject sustained a heavy burn and felt acute pain.

After awakening she was continuously watched by one of the physicians, a member of the conference. According to the record of observation, twenty-five minutes after the aforesaid suggestion and upon awakening, the skin was red at the point of the 'burn', fifty-five minutes later, a swelling was observed; two and one half hours later a white spot appeared in the centre of the 'burned' spot, and three and one half hours later a blister formed.

Under deep hypnosis a suggestion to the effect of 'burning' makes a second degree burn on that spot on the body of the subject where the hypnotist or operator wanted it to occur.

End of quote.

The subject shows the power of the mind. Delusion can create marks on the body in some people.

This discovery shows that stigmatists may pass all the known ways of cheating and still be able to cheat. They might have the one in a million power to cause marks without using any instruments.

FROM COLIN WILSON'S BEYOND THE OCCULT

A quarter of a century earlier Leavenworth had housed a multiple murderer called Hadad. The psychologist Donald Power Wilson first encountered him when he was taken to Hadad's cell

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Hadad offered Wilson another demonstration of his powers. He removed his clothes and lay across two desks, then went into a death-like state. Then, as he had predicted, the twelve signs of the zodiac appeared at different places on his body in the form of red welts — what Wilson calls an example of 'controlled dermatographia'. When Hadad's vein was punctured there was almost no blood: Wilson confirmed that this was beyond the usual psychotic trance or catalepsy.

DR LECHLER

Elizabeth K was born in 1902 and was a lady of tremendously vivid imagination and who suffered from hysteria. Stigmata and tears of blood were induced in Elizabeth by her psychiatrist using hypnosis. Like all stigmatics she gave evidence of suffering from multiple personality disorder. It was found that when she was able to imagine herself going through the crucifixion so strongly that it was like reality to her that the wounds appeared. Her psychiatrist Dr Lechler hypnotised her to believe she was being crucified and he saw stigmata appear. This confirmed his belief that people with unusual imaginative powers and strong mystical tendencies can do things nearly everybody else can't do. One of these things is that they can make their bodies produce stigmata just by mind power.

A hoax has been suspected all because of one photo allegedly showing the subject bleeding from outside the eyes while Lechler the psychiatrist was claiming that the blood came from inside the eyelids. So the problem is that the eyes look too clear for somebody that was bleeding from inside the lids. But if there was a little blood it would soon have been wiped by the tears which would have moved the blood from the two corners of the eye down the face. We see this in the photograph and we must remember that when the picture was taken, Elizabeth had been bleeding before Lechler got around to taking the photograph (page 95, *The Bleeding Mind*) so the eye bleeding might have just stopped so that her eyes looked clean but the lids were still stained with blood. [View the photo.](#)

If Lechler had been hoaxing he would not have made the mistake of photographing a woman who had just plastered blood around her eyelids. It has been complained that the witnesses were just Lutheran deaconesses and that Lechler admitted he could not always prove that Elizabeth was not piercing herself (page 21, *The Stigmata and Modern Science*). But Lechler was convinced he was sure she was watched well enough at times so she could not have been faking all the time. And moreover, he noted that the wounds lasted only as long as the hypnotic suggestion did which was 1-2 days (page 21, *The Stigmata and Modern Science*) and we know that wounds inflicted by natural means last longer. Anyway, why would Elizabeth fake? She was always an obscure and reliable and conscientious person.

Elizabeth K's stigmata is nothing compared to that of the people we have been reading about. The wounds were not very impressive which indicates that she did not inflict them herself for she would have made them look more than just a few pinpricks. But they are real and show that suggestion has a part to play in causing stigmata. Perhaps, had she had the right triggers in her brain and nervous system that only a few seem to have she would have been able to produce wounds to match theirs.

With Elizabeth K we also have Eve from the *Three Faces of Eve* who was able to produce burn marks just by reliving her experience of being abused under hypnosis and we have Mook from Hamburg who took wounds on his head like the crown of thorns but only when he took heart attacks (page 23, *The Stigmata and Modern Science*). Some have thought Mook may have been somebody the Devil was experimenting with which is nonsense. The Devil has miracle power and he does not need to test it.

The stigmatists were all extremely emotional people except in the cases of obvious fraud. It would not be unfair to say they are all hysterical or emotionally unbalanced and Bourru, Burot, Charcot and Bourneville were known to have had a little success in making wounds appear by suggestion on their hysterical patients (page 15, *The Stigmata and Modern Science*).

Some people with emotional disorders have been found to exhibit inexplicable bruising swelling and bleeding through the skin a condition known in medical journals as psychogenic purpura. There is plenty of stigmata that has not been invested with religious significance. Autoerythrocyte sensitization a disorder that makes people reject their own blood can be an explanation for many stigmatist cases.

In 1989 Giorgio Bongiovanni went to Fatima on pilgrimage. He came back with stigmata. He has daily wounds in the forehead, hands, side and feet. The doctors have been baffled at his blood level being normal despite bleeding every day and the absence of infection. The doctors observed the blood coagulating incredibly fast in a few seconds. Sceptics are at a loss to explain how a man with wounds in his feet would fake stigmata in his hands when it is now known that Jesus would have been nailed through the wrists. This stigmatist claims that his miracle wounds are evidence not for orthodox Catholicism but for aliens, Jesus and Mary using spaceships, and his being the reincarnation of Francisco Marto, the little boy who had seen Mary at Fatima in 1917. Despite his prophecy that Jesus would return at the end of the twentieth century Jesus hasn't shown up. I bring this up to illustrate the point that here is a man who claims super-science caused his stigmata and stigmata cannot be used as evidence to draw or lure people into thinking the Catholic Church must be the right religion.

Professor Oscar Ratnoff found a woman who bled from the hair follicles on her thigh. No wound caused this but it goes some way to show that stigmata may be a skin disease caused by the combination of body and mind (page 1333, *The X Factor*, Issue 48, Marshall Cavendish, 1998).

From <http://www.assap.org/newsite/articles/Stigmata.html>

There have been non-miraculous instances of stigmata. It is an unusual phenomenon but not a miracle.

“The majority of claimants seem to be displaying a psychosomatic response to their religious fervour. That the body can will itself to produce such marks has evidence outside of the realm of stigmata claims and has even been put to the test. A Swedish girl known as Maria was badly beaten up when she was 23; after that time she would, every few weeks, produce bleeding from head, ear and eyelids. A doctor examining her concluded that she could produce bleeding at will, from no visible wounds, when she picked arguments with other patients and reached a certain emotional state.”

“Research seems, however, to have identified a mechanism by which the body can, in certain extreme emotions, manifest strange markings, producing a truly extraordinary, and highly visible, mystery phenomenon.”

The marks appear naturally, as a psychosomatic response to religious fervour. This is the most favoured theory with modern researchers. It has been tested and it has parallels outside of the claims of the stigmata. The condition is known as psychogenic purpura (spontaneous haemorrhaging with no obvious cause). It is rare, but there are several cases of people who produce on themselves the evidence of some previous trauma. In one case a woman who had been abused during childhood manifested the spontaneous appearance of her bruise marks during psychotherapy. British psychiatrist Robert Moody reported the case of an army officer whom he had treated for stress disorders and sleepwalking. During these times the officer produced the marks on his body of ropes where he had been tied up earlier. Moody photographed these wounds and saw them bleed. In the field of UFO and 'close encounter' research, there is the well documented case of Barney Hill who believed that he was kidnapped by aliens and subjected to a medical examination. Reliving the experience years later under hypnosis, he manifested a ring of warts around his genitals, corresponding to where he believed devices had been attached during the 'abduction'. In fact many people who claim to have undergone 'alien abductions' display marks on their bodies, and bleeding, from wounds they believe were inflicted by medical examination by aliens. Many other people who have been in close proximity to UFOs manifest a variety of marks. Some may be attributable to the object, for example, chest wounds received by Stephen Michalak in Canada. But some seem more likely to be the psychosomatic response to UFOs, for example triangular markings received by Dr X in southern France, in 1968.”

Some modern stigmatists do automatic writing, a spiritualistic phenomenon forbidden by the Church and the Bible.

”Heather's writings were channelled while she was in trance; she never remembered the writing, only the beginning as she reached for her pencil and the end when she 'came round'. But a few people were witness to the extraordinary speed of her writing; several pages filled in minutes. One witness said she watched Heather's hand moving at 'abnormal speed'.”

Her stigmata then if real would be evidence that spiritualism is true if the foolish simplistic religious reasoning that miracles are proof for the religion they happen in are true.

From <http://www.assap.org/newsite/articles/Stigmata.html>

Let Fr Herbert Thurston have the last word on stigmata,

“The impression left upon me has been that the subjects who were so favoured or afflicted were all suffering from pronounced and often hysterical neuroses. Many of them were intensely devout (of course it is only in the case of people whose thoughts were concentrated on religious motives that one would expect to find this type of manifestation) but in others piety was combined with eccentricities and with apparent dissociations of personality which were very strange and not exactly edifying. I find it difficult to believe that God could have worked miracles to accredit such people as his chosen friends and representatives.”

Padre Pio was foremost in his mind for he wrote about him carefully - and with grave doubts.