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Old dates, cool stories: Radiocarbon dating trees in the last cooling event

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Abstract

The field of radiocarbon (14) C) changed when tree-rings were first shown to be a direct proxy for atmospheric 14 C. Long-term measurements of 14 C derived from tree-ring chronologies showed 'wiggles' that were caused by carbon cycle, geomagnetic and solar variability. The presence of these 'wiggles' also meant a ${}^{14}C$ age had to be calibrated. The first ${}^{14}C$ calibration curve was built from tree-ring chronologies and to this day tree-ring chronologies are considered the gold standard. The most extensive tree-ring chronology extends from AD 1950 (considered present) into the most recent return to near glacial like conditions, called the Younger Dryas (YD). The cause of the YD remains a mystery, but with the discovery of 253 late-glacial pines in 2013 from Zürich, Switzerland reignited a 30-year effort to extend the most extensive (or absolute) tree-ring chronology further back in time.

To determine how old newly discovered trees were and avoid alternative time consuming and costly dating techniques we created Speed Dating: a breakthrough in direct Accelerator Mass Spectrometer (AMS) 14 C measurements of gas samples. Instead of going through conventional preparation techniques, wood samples were directly combusted in an elementar analyzer with the resulting CO_2 measured for its ¹⁴C content on an AMS system. The Speed Dating technique was shown to be robust with excellent standard normalization, reproducible blanks and accurate dating of reference materials. Further, Speed Dating resulted in an increase of sample throughput by 15x with uncertainties of $\leq 2\%$ and the cost of an AMS date was reduced by a third.

Trees identified as potential candidates for extending the absolute tree-ring chronology, were subjected to high-precision ${}^{14}C$ dating. As no well-defined methodology exists for high-precision 14 C dating by AMS, we created the Quality Dating protocol an outcome of the 1705 samples we measured at ETH. The Quality Dating protocol stipulated that for high-precision ¹⁴C dates by AMS, process rather than chemical blanks are to be used as an estimate of contamination. This was outcome of processed wood blanks on average, being statically different than chemical blanks. Further, standards should always be accompanied by another standard to ensure robust normalization, which was observed via a normalization of Oxalic acid II & to Oxalic acid I. Lastly, at least two references of similar composition and age to the analyte should be measured to confirm reproducible results. This was demonstrated by continual measurements of a wood sample that was 14 C dated by five other laboratories. By following the Quality dating protocol, an intercomparison with laboratory from Germany showed exemplary agreement in ${}^{14}C$ ages and uncertainty estimations.

The abundance of ${}^{14}C$ dates produced in this dissertation were from four chronologies, the absolute chronology and three Swiss chronologies-not linked to the present day. The absolute chronology was extended 200 years further back in time-based on high precision ¹⁴C. The extended $14C$ record of the absolute chronology could be linked to one of the Swiss chronologies. In turn, this Swiss chronology could be used to anchor the remaining chronologies. A higher calendrical certainty ($2\sigma \leq 8$ cal years) was obtained when wiggle matching to a New Zealand chronology. That was wiggle-matched to the extended absolute chronology. The ${}^{14}C$ record before and during YD was redefined with quicker increase and decrease in ¹⁴C than previously noted.

The ¹⁴C production estimated from the rise in atmospheric ${}^{14}C$ is increased by 20% for a period of 400 years starting at ∼ 12.8 kyr BP. While this increased production could be caused by either a change in geomagnetic field or oceanic circulation, century variations are akin to patterns seen in the Holocene that are assumed to be solar driven. Inferred from the correlation between total solar irradiance and ¹⁴C production for recent times, we estimate that the total solar irradiance the in the YD could have been reduced by $\geq 5 \text{ W m}^{-2}$, which is larger than previously speculated. This could mean that a weak Sun had more a role to play in the most recent return to near glacial-like conditions of the YD.

We use the precision of our new 14 C record to align climatic signatures seen in various

archives for the YD to the 20% increase 14 C production and investigate the InterHemispheric Gradient (IHG)- the ¹⁴C difference in tree-rings growing at the same time on the northern and the southern hemisphere. The elevated IHG is elevated accompanied with intense variability for ∼600 year period. The change in the IHG we associate to three variations in carbon cycle that mark beginning of the YD cooling event. The first being the grand solar minimum (mentioned above) that would create a 14 C gradient towards the pole regions cause by the increased production. This $14C$ gradient would be broadened by the second component, a weaker Meridional Overturning Circulation that increases concentration of atmospheric ${}^{14}CO_2$ in the Northern Hemisphere. The change in concentration would further be exacerbated by third a change to carbon cycle, due to an increase in strength of the Southern Ocean circulation and westerlies winds. This change would deplete atmospheric ${}^{14}CO_2$ in the Southern Hemisphere, promoting the observed change in IHG. The precise timing of these events (within uncertainties) and the IHG change can be considered synchronous. Oddly, the IHG change is ∼100 before changes associated with YD are detected in the German Meerfelder Maar chronology. We believe this to indication that calendrical uncertainties of the Meerfelder Maar chronology are underestimated. The work introduced in this dissertation:

- Adds and improves on existing AMS methodologies.
- Redefines placement and structure of ${}^{14}C$ during cooling event.
- Precisely identifies the largest known solar driven change.
- Synchronize various records in the YD
- Discovers an IHG change that is due to production and carbon cycle variations in the YD.

This dissertation will serve as a reference for ${}^{14}C$ studies in the future that would aim to improve calibration and understand ancient carbon cycle changes.

Zusammenfassung

Die Erkenntnis, dass Baumringe ein direktes Archiv des atmosphärischen Radiokohlenstoff (¹⁴C) Pegels sind, hatte grossen Einfluss auf die ¹⁴C-Methode. Lange Zeitserien von ¹⁴C Messungen zeigten 'wiggles', die durch den Kohlenstoffkreislauf und Schwankungen des Erdmagnetfelds und der Sonnenaktivität verursacht wurden. Die Existenz dieser 'wiggles' bedeutet auch, dass ¹⁴C-Alter kalibriert werden müssen. Die erste Kalibrationskurve wurde mit Hilfe von Jahrring-Chronologie erstellt, und bis zum heutigen Tag werden Jahrring-Chronologien als Goldstandard angesehen. Die längste Jahrring-Chronologie erstreckt sich von AD 1950 (Nullpunkt der Skala) bis zum letzten grossen Klimarückgang in nahezu eiszeitliche Verhältnisse, genannt 'Jüngere Dryas'. Es bleibt ein Rätsel, was die Jüngere Dryas ausgelöst hat, aber die Entdeckung von 253 spätglazialen Kiefern in Zürich, Schweiz, fachte von Neuem eine 30-jährige Anstrengung zur Ausweitung der absoluten Baumringchronologie in die Vergangenheit an.

Um das Alter der neu entdeckten Bäume zu bestimmen, und um langwierige und kostspielige Datierungstechniken zu vermeiden, entwickelten wir 'Speed Dating': Ein Durchbruch im Hinblick auf direkte Massenbeschleunigermessungen (AMS) von ${}^{14}C$ Gasproben. Anstatt der üblichen Aufbereitung wurden die Holzproben direkt in einem Elementar-Analysator verbrannt und das entstandene $CO₂$ im AMS System auf den ¹⁴C Gehalt gemessen. Wir zeigten, dass die Speed-Dating Technik ausgezeichnete Normalisierung in Bezug auf den Standard, reproduzierbaren Maschinen-Untergrund und genaue Daten von Referenzproben aufweist. Speed-Dating ergab einen 15-fach höheren Probendurchsatz bei Fehlern $\leq 2\%$, und die Kosten einer AMS-Altersbestimmung wurde um ein Drittel verringert.

Bäume, die als potentielle Kandidaten für den Ausbau der absoluten Baumring-Chronologie identifiziert wurden, wurden für Messungen mit hoher Genauigkeit vorgesehen. Da es noch keine wohldefinierte Methodologie für die Hochpräzisionsdatierung mit AMS gibt, haben wir als Ergebnis der Messung von 1705 Proben an der ETH das 'Quality Dating Protocol' geschaffen. Das Protokoll legt fest, dass für Untergrundproben von Hochpräzisionsmessungen mit AMS anstelle von chemische Substanzen Proben-nahe Materialien zu verwenden sind. Dies folgte daraus, dass Untergrund-Holzproben im statistischen Mittel von chemischen Untergrundproben abwichen. Weiter sollen beide Standards zusammen verwendet werden, wie der Vergleich von Oxalsäure II zu Oxalsäure I belegte. Schliesslich sollten mindestens zwei Referenzproben von ähnlicher Zusammensetzung und Alter wie die Proben gemessen werden, um die Reproduzierbarkeit zu bestätigen. Dies wurde durch fortlaufende Messungen einer Holzprobe gezeigt, die von 5 anderen AMS-Labors datiert wurde. Auf der Basis des Quality Dating Protokolls zeigte ein Vergleich mit einem deutschen Labor eine beispielhafte Übereinstimmung in ${}^{14}C$ –Altern und Fehlerbestimmungen.

Die Mehrzahl der ¹⁴C-Daten dieser Dissertation stammen von vier Chronologien, der absoluten Chronologie und drei Schweizer Chronologien, die nicht an die absolute Chronologie angeschlossen sind. Die absolute Chronologie wurde mit hochpräzisen Daten um 200 Jahre zum Älteren verlängert. Die verlängerte ¹⁴C-Datensatz der absoluten Chronologie konnte mit einer der Schweizer Chronologien verbunden werden. In der Folge konnten mit dieser Chronologie die übrigen Chronologien verankert werden. Eine weitere zeitliche Festlegung ($2\sigma \leq 8$ cal Jahre) wurde mit einem wiggle-match zu einer Neuseeländischen Chronologie erreicht, die ihrerseits zur erweiterten absoluten Chronologie über wiggle-matching angeschlossen wurde. Die ¹⁴C-Zeitreihe vor und in der Jüngeren Dryas wurde neu bestimmt, mit schnelleren Anstiegen und Abfällen im Vergleich zu früheren Daten.

Die aus dem atmosphärischen ¹⁴C Anstieg abgeleitete ¹⁴C Produktion ist über einen Zeitbereich ab ∼ 12.8 kyr BP über einen Zeitbereich von 400 Jahren um 20% erhöht. Während die erhöhte Produktion theoretisch auch mit Änderungen in der Stärke des Erdmagentfeldes oder Änderungen in ozeanischer Zirkulationen erklärt werden könne, so ähnelt die Struktur stark Strukturen im Hololzän, die durch Änderungen in totaler solarer Irradianz erklärt werden. Abgeleitet aus der beobachteten Beziehung zwischen der solaren Irradianz und der beobachteten ¹⁴C Produktion,

schätzen wir eine um ≥ 5 W m−² abgeschwächte solare Irradianz für die YD ab, was mehr ist, als bisher abgeschätzt wurde. Das könnte bedeuten, dass die Sonne eine bedeutendere Rolle für die letzte kurzzeitige Rückkehr zu nahezu glazialen Bedingen der YD gespielt hat.

Wir verwenden den neu ¹⁴C Rekord um die klimatische Signaturen, die in verschiedenen Archiven beobachtet werden, mit der um 20% erhöhten ¹⁴C Produktion zu synchronisieren, und untersuchen den interhemisphärischen Gradienten (IHG) – derm 14 C Unterschied von zeitgleich gewachsenen Baumrichen der nördlichen und der südlichen Hemisphäre. Der IHG ist über ∼600 Jahre hinweg erhöhte, kombiniert mit einer erhöhten Variabilität. Die Änderung des IHG wird auf mit drei Änderungen im Kohlenstoff Kreislauf zu Beginn der YD zurück geführt. Die Erste ist ein grosses solares Mimimum (wie zuvor erwähnt), das durch die erhöhte ¹⁴C Produktion einen ¹⁴C Gradienten hin zu den Polregionen verursacht. Dieser ¹⁴C Gradient wird durch eine zweite Komponente verstärkt, eine schwächere thermohaline Zirkulation (Meridional Overturning Circulation, MOC), die atmosphärisches ${}^{14}CO_2$ in der Nordhemisphäre erhöhen würde. Die erhöhte Konzentration würde weiter verstärkt durch die dritte Änderung im Kohlenstoff Kreislauf, verursacht durch einen erhöhten Zirkulation der Südozeans und erhöten Westwinden. Diese Änderungen würde das atmosphärische ${}^{14}CO_2$ auf der Südhemisphäre abreichern und den IHG erhöhen. Merkwürdigerweise werden die Änderungen im IHG in der Chronologie des Meerfelder Maars 100 Jahre früher als diejenigen der Jüngeren Dryas beobachtet. Wir vermuten, dass die Fehlerbreite der Zeitskala des Meerfelder Maar unterschätzt ist.

Neu Beiträge in dieser Dissertation:

- Neue und verbesserte Methodologien für AMS
- Neue Festlegung und Struktur von ${}^{14}C$ einer Abkühlungsphase
- Synchronisierung von Eiskernen
- Genaue Identifizierung des größten bekannten Grand Solar Minimum
- Entdeckung eines IHG Verlaufs in der Jüngeren Dryas, ausgelöst durch den Kohlenstoffkreislauf

Diese Dissertation wird als Referenz für zukünftige¹⁴C Studien dienen, die die ¹⁴C Kalibration verbessern und Änderungen im Kohlenstoffkreislauf der Vergangenheit verstehen wollen.

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation

On a fateful day in 2013, a technician (Daniel Nievergelt) from the forest, snow and landscape research institute was searching for a buried treasure that-with the right scientific tools-could tell a tale of climates long past. What was he looking for? To answer that question, we need to start at the beginning.

In 1929 A.E Douglass made use of tree-rings for dating ancient Indian ruins. In that he assumed tree-rings grow annually, where we now know of the possibility of missing tree-rings (Baillie and Munro, 1988) and that trees could be matched to each other by a common tree-ring growth signal (Douglas, 1929). By matching trees of different ages together, a chronology stretching in time could be built that Douglas (1929) termed dendrochronology. The tree-ring growth patterns of ancient Indian ruins were matched to a dendrochronological record that allowed Douglas (1929) to determine the exact year the runes were built. What he did not know was tree-rings could tell more than just time.

As tree-rings grow their width is dictated by local temperature and precipitation (LaMarche, 1974) with measurements ¹⁸O serving as a proxy (Pearman et al., 1976). The radiocarbon (^{14}C) concentration in tree-rings reflect ${}^{14}CO_2$ fixed from the atmosphere during photosynthesis (Suess 1980). ¹⁴C measurements over the last 8000 years from a dendrochronological record showed visible oscillation of ${}^{14}C$ with time, referred to as 'wiggles' (Suess, 1980). The ${}^{14}C$ wiggles were (and still are) a result of past changes to the ocean, Sun and geomagnetic field (Stuiver and Braziunas, 1993). These changes affected the premise of 14 C dating (Suess, 1980).

¹⁴C dating was built on the premise that the radioactive decay of ¹⁴C, which has a half-life of 5730 years (Godwin, 1962), equated to calendar years (Arnold and Libby, 1949). When in fact, a 14 C date can only be assigned to a calendar year through calibration. Hence the birth of a calibration curve made-up of ${}^{14}C$ dates derived from a dendrochronology record extending from 1950 AD (treated as the present) to 4450 years Before Present (cal BP) comprised of American trees (Stuiver and Becker, 1986). Now, the world's most extensive dendrochronological record used for ¹⁴C calibration comes from Germany, extending from the present to 12 410 cal BP (Friedrich et al., 2004). The oldest part of this chronology is in the Younger Dryas (YD) where in Germany and the rest of Northern Hemisphere had returned to near-glacial like conditions (Dansgaard et al., 1986; Brauer et al., 2008; Steffensen et al., 2008).

The YD began around 12.9 cal kBP marking the end of a warm period known as the Allerød (Steffensen et al., 2008). The Allerød-YD transition has been theorized to be a result of strong stormy conditions (Brauer et al., 2008), low solar activity (Renssen et al., 2000) and weak ocean circulation (Broecker et al., 1989) or a combination of all three (Renssen et al., 2015). Accurately placed ¹⁴C dates during this period would aid in our understanding of solar variability and ocean changes (Muscheler et al., 2000; Goslar et al., 2000; Muscheler et al., 2008; Hua et al., 2009; Hogg et al., 2016). Felix Kaiser and his colleagues tried to extend the German chronology record with floating Swiss chronologies (Friedrich et al., 2004; Kromer et al., 2004; Schaub et al., 2008; Hua et al., 2009; Kaiser et al., 2012) that proved inauspicious (Hogg et al., 2016). This was primarily due to different regional tree-ring growth conditions and limited 14 C overlap.

¹⁴C dates for the oldest part of the PPC are scarce with 12 dates spanning 425 years. These ¹⁴C dates were determined on a Gas Proportional Counter (GPC) that requires large sample sizes (> 15g) and measurement times up to 10 days (Kromer et al., 2004). Not all trees found were viable for ¹⁴C dating, leading to a total of 121 dates spanning 900-yr. The passing of Felix Kaiser in 2012, ceased efforts to extend the German chronology and improve the ¹⁴C record in Allerød-YD. Until that fateful day in 2013 where a technician discovered a tree-stump at a construction site in Zürich, Switzerland.

Figure 1.1: Tree stumps recovered from a construction site in Binz, Zürich

Frequent trips to the construction site yielded 253 well-preserved pine (Pinus sylvestris L.) tree- stumps (Fig 1.1), a subset (n = 10) of which were ¹⁴C dated. These dates spanned the gap between the absolute German chronology and Swiss floating chronologies. Hence, these pines trees (henceforth known as Binz trees) along with decreased sample size and increased throughput of ${}^{14}C$ dates by Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) offered the potential to accurately place and increase the number of ${}^{14}C$ before and during a cooling event. This would further tie into ${}^{14}C$ calibration as well synchronization of paleoclimate records during this period. In an endeavour to do just that as well as improve dendrochronological links and temperature reconstruction using δ^{18} O a proposal was submitted to the Swiss National Foundation (SNF).

The SNF proposal was accepted (proposal number 200021L-157187) with three PhDs funded. The first PhD Frederick Reinig was given the task to find dendrochronological links between the German chronology and Swiss trees. The second PhD Maren Pauly was given the task reconstructing temperature. And the third PhD, myself was selected to measure 14 C by AMS. Thus, the focus of this dissertation is to: improve on existing AMS 14 C dating techniques, accurately and precisely extend the tree-ring based ¹⁴C record during the Allerød-YD and synchronize other paleo-records allowing for an investigation into changes in the ocean, Sun and geomagnetic field.

1.2 Measurement techniques for ¹⁴**C**

While the majority of this dissertation is focused on improving existing AMS techniques of ¹⁴C dating (Chapter 2 and 3) and the application of 14 C dates (Chapter 4) it is relevant to discuss the history and evolution of 14 measurement techniques.

 $14¹⁴C$ measurement began with Gas Proportional counters (GPC) that detected the electrons originating from beta decay of ${}^{14}C$ (Libby, 1961). These measurements were initially limited to environmental levels of ¹⁴C unless laboratories were built deep underground (Loosli et al., 1980).

Eventually, with improvements of detectors and removal of gas impurities-that scavenge electrons or produce false positives (Kromer and Münnich, 1992 and references therein)- samples as old as 14 cal kBP could be measured (Kromer et al., 2004). While impressive, a significant drawback still existed for GPC; the relatively large amount of material (>15g of wood) and measurement times (g*leq* ten days) required. These drawbacks stem from indirect measurements of ¹⁴C.

Directly measuring ¹⁴C atoms may seem trivial with mass spectrometers existing nearly since the beginning of the 20th century (Aston, 1919) but direct measurements of ^{14}C atoms presented two fundamental problems 1) it has a natural abundance of 1 part per trillion and 2) measurements of ¹⁴C atom can be overshadowed by a natural competitor nitrogen (^{14}N) and molecular interferences. The advent of AMS solved these problems.

Figure 1.2: Stardard MICADAS set-up. Beam path's interaction with the components of an MICADAS (see chapter 1.2) is shown as red line. Image modified from Synal et al. (2007).

While AMS systems come in a variety of shapes and sizes (Suter, 2004), they all operate under the same fundamental principles. First, a negative ${}^{14}C$ ion beam¹ is created that suppresses the enormously abundant 14 N isobar as 14 N is incapable of forming negative ions (Bennett et al., 1977; Muller, 1997). The negative ion beam (E/q) can sometimes pass through an ElectroStatic Analyser (ESA) which selects ions with a specific energy. The beam is then subjected to an accelerator tube with a pulsing potential to ensure carbon isobar beams ${}^{12}C$ and ${}^{13}C$ have the same momentum as ¹⁴C (Suter et al. 1984). Alternatively, a bouncing magnetic field can be applied that acts a momentum filter (Sie et al., 2000). Irrespective of the method used to select the beam, a magnet is always used as momentum filter. This magnet is often called the low energy magnet as afterwards the beams travel to a tandem accelerator. Here the beams of carbon are accelerated to a terminal with a considerable potential that can be up to several MeV. The carbon beams then pass through a gas or a foil where they are stripped of their charge. The newly formed positive carbon beams are accelerated to a ground potential, which can be mathematically represented as $E = (q + 1)V$ (Fifield et al., 1999 and references therein). The stripping of the charge state rapidly breaks up molecular isobars either through coulomb explosion and/or molecular collision with an inert gas (Lee et al., 1984). This stripping process thus reduces the molecular isobar by several factors (Litherland, 1980; Lee et al., 1984; Suter et al., 1999). The accelerated beam is passed through another magnet acting as momentum filter, denoted as the high-energy magnet. The emerging

¹a positive ion source mass spectrometer has been developed by Freeman et al. (2015) but is beyond the scope of this dissertation

 ${}^{12}C^+$, ${}^{13}C^+$ and ${}^{13}C^+$ beam (derived from ${}^{13}CH^+$) are collected in Faraday cups (Synal et al., 2007). The $14C⁺$ beam continues pass the Faraday cups where it can be subjected to another mass filter magnet and almost always passes through an ESA to a gas ionization chamber (Fifield et al., 1999; Suter, 2004; Synal et al., 2007). This chamber can contain isobutane as it has high stopping power and has a substantial ionization efficiency-creating electron-ion pars that can be counted (Oed et al., 1988).

All of the 14 C dates produced during this dissertation derive from a compact AMS called MIni CArbon Dating System (MICADAS, Ionplus) that follows the principles as mentioned above with the distinction of having a pulse system on the low-energy side and gas-filled stripper (Synal et al., 2007). The advantage of a MICADAS over a GPC relates to sample throughput. Samples older than two half-lives required 1-3 day measurement times on a MICADAS while a GPC would require (for similar precision) a minimum of 10 days (Kromer et al., 2004). A general overview of a MICADAS is given in Fig 1.2.

1.3 Atmospheric ¹⁴**C**

Beyond the application of atmospheric ${}^{14}C$ to serve as chronological tool (see motivation), atmospheric 14 C can be used to investigate paleo- changes in the ocean, Sun and geomagnetic field as these processes are capable of regulating the concentration of atmospheric ^{14}C (Stuiver and Braziunas, 1993). The production of ${}^{14}C$ occurs in the upper atmosphere through the interactions neutrons (n◦) derived from cosmic ray particles and nitrogen atoms:

$$
^{14}N + n^{\circ} \rightarrow ^{14}C + proton
$$

The extent of cosmic rays entering the upper atmosphere can be modulated by the geomagnetic field (Mazaud et al., 1991; Laj et al., 1996; Hughen et al., 2004; Beer et al., 2012). This kind of modulation is observed as long trends (>1kyr) in 14 C production, which can only result from changes to the geomagnetic dipole strength as cosmic rays are deflected several Earth radii from the Earth surface (Mazaud et al., 1991; Beer et al., 2012). These changes in the dipole strength have occurred over the last 800 kyr with the most recent known as the Laschamp event taking place around 41 cal kB (Guyodo and Valet, 1999). More recent and readily occurring modulations of cosmic rays are a result of solar variability.

The Sun can modify atmospheric 14 C production on a daily, monthly, yearly and century basis (Beer et al., 2012) as cosmic rays passing through the magnetic field of the heliosphere are deflected (McDonald, 1998). The daily and monthly variations in the magnetic field of the heliosphere are not perceived in atmospheric ${}^{14}C$ archives due to yearly integration times (Stuiver and Quay, 1980; Bard et al., 1997; Solanki et al., 2004; Miyahara et al., 2007; Muscheler et al., 2007; Miyahara et al., 2010; Beer et al., 2012; Nagaya et al., 2012; Güttler et al., 2013; Usoskin, 2017). Yearly changes derived from the heliosphere can be small with a periodicity of 11-years having amplitudes upwards of 2.5‰ in $\Delta^{14}C$ (Stuiver and Quay, 1980). These 11-year cycles have been associated with the appearance of Sunspots. Sunspot variations are known as the Schwabe cycle (Hoyt and Schatten, 1998) and the prolonged absences of Sunspots are considered to be solar minima (Stuiver and Quay, 1980). These minima can vary in strength and duration -ultimately seen in Δ^{14} C- with the most considerable and abrupt change observed at 7430 cal BP (Miyake et al., 2017). This minimum was theorized to be either an unknown phase of the Sun or a grand solar minimum in combination with successive solar proton events. Large solar minimums are believed to be the driving force behind the Little Ice age that occurred in the period AD 1300-1850 (Mauquoy et al., 2002; Mann et al., 2009). A solar proton event is likely the cause of a significant increase in Δ^{14} C seen between AD 774-775 (Miyake et al., 2012; Usoskin et al., 2013) and AD 993-944 (Miyake et al., 2013), which are hazardous to spacecraft's and astronauts (Xapsos et al., 2000). To investigate solar proton events, Schwabe cycle and solar minimums has led to a plethora of new annually resolved, high precision ${}^{14}C$ dates derived from tree-rings set to enter next iteration of the

Figure 1.3: A simplified global carbon box model from the IPCC report, with values given in PgC $(1 \text{ PgC} = 10^{15} \text{ gC})$ and annual carbon exchange fluxes (Ciais et al. 2013)

international calibration curve. An added benefit of highly resolved high precision data sets allows for the investigation of oceanic variability.

Unlike the geomagnetic field and the Sun, the ocean variability does not affect production but rather varies the concentrations of atmospheric ${}^{14}CO_2$ (Siegenthaler et al., 1980; Stocker and Wright, 1996). $CO₂$ is affected by carbon cycle with the most significant reservoir exchanging on timescales of ≥ 1 kyrs being the deep ocean (Fig 1.3; Siegenthaler et al., 1980; Stocker and Wright, 1996). Atmospheric ¹⁴C derived from floating tree-ring chronologies (Kromer et al., 2004) observe abnormal increases during the YD that were associated (in part) with a downturn of deep ocean ventilation (Muscheler et al., 2000; Muscheler et al., 2008). However, a similar study of atmospheric ¹⁴C derived from lake sediments indicated the changes observed in the YD could be explicable through solar modulation (Goslar et al. 2000). The different results from Muscheler et al. (2000 and 2008) and Goslar et al. (2000) can be associated with different atmospheric ¹⁴C proxies containing high calendrical uncertainties and low resolution. Irrespective, these studies and those involving SPE as well as geomagnetic field variations require atmospheric ^{14}C to be coupled to 10 Be.

 10 Be atoms are produced by high energy neutrons derived from cosmic rays analogous to 14 C production (Beer et al., 1994). Whereas ${}^{14}C$ is additionally affected by the carbon cycle, ${}^{10}Be$ is transported directly on aerosol to natural reservoirs such as ice-cores, reflecting production rates more directly (Beer et al., 1994; Bard et al., 1997; Muscheler et al., 2000; Muscheler et al., 2008). These effects can be disentangled by either converting atmospheric ${}^{14}C$ to production signal or ¹⁰Be into atmospheric ¹⁴C both of require the use of box model (Beer et al., 1994) that was outlined by Oeschger et al. (1975) and Siegenthaler et al. (1980).

1.4 The cooling event: Younger Dryas

The YD was an abrupt return to near glacial like conditions with the disappearance of megafauna in the Northern Hemisphere (NH), recognized as early as 1901 in European pollen sequences (Hartz and Milthers) and clearly seen in Greenland ice cores (Johnsen et al., 1992; Alley et al., 1994). While several other proxies provide evidence for the YD, two things remain unclear 1) the cause and 2) the timing.

1.4.1 The cause of the Younger Dryas

Broecker et al. (1989) first proposed that a partial collapse of the Laurentide Ice sheet, which subsequently fed into the North Atlantic ocean, caused a complete collapse of the North Atlantic Deep Water (NADW) formation that lasted the duration of YD. As a result of the atmosphere over the ocean, which is usually warmed by the NADW, remained cold and consequently cooled Europe and North America (Broecker et al., 1989). Almost 20 years after Broecker et al., theory little to no evidence was found for the proposed path and source of fresh leading Broecker (2006) to conclude "our inability to identify the path taken by the flood is disconcerting." A year later, evidence of catastrophic flow (in support of Broecker et al., 1989) dated to 12.9 cal kBP-based on foraminifera found at the mouth of St. Lawrence estuary (Carlson et al., 2007)-was criticized by Peltier et al. (2008). Peltier et al. noted that previous studies in this area found no evidence of freshwater flux at 12.9 cal kBP. It was not until 2010 when Murton et al. discovered a 13 cal kBP flood path evident from gravels and regional erosion surface passing through the Mackenzie River to the Canadian Arctic Coastal Plain. The authors also rejected that the collapse of the Laurentide Ice sheet was solely eastward into the North Atlantic ocean and consequently would not result in a complete collapse of NADW.

Further studies indicated that the flow of fresh water coming from the Arctic would reduce the NADW by >30% (Condron and Winsor 2012) in agreement with McManus et al., (2004) observation of a rapid increase in $^{231}Pa/^{230}Th-a$ kinematic proxy for the meridional overturning circulation-around 12.8 cal kBP. However, a reduced NADW does not fit to previous models that assumed a full collapse as a trigger for the YD (Manabe and Stouffer, 1997). Strong winds were evident at the onset of YD from a paleoclimate record from Germany.

A floating lake sediment chronology from Meerfelder Maar (MFM), Germany extending to ∼14 cal kBP (Brauer et al., 1999) contained consistently thick varves after ∼12.7 cal kBP. These thick varves were accompanied by the cessation of siderite as a result of stormier conditions linked to changes in the Atlantic ocean and consequently mark the onset of YD in Germany (Brauer et al., 2008). Prior to onset of YD, an increase in ${}^{14}C$ from floating chronologies (Hajdas et al., 1998, 2003; Wohlfarth et al., 1998; Goslar et al., 2000; Kromer et al., 2004) was related to weak solar forcing.

The combination of weak solar forcing, stronger winds and weakening of the NADW were demonstrated to be key mechanisms involved in the onset of the YD (Renssen et al. 2015). However, the exact the magnitude of the forcings and interactions between them remain unclear. Further, by Renssen et al. own admission this does rule out the comet impact theory.

The comet impact theory that remains highly debated is instead of the collapse of the NADW, the impact of an asteroid would have released light-blocking dust into the sky, cooling North America (Firestone et al. 2007). South of the impact fiery projectiles would set forests alight, resulting in soot increasing the blockage of light and adding to the cooling (Kennett et al. 2008, 2009). Other groups could not detect the geochronological evidence proposed by Firestone et al. and the forest could have resulted from natural processes (see Pinter et al., 2011). The recent detection of an impact crater on Greenland, which evidence suggests it is between 100 to 12 cal

kBP old or even millions of years old (Kjaer et al., 2018) has renewed this theory with a twist. As Greenland at this time was covered in ice, a comet impact would have resulted in a massive amount of freshwater entering the Atlantic Ocean with similar to results to Broecker et al. (1989) theory, but indications for such a flood remains elusive.

1.4.2 The timing of the Younger Dryas

The exact timing of the onset the YD remains tentative. In GRIP (Johnsen et al., 1992), GISP2 (Alley, 2000) and NGRIP (Steffensen et al., 2008) ice-cores the onset of the YD is $12\,700 \pm 100$, 12 750 \pm 50 and 12 896 \pm 1.5 cal BP, respectively. While GRIP and GISP2 used δ^{18} O as an indicator for the onset of VD. NGPIP the ice core with the highest resolution used deuterium excess $(d - \delta D$ the onset of YD, NGRIP-the ice core with the highest resolution-used deuterium excess ($d = \delta D 8 \delta^{18}$ O). Deuterium excess is a parameter that contains information on fractionation effects caused
by the evaporation of source water that showed a 2-3‰ increase at 12.896 + 1.5 cal BB representing by the evaporation of source water that showed a $2-3\%$ increase at 12 896 \pm 1.5 cal BP representing a 2 to 4 K cooling of marine moisture (Steffensen et al., 2008). This shift is approx. 200 years before varve thickness increase and cessation of siderite occurs in MFM.

The cause for this discrepancy is still unclear. It could be that because both NGRIP and MFM have chronological uncertainties due to ice-ring or varve counting, respectively or there the 200-year delay is a mechanism of paleoclimate change that we have yet to understand.

The high resolution $14C$ introduced in this dissertation aims to investigate solar variability during the YD (Chapter 3) and carbon cycle changes (Chapter 4).

1.5 Organization and objectives of this dissertation

This dissertation is structured in six main parts.

Chapter one is the introduction. It starts with the motivation for this work, and then three main subjects surrounding this dissertation. The first is an overview of the evolution measurement techniques, and the MICADAS used to produce a half-a-million CHF worth of ¹⁴C measurements in this dissertation. The second is an overview of the paleo-environmental applications of atmospheric 14 C. The third is a summary of the mysteries surrounding a cooling event known as the Younger Dryas.

Chapter two presents the published paper in the journal of Radiocarbon© Speed Dating: A rapid way to determine the radiocarbon age of wood by EA- AMS, which was submitted before the end of the first year as PhD. Speed Dating represents a breakthrough in gas-based AMS dates that before were primarily used for samples with low carbon content. Instead of going through 'conventional' AMS preparation (see chapter 3) for wood samples, directly combusting and measuring the resulting $CO₂$ increased sample throughput by 15x, reduced the cost by a third with uncertainties of 2%. The Speed Dating technique was used to identify Binz trees of interest for this project (Reining et al., 2018).

Chapter three introduces a paper accepted with revision(01/2019) submitted to the journal of Radiocarbon[©], Quality Dating: A protocol for reproducible high precision ¹⁴C dates applied to Late Glacial wood. This publication highlights the lack of protocols available to the academic community to ensure high precision ${}^{14}C$ measurements. The majority of high precision ${}^{14}C$ studies (a google search yielded 895 results) are not accompanied by measurements controls in place at the laboratory but often rely on guidelines set out by Intcal. Primarily an intercomparison study, which are also lacking (see Chapter 3); therefore, we introduce protocol that discusses quality assurances in place at ETH along with an intercomparison study. As a case study, we present new high precision dates for the Germany absolute chronology that fill a gap in IntCal13. It is our goal that this publication will serve as a guideline for other labs and create similar studies.

Chapter four reveals the extension of the absolute German chronology through wiggle-matching to Swiss trees that can also be confirmed by a tentative cross-dating performed by F. Reinig. Also, this chapter contains the calendrical placement of Swiss floating tree-ring chronology based on

¹⁴C wiggle-matching. The placement of the chronologies along with 170^{14}C dates from the Quality Dating publication amounts to the largest density of high precision ¹⁴C- a total of 1780 spanning before and after the YD. The ${}^{14}C$ dates are used to estimate production, which enables an investigation of solar variability in the YD. This chapter is presented in the format of Nature Geoscience and was submitted May 2019. This paper is titled, There goes the Sun: Reconstructing atmospheric ¹⁴C reveals prolonged solar minimum in the Younger Dryas.

Chapter five is a discussion on the InterHemispheric Gradient (IHG) during the YD. The IHG is the occurrence of tree-rings growing at the same time having different hemispheric ${}^{14}C$ ages, which is controlled by the carbon cycle. In particular, the IHG is governed by more expansive ocean and strong winds in the Southern Hemisphere for the Holocene. We use the high-resolution and high precision measurement produce for this dissertation accompanied by an independent record from France and a well replicated Southern Hemisphere chronology to determine precisely the IHG. A long-lasting elevation in the IHG is discussed in relation to known climatic changes during the YD derived from various paleo-records. This defined IHG also highlights calendrical uncertainty in the critically important Meerfelder Maar chronology.

Chapter six brings us to the final section of this dissertation, the summary and outlook.

Chapter 2

Finding the right match through Speed Dating

This chapter contains the published version of Speed Dating: A rapid way to Determine the radiocarbon age of wood by EA-AMS (DOI 10.1017/RDC.2016.76), reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press©. This paper was submitted within the first year of PhD and generated press in Germany. The paper is followed by a brief discussion on how Speed Dates were used to a build a dendrochronology record.

2.1 Speed Dating: A rapid way to Determine the radiocarbon age of wood by EA-AMS

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SPEED DATING: A RAPID WAY TO DETERMINE THE RADIOCARBON AGE OF WOOD BY EA-AMS

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ABSTRACT. Radiocarbon measurements in tree rings can be used to estimate atmospheric ¹⁴C concentration and thereby used to create a ¹⁴C calibration curve. When wood is discovered in construction sites, rivers, buildings, and lake sediments, it is unclear if the wood could fill gaps in the ${}^{14}C$ calibration curve or if the wood is of historical interest until the age is determined by dendrochronology or ¹⁴C dating. However, dendrochronological dating is subjected to many requirements and ¹⁴C dating is costly and time consuming, both of which can be frivolous endeavors if the samples are not in the age range of interest. A simplified 14C dating technique, called Speed Dating, was thus developed. It can be used to quickly obtain ¹⁴C ages as wood samples are neither chemically treated nor graphitized. Instead, wood is combusted in an elemental analyzer (EA) and the $CO₂$ produced is carried into an accelerator mass spectrometer (AMS) with a gas ion source. Within a day, 75 samples can be measured with uncertainties between 0.5–2% depending on the age, preservation, and contaminants on the material and Speed Dating costs about one-third of conventional AMS dates.

KEYWORDS: 14C, AMS dating, Speed Dating, MICADAS.

INTRODUCTION

Radiocarbon dates are routinely performed on tree rings of archaeological and naturally deposited wood as a dating tool and/or for determining past atmospheric 14 C concentration. When wood remnants are discovered at construction sites and in rivers, lake, and bog sediments, the absolute age often remains completely unknown until a dendrochronological and/or 14 C date can be established. The same is true when the date of historical artifacts (e.g. wooden art objects or construction time of buildings) is to be established. ¹⁴C dating is of special importance as dendrochronological dating is subjected to many requirements (existence of chronologies, minimum number of rings, species, etc.) and is therefore often not immediately applicable (Cook and Kairiukstis 2013). While 14 C dates are typically applicable, conventional 14 C analysis by accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) is relatively time consuming and expensive.

Conventional 14C AMS measurements of wood involve chemical treatments to extract cellulose (Hoper et al. 1998; Brock et al. 2010; Němec et al. 2010). The cellulose is then converted to graphite by combustion and reduction, which can take several hours (Vogel et al. 1984; Xu et al. 2007; Wacker et al. 2010a). The graphitized samples are then analyzed by using an AMS fitted with Cs sputter sources (Vogel et al. 1984; Fifield 1999; Synal et al. 2007; Synal 2013), which are capable of high-precision measurements down to 2‰ on a modern sample (Calcagnile et al. 2005; Wacker et al. 2010b, 2014). This entire process is expensive and it can take over a week to prepare and measure 25 samples along with standards and blanks. As ${}^{14}C$ analysis by AMS requires an extraordinary amount of work, many samples that are collected are never dated and remain in storage. Advances in gas measurements of $CO₂$ by AMS (Bronk Ramsey et al. 2004;

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Fahrni et al. 2013; Ruff et al. 2007) and coupling of an elemental analyzer (EA) to an AMS (Kieser et al. 2010; Ruff et al. 2010; Salazar et al. 2015) offer a novel way to ¹⁴C date wood samples.

Here, we present a new method, called Speed Dating, that supersedes chemical preparation and graphitization to quickly ¹⁴C date wood material. The objective of Speed Dating is to quickly determine (1) if the material falls into a time period interest of where data are scarce and, consequently, (2) whether the site where the material was discovered should be revisited to collect more samples.

METHOD

Sample Preparation and Measurement

All samples, standards, and blanks contained approximately 200 µg of carbon and were wrapped in aluminum capsules $(4 \times 4 \times 11 \text{ mm})$, Elementar, Germany). For a standard, we used oxalic acid II (OXII, NIST SRM 4990C), for a chemical blank we used phthalic anhydride (PhA, Sigma-Aldrich, PN-320064-500 g), and as wood process blanks we used brown coal and kauri wood that are both older than 100,000 yr BP. The wrapped material is placed into an EA (vario MICRO cube, Elementar) where the material is combusted by flushing with oxygen for 50 s and the $CO₂$ produced is fed with helium carrier gas into a gas interface system (GIS, Ionplus).

In the GIS, the $CO₂$ is collected in a zeolite trap and then released into a gas syringe. The syringe is used to slowly inject CO_2 mixed with helium as carrier gas, into the ion source of a Mini Carbon Dating System (MICADAS, Ionplus) (Ruff et al. 2010; Wacker et al. 2013). The carbon concentration is kept consistent for all materials at $100 \mu g$ by pumping away excess $CO₂$. The initial setup and tuning is done on $CO₂$ combusted from OXII standard mixed with helium (1:20 v/v). In a procedure of about 15 min, we tune the ionization extraction potential, beam steerers in the x and y direction on the low-energy end, and the low- and high-energy magnets. More details about tuning a MICADAS can be found in Wacker et al. (2010b). The flow rate of $CO₂$ in helium carrier gas is adjusted to obtain maximum 12° current (Fahrni et al. 2013; Wacker et al. 2013). Typically, a flow rate of 2.5 µg carbon per minute is supplied to the ion source and a ${}^{12}C^+$ current of 6–10 μ A is measured in a Faraday cup placed after the accelerator. Detailed measurement parameters of an EA-GIS-MICADAS can be found in Fahrni et al. (2013). These measurements require minimal supervision.

Approximately 75 samples along with standards and blanks can be analyzed in a day. The EA can hold up to 120 samples at a time and samples can be continuously loaded while measurements are running. The gas cathodes used for the measurement are exchanged in a magazine every 38th sample while the measurement is running. A single sample is measured for 10–12 min, while the total time from combustion in the EA to the end of the 14 C analysis takes 13–15 min. The measurement of a single sample can be repeated in case a higher counting statistic, and thus a potentially higher measurement precision, is desired. Samples were bracketed by standards to detect any potential time-dependent variation. The estimated crosscontamination for an EA-AMS setup is less than 0.4% (Ruff et al. 2010). To limit correction from cross-contamination between samples with large differences in ${}^{14}C$ concentration (e.g. measurements of a standard followed by a blank), a duplicate was measured and the first measurement was considered void. Data reduction for Speed Dates and conventional AMS dates were done with the BATS program as described by Wacker et al. (2010c), in compliance with data processing for conventional AMS measurements.

During the course of a measurement, it seldom occurred that a sampled had to be remeasured. This could occur when an aluminum capsule becomes stuck in the EA sampler holder and fails to drop into the combustion tube or the inlet for $CO₂$ on a cathode is closed (Fahrni et al. 2013). These samples could be easily repeated by adding a duplicate at the end.

To evaluate the difference between Speed Dates and conventional AMS dates, samples from AD 770 were cellulose extracted using base-acid-base-acid-bleaching (BABAB) (Němec et al. 2010), and graphitized using an EA-AGE-3 (Wacker et al. 2010a).

DISCUSSION

Blanks and Standards

We measured the carbon content of aluminum capsules (Elementar, Germay) to be \sim 1 µg by combusting multiple capsules in an EA and measuring the resulting $CO₂$ concentration. To limit the effect of constant contamination from the Al capsules, we used sample weights of 200μ g of carbon. The measured 14 C content for the kauri and brown coal process blanks and the phthalic anhydride (PhA) process blank are given in Table 1. The kauri and brown coal process blanks showed a marginally higher level of contamination with a larger standard deviation than the PhA blanks. All blanks were weighed and wrapped in aluminum capsules at the same time and one would expect the same blank value for PhA and the process blanks. However, PhA comes from a stock bottle and the kauri and brown coal blanks are from relatively large pieces of wood that had to be cut into smaller sample sizes. By cutting these pieces of wood, we may have introduced minor ${}^{14}C$ contamination that explains the marginally higher ¹⁴C content. As all woods were cut, the brown coal and kauri were considered to be appropriate for blank subtraction.

Three measurement campaigns of the standard OXII using the EA-GIS-MICADAS show a scatter that is in good accordance with the quoted measurement uncertainties (Figure 1). Standards were analyzed for 10–12 min until roughly 25,000 counts of ¹⁴C were measured. The standard deviation was 0.008. This is due to counting statistics and the additional 0.4% uncertainty we add as sample scatter to account for variability of gas measurements by AMS (Bronk Ramsey et al. 2004; Fahrni et al. 2013; Wacker et al. 2013).

Measurements and Uncertainties

The uncertainties associated with AMS measurements arise from counting statistics, and the stability of the measurement over time (Wacker et al. 2010c). In addition, Speed Dating of untreated wood may have an additional offset compared to conventional AMS dates of cellulose because lignin and other parts of the wood (Gaudinki et al. 2005) or contamination

Figure 1 Fraction modern (^{14}C) values for 34 OXII samples that were analyzed by EA-GIS-MICADAS. Measurement times were between 10 and 12 min (25,000 counts of 14 C).

Figure 2 Mean Speed Dates and conventional AMS measurements for annual resolution between 770 and 780 BC. Speed Dates were done in triplicates.

from the matrix where samples were stored, which may have younger or older ^{14}C content than cellulose of a specific year.

We tested for any offsets of Speed Dating on annually resolved wood samples for the period AD 770–780, i.e. relatively modern wood. We measured this 10-yr period in triplicate and the same samples were dated conventionally (Figure 2). The mean Speed Date uncertainty was $\pm 0.5\%$ (± 40 yr).

Two Speed Dates showed a slightly younger ${}^{14}C$ age than that of conventional AMS dates of cellulose. This is could be due to lignin or other parts of the wood that change over time as these compounds would introduce younger ${}^{14}C$ (Gaudinki et al. 2005). If the sample uncertainty is increased to 0.8%, Speed Dates and conventional AMS dates are within 2 standard deviations. In any case, Speed Dating provides a rapid estimate of ^{14}C age for relatively ^{14}C modern samples with acceptable precision.

Speed Dating was used to analyze 110 undated subfossil trees that were never ^{14}C dated as a contribution to the ongoing construction and extension of early Holocene and Late Glacial tree-ring chronologies (>10,000 BP). The samples age were determined to be between 14,500 to

Figure 3 Calibrated Speed Dates using IntCal13 (Reimer et al. 2013) for 110 samples plotted with two Northern Hemisphere tree chronologies, CELM and PPC (see text). The span of a data point indicates the calibrated calendar age range based on Speed Dating results.

11,000 BP with uncertainties of 1–2% (80–160 yr) (Figure 3). These are acceptable uncertainties when the aim is to add a time constraint to material with no chronological context.

In addition, through Speed Dating we were able to suggest a rough chronological placement for trees that were older than 10,000 BP. The trees were placed around the Central European Lateglacial Master chronology (CELM) (Kaiser et al. 2012), and the Preboral Pine Chronology (PPC) (Friedrich et al. 2004) (Figure 3). Consequently, Speed Dating eliminated a vast majority of samples that were not of interest because these trees overlapped with CELM and PPC where already a large number of trees exist (Friedrich et al. 2004; Kaiser et al. 2012). However, 17 trees fell within the range of 12,700–11,100 BP, a period of time where Northern Hemisphere data are lacking in IntCal13 (Hogg et al. 2013; Reimer et al. 2013).

These were then dendrochronology matched (Table 2) with the expectation that the material could strengthen the tree-ring chronologies, possibly filling gaps in the Northern Hemisphere IntCal13 data set (Reimer et al. 2013) and/or potential link the floating CELM chronology to the absolutely dated European master chronology. Out of the 17 samples that were subsequently successfully dendrochronologically matched, two Speed Dates did not fall within the measurement uncertainty of the 14 C calendar range and were older than the dendrochronology date. This is not likely due to lignin or other parts of the wood that change over time as those compounds would introduce younger ¹⁴C (Gaudinki et al. 2005). We speculate that theses samples have traces of older ${}^{14}C$ because of oil/gas residue, e.g. from when they were sampled in the field with a chainsaw or chalk used to mark the tree-ring numbers. Additionally, for sample ETH-61541, the outermost rings were sampled; thus, these rings may have had contact with carbonates or old carbon compounds from the surrounding soil. Normally, all of these contaminants would be removed by chemical pretreatment. Still, Speed Dating was capable to date those trees within ±400 yr of the true age determined with the dendrochronology.

Time Consumption and Costs

Up to 75 unknown samples can be analyzed with Speed Dating per day. The measurements require minimal user input (at least every 3 hr) and is extremely efficient compared to conventional dating techniques. Conventional AMS dating requires the subsequent processes of (a) cellulose preparation (2 days), (b) graphitization (2–5 days), and (c) measurement (1–2 days). Meanwhile, Speed Dating can yield results in a single day. We estimate the cost of Speed Dating samples to be less than one-third that of conventional AMS dating.

CONCLUSIONS

Speed Dating offers a rapid way to estimate the 14 C date for wood material as it is faster than conventional AMS measurements at roughly one-third the cost. Up to 75 wood samples can be analyzed within a day. The achieved measurement uncertainties were with 0.5–2% (60–160 yr), depending on the age of the wood. In this respect, Speed Dating is not an application to replace or be used in substitute for conventional high-precision measurement. Rather, Speed Dating can be used to add in an efficient way a time constraint to previously undated material to determine if the sample(s) or a site(s) warrants further investigation.

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2.2 Consequences of Speed dating Binz trees

Speed dates of several Binz trees were used in part to confirm dendrochronology links and assign dendrochronology calendar ages by F. Reinig (Fig 2.1). The Speed Dates I measured as part of joint effort are given in appendix.

Figure 2.1: Various Binz chronologies with pre-existing Swiss chronologies, modified from Reining et al. (2018)

Surprisingly, the majority of Binz trees were either too old or too young to connect to absolute German chronology or extend Swiss floating chronologies, except Binz group 7. No dendrochronology cross-date between this group and those of Kaiser et al. (2012) were discovered by Reining et al. (2018). In lieu of this, we decided to 14 C date Binz group 7 and re-date Kaiser et al. (2012) chronologies to wiggling-match chronologies. To minimize uncertainties in wiggle-matching of chronologies requires high-precision ¹⁴C dates.

The term 'high-precision' is used quite often with a lack of protocols available to the academic community. By and large, a quality insurance test proposed by IntCal is an intercomparison. These studies (although only a handful exists) may mention chemical methods applied to analytes but normally focus on laboratory offsets (Adolphi et al. 2013; Hogg et al. 2013).

In an effort to ensure the ${}^{14}C$ dates produced in this study were precise we implemented quality insurances from the first set measurements until the last 14 C date, totaling 1705. The quality protocol we are trying to introduce to academic community is presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

A protocol for high precision ¹⁴**C dating**

This chapter contains the paper accepted with revision (01/2019) that was submitted to the journal of Radiocarbon. This paper summarize the methodology we used at ETH to ensure high precision and accurate ¹⁴C dates produce in this dissertation.

3.1 Quality Dating: A protocol for reproducible high precision ¹⁴**C dates applied to Late Glacial wood**

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3.1.1 Abstract

Advances in accelerator mass spectrometry have resulted in an unprecedented amount of new highprecision radiocarbon (14) -dates, some of which will redefine the international 14 C calibration curves (IntCal and SHCal). Often these datasets are unaccompanied by detailed quality insurances in place at the laboratory, questioning whether the ${}^{14}C$ structure is real, a result of a laboratory variation or sample-scatter. A handful of intercomparison studies attempt to root out laboratory offsets but may fail to identify sample-scatter and are often financial constrained. Here we introduce a protocol, called Quality Dating, implemented at ETH-Zürich to ensure reproducible $\&$ accurate high-precision 14 C-dates. The protocol highlights the importance of the continuous measurements and evaluation of blanks, standards, references and replicates. This protocol is tested on an absolutely dated German Late Glacial tree-ring chronology, part of which is intercompared with the Curt Engelhorn-Center for Archaeometry. Together with CEZA, a dataset containing 170 highly-resolved, highly-precise ¹⁴C -dates supplement and restructure three decadal dates spanning 280 cal. years in IntCal.

3.1.2 INTRODUCTION

Radiocarbon (14) dating can be used to determine the age of an object or for reconstruction of past atmospheric and oceanic ${}^{14}C$ concentrations. While a calendrical age of a ${}^{14}C$ -date(s) is determined through calibration (IntCal, SHCal), reconstructed concentrations are derived from a variety of archives. These ¹⁴C-archives, in turn, form the backbone of IntCal (Reimer et al 2013a) and SHCal (Hogg et al. 2013a); the touchstone for which are tree-ring chronologies. Tree-rings, can be dendrochronologically dated with absolute certainty from 1950 AD (considered present) to ∼ 12k Before Present (BP; Friedrich et al. 2004) and are direct measure of atmospheric ¹⁴C (Becker 1993; Kromer and Becker 1993; Stuiver and Pearson 1993; Friedrich et al. 1999; Reimer et al. 2013b). Single tree-rings serve as means to reconstruction atmospheric ^{14}C with annual resolution. Annual ¹⁴C -dating of trees is possible thanks to the relatively small sample-size (\geq 10mg) required for an Accelerator Mass Spectrometer (AMS) date. New annual or high resolution AMS ¹⁴C -dates help to establish 'wiggles' and identify rapid increases in atmospheric in IntCal and SHCal.

The origin of a 'wiggle' can be the result of a production or concentration change (Stuiver and Braziunas 1993), with rapid increases associated to solar forcing (Miyake et al. 2012; Miyake et al. 2013; Büntgen et al 2018). Production changes to ${}^{14}C$ are inversely related to solar activity and are correlated to changes in the geomagnetic field. Rapid increases (year-to-year change) have been discovered twice in tree-rings (Miyake et al. 2012; Miyake et al. 2013; Büntgen et al 2018) that are speculated to be of solar flare (Usoskin et al. 2013), which can negatively impact astronauts and the international space station (Xapsos et al). In addition, tightly calendrical constrained, well-defined 'wiggles' and solar flares will help reduce the uncertainty of a ¹⁴C -date(s) calibration to IntCal and SHCal. However, before datasets containing such features are incorporated into IntCal or SHCal , they must be tested for their consistency and reproducibility. (Reimer et al. 2013b).

Intercomparsions focus on the reproducibility of a set of unknowns and fruitfully determine any potential laboratory offsets (Adolphi et al. 2013; Hogg et al. 2013b). These studies are often expensive and time consuming, thus not always feasible for every ${}^{14}C$ laboratory nor every ${}^{14}C$ project. To identify internal issue many laboratories have quality insurances in place but are not published, making it difficult to ascertain whether the ${}^{14}C$ structure in a dataset is real, a result of a laboratory variation or sample-scatter.

Here we present ETH's protocol to ensure reliable, reproducible high-precision 14 C dates: "Quality Dating." As a case study, we apply the Quality Dating protocol to ${}^{14}C$ dates on Late Glacial wood from 12.16-11.88 kBP, where only three decadal dates exits in IntCal13 (Reimer et al. 2013a) and intercompared our results with the Curt-Engelhorn-Zentrum for Archaeometry (CEZA).

3.1.3 METHOD

Dendrochronology

Tree-Ring Width (TRW) measurements were from at least two radii of each sample using a LINTAB measuring device with a precision of 0.01 mm and the software program TSAPWin (Rinn, 1996). The TRW measurements were visually and statistically cross-dated using t-values (tBP) and Gleichläufigkeit (Glk) indices (Baillie and Pilcher, 1973) in TSAPWin. Chronologies were established and checked with Cofecha (Holmes, 1983). Individual trees (BREI0232, COTT0418) were selected by wood quality, length and positioning within the developed chronologies (Friedrich et al. 2004) for 14 C dating. Whole tree-rings were sampled with a mixture of biennial to septennial dependent on the width of single-rings. The dendrochronological linkages from Preboreal Pine Chronology (PPC)-Cottbus (Cott) and PPC-Breitenthal (BREI) can be seen in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: The t-value and Glk values for the dendrochronological linkage of PPC chronologies around 12 kBP are given.

Sample Preparation and Measurements

A chemical blank, Phthalic Anhydride (PhA, SigmaAldrich, PN-320064-500 g), was used to detect contamination from the graphitization process and the MIni CArbon DAting System (MICADAS). Fossilized wood "Braunkohle" (BK, also known as brown coal is lignite from Reichwalde, Gemany) and kauri wood (KB, MIS 7, New Zealand) were used as process blanks. Standards were Oxalic acid II (OXII, NIST SRM 4990C) and Oxalic acid I (OXI, SRM 4990B). The reference, a 10-year block of kauri wood (TK121) is from the Younger Dryas, a period of time representative of the samples introduced in this study, dated to 10968 $\pm 21^{14}$ C yrs (1- σ ; Hogg et al. 2013b). The samples BREI0232 and COTT418 are pines (*Pinus sylvestris L*) from the PPC. These pines were part of a larger discovery in Breitenthal and Cottbus, Germany (Friedrich et al. 2004).

Process blanks, reference material and samples were chemically treated to extract cellulose. Cellulose is a component of wood that has remained unchanged over time and is necessary for an accurate ¹⁴C -date (Hoper et al. 1998; Brock et al. 2010; Sookdeo et al 2017). Cellulose was extracted in batches of 56 (2 TK121, 2 BK, 2 KB and 50 samples) using a modified base-acidbase-acid-bleaching method outlined by Němec et al. (2010). The modified method involved an over the weekend base step at 60◦C and the second acid step was a wash, which resulted in whiter cellulose than the method outlined by Němec et al. (2010). The extracted cellulose was placed in a freeze dryer overnight. For each of the standards, blanks and samples 1mg of carbon were placed inside aluminum capsules $(4 \times 4 \times 11 \text{ mm})$, Elementar) and closed. These capsules were placed into an Elemental Analyzer (EA, Vario MICROcube, Elementar) sample holder.

Samples, standards and blanks were dropped into the heated chamber of an EA one at a time, where oxygen gas was fed in for 50 sec to facilitate the combustion of carbon to carbon dioxide, which was captured in a zeolite trap. The estimated cross-contamination between capsules in an EA is less than 0.6‰ (Wacker et al. 2010a). Nevertheless, to limit cross-contamination between blanks, standards and samples, two pre-conditioning blanks, standards or samples were run to deterge the system before sampling. The pre-conditioning materials were combusted in the EA, loaded onto the trap and then discarded. The graphitized materials were pressed into aluminum cathodes (Ionplus), organized and placed in the sample holder of a MICADAS (Ionplus), known as a magazine.

One magazine contained seven standards, either four OXI or three OXII or vice versa, one PhA, four process-blank (two BK, two KB), two TK121 and 25 samples. Samples were bracketed by standards to detect any potential time-dependent variation. Magazines were measured on a MICADAS at the Laboratory of Ion Beam Physics, ETH-Zürich (Synal et al. 2007; Wacker et al. 2010b). Measurements times varied between two or three days or until the uncertainty on a samples' ¹⁴C -age were approx. 21 years (200 000 ¹⁴C counts). Data reduction was carried out with the BATS program as described by Wacker et al. (2010c), in compliance with data processing for AMS measurements.

As an opportunity to further test the methodology used at ETH, 72 identical samples were sent to, prepared at and the ^{14}C age determined at CEZA on their MICADAS. These samples are given labelled identifier 'MAMS.' The samples, process blanks and reference materials measured at CEZA were treated identically to extract cellulose. The applied cellulose method was a base (overnight; 4% NaOH)-acid (30min; 4% HCl)-base (30min; 4% NaOH)-bleaching (at least 60min; pH 3 NaClO2) with all steps undertaken at 60◦C. The bleaching was repeated until material turned white after which the material was washed thoroughly with deionized water. Samples were dried in an oven at 80◦C and approx. 1mg of carbon was placed in aluminum capsules (Elementar) and combusted in an EA (Vario MIRCOcube, Elementar). Samples were either graphitized on an in-house system or an AGE-3 (Ionplus). The custom graphitization system used a liquid-nitrogencooled trap in contrast to the zeolite trap of an AGE-3. Graphite was compressed into aluminum cathodes (Ionplus). In addition, to the 72 samples mentioned above, 23 and three samples from the PPC were measured at ETH-Zürich and CEZA, respectively.

3.1.4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Blanks

The distribution of 33 combustion blanks (PhA), and 164 process blanks (BK and KB) are compared in figure 3.2. While a PhA blank is typically indistinguishable from a process blank, the mean F^{14} C values differ (p \ll 0.05) with 0.00132 ±0.00005 (1- σ ; 53.3k ¹⁴C yrs) compared to 0.00164
+ 0.00003 F¹⁴C (1. σ ; 51.7k ¹⁴C yrs), respectively. The more degrade fossilized wood (BK) \pm 0.00003 F¹⁴C (1- σ ; 51.7k ¹⁴C yrs), respectively. The more degrade fossilized wood (BK) is indistinguishable from the better preserved Kauri wood (KB), though its cellulose yield was reduced by approx. 30%.

Figure 3.2: Distributions of F14C for 166 process blanks (Kauri and Brown coal wood, red) and 33 chemical blank (PhA, green) measured at ETH-Zürich over 2 years are fitted with normal distributions (red lines).

The difference between the combustion and process blanks arises as the combustion blank is

not subjected to the cellulose extraction treatment. The role of the PhA is to detect any potential contamination during graphitization and target preparation, but is not used for data reduction as it tends to underestimate ${}^{14}C$ introduced during sample processing. Rather, the process blank, for which we observed on average as larger $F^{14}C$ (figure 3.2), are used for background correction with a $F^{14}C$ of 0.0003 was used for the error propagation.

To appropriately estimate ${}^{14}C$ background and variability, we suggest having at least four process blanks per 25 samples – the first step of our protocol.

Standards

Standards of OXII, OXI or another compound with a known ¹⁴C concentration are used to determine the $F¹⁴C$ value for a sample. The linearity of standard normalization in between months and years of measurements is rarely reported. Over the course of two years, a mixture of seven OXII and OXI per magazine measured at ETH is extremely consistent (Wacker et al. in press). The mean $F^{14}C$ for 77 OXII normalized to OXI was 1.340119 ± 0.000184 (1- σ), in good agreement with the consensus value of 1.34066 ± 0.00043 (1- σ ; Mann 1983; Stuiver 1983). The strong reproducibility consensus value of 1.34066 ± 0.00043 (1- σ ; Mann 1983; Stuiver 1983). The strong reproducibility of our standards was not affected by different cation $(^{12}C^{+}$ and $^{13}C^{+})$ currents measured between magazines (Wacker et al. in press). In addition, the uncertainties of the individual standards, as well as the samples, have a relative 1‰ added for the reproducibility of the analysis, including preparation. The additional uncertainty was estimated from the reproduction of the reference material and the intercomparison with Mannheim. While a drawback of multiple standard can be time (if more are required) and cost (if a new standards have to be order), the added benefit, leads us to the second step of our protocol, always measure various standards in replicates.

Reference material

The results of reference material provided crucial information on whether sample preparations along with 14 C measurements are reproducible. TK121, a 10-year block of wood from the towai chronology (Hogg et al. 2016) serves as a reference for this study, as it has 1) been ¹⁴C-dated by five different laboratories-with a consensus age of 10968 ± 21^{14} C yrs (1- σ ; Hogg et al. 2013b), 2) no large year-to-year variations (Hogg et al. 2016) and 3) a representative ${}^{14}C$ age and composition to the samples presented in this study. The TK121 measure over the course of two years at ETH is given in figure 3.3.

The mean ¹⁴C age was determined to be 10 954 \pm 2 (1- σ) with a variability of \pm 20. A normalized χ^2_{red} -test performed on TK121 yield a value of 0.72. A significance level (α) of 0.05 for a dataset of this size, is 0.76 indicating our uncertainties are precise with a tendency to 0.05 for a dataset of this size, is 0.76, indicating our uncertainties are precise with a tendency to be conservatively overestimated. However, this could be the result of the well preserved nature of kauri wood, and not justifiable to reduce our ¹⁴C uncertainties for other samples. Therefore, the uncertainties quoted here and on German Late Glacial wood are not reduced. Rather these uncertainties include contributions from the variability of the background (± 0.00003 in $F^{14}C$), standards (± 0.000184 in $F^{14}C$), counting statistics (approx. ‰) and 1‰ for the reproducibility of the analysis. The uncertainties for 81 TK121 are all within the $1-\sigma$) of Hogg et al. (2013b). Hence, the third step of our protocol is to measure two references per 25 unknowns.

Intercomparison between CEZA and ETH-Zürich on late-glacial wood

Intercomparisons unlike internal references or duplicates can identify laboratory offsets (Adolphi et al. 2013; Hogg et al. 2013b). Late-Glacial tree-rings measured at ETH generated structure (see Extension of the PPC) not visible in IntCal13. More so, this structure is reflected in the 72 identical samples chemically extracted, graphitized and ${}^{14}C$ dated at CEZA (see methods), which are in excellent agreement in a distribution of differences, figure 3.4.. The mean of this distribution was determined to be -3 $\pm 4^{14}$ C yrs (1- σ) with a χ^2_{red} of 1.06.

Figure 3.3: ¹⁴C age for 81 reference samples (TK121, green) measured at ETH-Zürich with their mean value $(1-\sigma)$ limits, red lines) and the nominal value (black, see methods).

This χ_{red}^2 value is an indication that the calculated uncertainties in both laboratories were
continued which is in slight contrast to our findings based on the references. While appropriately estimated, which is in slight contrast to our findings based on the references. While in principle the increased χ^2_{red} of the replications compared to the reference material could be
explained by a possible underestimation of uncertainties by CEZA, we think the increase χ^2 explained by a possible underestimation of uncertainties by CEZA, we think the increase χ^2_{red} is more likely due to the different state of preservation of the wood samples. Thus the excellent agreement between CEZA and ETH validate the Quality Dating protocol implemented on Late Glacial wood. It is not realistic for all laboratories to be able to have the time and afford the work necessary for an intercomparison. Therefore, the fourth step of our protocol is to either have an intercomparison (ideally) or measure at least every fifth unknown in duplicates.

Extension of the PPC

The oldest part of world's longest absolute chronology, the PPC, has three decadal 14 C-dates covering a period between 12 160 to 11 880 cal BP in IntCal13 (Reimer et al. 2013a). Together with the CEZA we introduce 170 high-precision ${}^{14}C$ -dates that fill this period with high temporal resolution and structure, 3.4b. The ¹⁴C record starts with a plateau at 12.16 cal kBP lasting over 200 cal. years - unprecedented in IntCal13 (Reimer et al. 2013a) with less variation than the Hallstatt plateau. This plateau has two small visible ${}^{14}C$ wiggles, before it is truncated by a 110 ¹⁴C yrs (13‰ in Δ^{14} C) change within 40 calendar years, not evident in the decadal measurements within IntCal13. This extension of the PPC will be submitted to the next iteration of Intcal. The structure introduced for this period is neither a result of large sample scatter nor laboratory offsets because of the excellent agreement with CEZA.

Figure 3.4: a) Histogram of ¹⁴C age differences for the same samples prepared and measured separately at ETH-Zürich and CEZA (grey), overlaid with a normal curve (red). b) ^{14}C ages for dendrochronological dated tree-rings of the PPC measured at ETH-Zürich (red) and CEZA (yellow) are compared with the latest calibration curve IntCal13 curve (blue).

3.1.5 CONCLUSION

Advances in AMS measurements have led to a rush of high precision, timely resolved ¹⁴C-dates but paucity exists on discussions of quality insurances. The here presented Quality Dating protocol at ETH ensures reproducible, accurate and precise ${}^{14}C$ -dates by:

- Having samples accompanied with process blanks rather than combustible blanks
- Running multiple standards of varying 14 C concentrations
- Continual measurements of references that is comparable in age and composition to the sample
- Replication of measurements, ideally by another laboratory

This confirms proper background correction, robust standard normalization and reproducible results. By no means is this the only way to ensure high-precision ${}^{14}C$ -dates and we hope that other 14 C laboratories will published their own protocols in the near future.

3.1.6 Acknowledgments

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Chapter 4

Redefining ¹⁴**C 'wiggles' and their origins before and during a cooling event**

Quality dating was implemented for all 1705 samples produced at ETH during this dissertation. This chapter reveals the extension of the absolute German chronology through wiggle-matching to Swiss trees that confirmed tentative dendrochronology cross-dated performed by F. Reinig. Moreover,additional cross-dates performed by F. Reinig are in agreement with wiggle-matches of trees within Swiss chronologies. In light of dendrochronology cross-date between the absolute chronology and Swiss floating chronologies, Swiss chronologies were wiggle-matched to a New Zealand towai chronology (Hogg et al., 2016). The increased replication and synchronization of dendrochronologies enables an investigation of solar forcing in the YD. This paper it titled: 'There goes the Sun: Reconstructing atmospheric ${}^{14}C$ reveals prolonged solar minimum in the Younger Dryas' is presented as it was submitted to Nature Geoscience.
4.1 There goes the Sun: Reconstructing atmospheric ¹⁴**C reveals prolonged solar minimum in the Younger Dryas**

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Abstract

The Younger Dryas (YD) is marked by an abrupt return to near glacial-like conditions, ending the conversion to a warmer, interglacial climate. The radiocarbon (14 C) record for this period is composed of an absolutely dated (ending in 1950 AD) tree-ring chronology -the 'golden standard' for 14 C calibration. Efforts to extend the absolutely dated chronology further into the YD have proven frivolously due weak tree-ring overlap and low 14 C replication. Here we introduce the principal density of high-precision annual tree-ring 14 C-dates (n =1610) that in part extend the absolute 14 C record. This extension anchors within ±6 cal yr (2- σ) a well replicated floating New Zealand chronology and in-turn the remainder of our chronologies within ± 8 cal yr (2-σ). ¹⁴C production estimates shows a 40% increase in the YD that occurs within a century, which is greater than any continuous rise in the Holocene. The duration of this steep rise is caused by reduced solar activity that is potentially larger than previous estimates. This work will help align the sequence of climatic events in the YD and subsequently provide a framework for probable outcomes of solar forcing coupled to anthropogenic induced changes.

MAIN

The Earth has undergone several large climatic shifts, the most recent of which (excluding global warming) is the Younger Dryas (YD), starting near 12.9 cal kBP (before 1950 AD) 1 . The YD is denoted by a rapid cooling event that occurred faster than those induced by the movement of mass ice sheets, which are called 'Henrich' events (ref 2 and references therein). Input of fresh water from Henrich events reduced the strength of the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation, leading to a general cooling³. Unlike, Henrich events ice-rafted debris in the YD is limited $4, 5$ and shutdown of the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation was not as prominent^{6, 7}. Hence, other theories suggest that YD event was not solely caused by changes to ocean circulation and instead occurred through a combination of reduced solar forcing and altered atmospheric circulation^{8, 9, 10}. These changes could have occurred through either natural processes or a comet impact¹¹ for which the timing is debatable¹². Timing of natural processes such as altered atmospheric circulation, temperature changes in Europe and solar variability relay on accurate and precise radiocarbon (14) C) calibration.

The 'golden standard' for 14 C calibration are tree-rings as they 1) commonly form annually incorporating atmospheric 14 C for that year and 2) can be cross-matched from tree-to-tree creating dendrochronologies. Dendrochronologies are considered to be absolutely dated if the record ends in 1950 AD, otherwise they are considered 'floating' in time. The most extensive absolutely dated dendrochronology is the German Preboreal Pine tree-ring Chronology (PPC) (ref 13 and references therein). The PPC start date remains at 12 325 cal BP despite attempts to extend the record further back due to weak dendrochronological links¹³ and ¹⁴C overlap¹⁴. Treering dates younger than 12 325 cal BP are predominantly from German and Swiss floating dendrochronologies¹⁵. ¹⁴C-dates made on the absolute and floating dendrochronologies are mostly decadal blocks with low temporal resolution^{13, 15} -the exception being high-precision ¹⁴Cdates on the PPC between 12 160- 11 880 cal BP (Sookdeo et al. submitted). The decadal dates of floating ¹⁴C records have been repositioned calendrically over the years, with matches to marine records¹⁵, dendrochronologies from the Southern Hemisphere¹⁶ and the common cosmogenic production signal of 10 Be in ice-cores^{17, 18}. The most recent attempt to position

Swiss and German dendrochronologies used wiggle-matching against an extensively replicated and continuously decadally $14C$ -dated floating New Zealand dendrochronology, named "towai" $14, 19$. The calendrical placement of the towai relied on 18 dates wiggle-matched to less precise dates from the PPC resulting in a calendrical uncertainty of ±14 years (2-σ). In the following we present the highest density of annual 14 C-dates (n= 1610) made on Swiss trees, which redefines and synchronizes placements of dendrochronologies to investigate solar activity during the YD.

RECONSTRUCTING ATMOSHPHERIC RADIOCARBON

The oldest of the 14 ^c-dates introduced here are positioned calendrically through a combination of wiggle-matching (see supplementary table) and tentative dendrochronology dates to the PPC (Reining et al. submitted). The extended PPC increases the number of 14 C measurements by a factor of six and allows for unmatched precision and accurate wiggle-matching of the towai, which is shifted ten years younger than its current placement with an improved uncertainty of six years (2-σ), within the 95% CI previous placement¹⁴, Fig. 1. The new placement of the towai anchors two Swiss floating dendrochronologies, ZHYD1 (formerly YD-B) and SWILM.

The ZHYD-1 is now a factor of four times more resolved and repositioned by seven decades $(\pm 8$ cal yr, 2-σ) compared to 2013 addition of the international calibration curve (IntCal13)²⁰ and is within the 95% CI of Hogg *et al.*¹⁴ placement. In addition, the ZHYD1 shows larger amplitudes changes than original decadal 14 C-dates¹⁵ submitted to IntCal13 that are more in line with towai but offer improved constrains on fast events occurring within the decades, Fig.1. The number of 14 C- dates derived on the SWILM chronology has increased by factor of three and has be calendrical repositioned by four decades (±8 cal yr, 2-σ) compared to IntCal13 and is outside the 95% CI of Hogg *et al*.¹⁴ placement. This discrepancy is due to the low replication and resolution of ¹⁴C on the SWILM when it was first wiggle-match to the towai accompanied by a sharp 40‰ in Δ^{14} C rise carrying more weight when trying to minimizing the difference. Our new SWILM record is well replicated both before and after the steep rise in 14 C, enabling placement to the towai that is without equal. The new placement of the SWILM was used to wiggle the French barbier chronology²¹, which was originally "visually tuned" to the towai, Fig. 1.

Figure 1 Terrestrial 14C records in the YD. Individual trees measured for this study are given in the legend with their respective dendrochronology denoted as symbols: PPC (green squares), ZHYD1 (red circles), and SWILM (blue diamonds). The towai chronology (black inverted arrow; Hogg et al., 2016) is shifted bases on a wiggle-match to the PPC. In turn, the shifted towai was used to position ZHYD1 and SWILM. The barbiers (yellow pentagrams; Capano et al., 2017) positioned against the SWILM. Tree-ring data from IntCal13 (Reimer et al., 2013a) are plotted (blue *) and the smooth random walk curve (blue fill). 14C calendar ranges are given for the PPC (green line), ZHYD1 (red line), SWILM (blue line) and towai (black line). The number of 14C measured as with bin sizes of 65 cal years are given for IntCal13 (blue; Reimer et al, 2013) German trees of the PPC (green; Sookdeo et al., in press), Barbier (yellow; Capno et al. 2018;) and this study (red).

PRODUCTION

The structural changes in 14 C during the YD could have resulted from production variations that are driven by solar and geomagnetic forcing, with amplitudes modulated by reduced deep ocean ventilation^{22, 23}. Solar forcing, was proposed to behind upwards of 80‰ changes in $Δ^{14}C$ observed in marine sediments and corals in YD⁸. However, bi-decadal 14 C measurements on two Polish lake sediments²⁴ along with floating tree-ring measurements¹⁵ showed smaller amplitudes of 40% in Δ^{14} C that were either associated with natural variations or ocean driven. In addition, by matching floating tree-ring chronologies to common cosmogenic production signal of 10 Be derived from ice-core, GISP2 revealed an offset in amplitudes that were postulated to be a result of a 30% reduced deep ventilation¹⁷. Later measurements of 10 Be on ice-core, GRIP showed inconsistences with measurements on GISP2 that have yet to be reconciled²⁵. It is difficult to decide, which ice-core record is accurate when comparing common production signatures to the new 14 C record as perfect agreement between 10 Be flux and 14 C cannot be expected¹⁷. Nevertheless, with the new ¹⁴C record we can estimate production levels using a carbon box model assuming Holocene-like conditions (Brehm et al. submitted) after correcting for different atmospheric $CO₂$ concentrations²⁶.

The 14 C production for the YD and part of our record that captures the Allerød compared to the Holocene shows variable levels, Fig. 2. The Allerød and the onset of the YD –as defined in icecore NGRIP¹ – show ¹⁴C production variations that are close to Holocene. That is until a 40% increase at ~12.8 cal kBP in the YD, which is greater than any continuous rise in the Holocene (Fig 2b-d) leading to a 400-yr period where 14 C production is 20% higher than and gradually recovers to Holocene-like levels. During this 400-yr period production varies on century scales, which are likely solar driven.

Figure 2 14C production for the last ~13 cal kBP. a) 14C production for the last 1000-yrs of the Holocene (blue) is calculated from annual 14C made on tree-rings (Brehm et al. submitted) with the rest of Holocene and last 175-years of the YD (orange) based on tree-ring 14C dates in IntCal13 (Reimer et al. 2013). The remainder of the YD and the end of Allerød (pink) is based on 14C introduced in this study. b), c), d) are periods of the Holocene with visual large changes in production (black arrows) scaled to have a mean of 1 and compared to a scaled production from the YD. The boundaries of the YD are defined by deuterium excess from NGRIP (Steffensen et al. 2008)

Solar forcing was shown to be responsible for century variations the Wolf, Spörer and Maunder minima observed between \sim 600-100 BP²⁷, Fig. 2d. In particular, these minima corresponded to intervals of where Sun-spots were absents. While for the first time we are able to observe on average 11-year Sun-spot (Schwabe) cycles in the ¹⁴C record for the YD, we miss smaller $\Delta^{14}C$ modulation averaging below our precision of 1.6‰ (peak to peak, 1-σ), Fig 3. It is thus trying to ascertain whether these minimums in the YD are the result of absent Sun-spots but does indicate that the underlying mechanics of solar forcing are similar to what has been observed for the last 1000 years. The long-term 400-yr trend of a 20% rise in 14 C production in the YD could be the result of the Sun and a combination of the geomagnetic field or the ocean. However, estimates of the virtual axial dipole moment – a measure of the geomagnetic field strength- remain limited for the YD (ref²⁸ and references therein) and oceanic effects on 14 C production cannot be estimated without accurate measurements of 10 Be fluxes (see above).

SOLAR INFLUENCE ON THE ONSET OF THE YOUNGER DRYAS

Oceanic, solar and altered atmospheric circulation are currently speculated to have caused the YD that resulted from either an extra-terrestrial impact¹¹ or natural causes^{3, 8, 9, 10}. Initially, Firestone *et al.*¹¹ proposed an extra-terrestrial impact in America would cool the environment by releasing light-blocking dust particles, which was further exacerbated by soot released from forest set alight by fiery projectiles²⁹. In the absence of impact crater the theory remained debated³⁰ until one was discovered in Greenland¹². An impact in Greenland would (along with light emitting particles) release fresh-water into Atlantic Ocean, slowing down the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation. Beyond the large increase in 14 C production there appears to be no sign perturbation to the carbon-cycle as would be expected from extra-terrestrial impact. This along with the unknown timing of the extra-terrestrial impact¹² and elusive flood paths indicates natural variations caused the sequences of events in the YD. With recent studies and our new ¹⁴C record previous estimates of natural variations to the total solar irradiance in the YD may have been underestimated.

Figure 3 Spectral analysis of atmospheric Δ14C for the period, 12.8 - 11.9 cal kBP. (a) Wavelet anaylsis and (b) power spectrum (see methods). Horizontal dashes lines represent on average where 11-cycles are expected

Renssen *et al.¹⁰* proposed a change of 2 W m⁻² to the total solar irradiance that in combination with a three-year, 5 Sv freshwater pulse and altered atmospheric circulation led to the rapid onset of the YD. Recent estimate of total solar irradiance change between the Maunder minimum, which is speculated to have led to the Little Ice Age^{31, 32} and current minima ranges between 3.7 and 4.5 W m^{-2 33}. The increase ¹⁴C production at ~12.8 cal kBP is 40% greater than the Maunder minimum when both periods are scaled to have a mean of one (Fig. 2d). A reduced total solar irradiance of $\geq 4 \text{ W m}^{-2}$ could also diminish the need for a three-year, 5 Sv freshwater pulse to be more in-line with geological evidence of a one-year, 0.3 Sv ⁵. To test such features would require complex climate models, which is beyond the scope of this study.

OUTLOOK

Although, the ¹⁴C calibration curve along with solar variations are now precisely timed (\pm 6-8yrs, 2-σ), calibration of sediments records that give context to the YD remain hindered. Marcofossils ¹⁴C-dated in Polish lake sediments²⁴ and Kråkenes³⁴ are hinder by large uncertainties >11‰ in Δ^{14} C. Re-measuring these marcofossil with the new high-precision capabilities of accelerator mass spectrometry will help with capturing the sequence of climatic changes in the YD. The Meerfedler Maar record³⁵ can be re-calibrating by using decadal 14 C-dates of tree-rings¹⁵ that time the Laacher See eruption. This shifts Laacher See eruption by $\sim +XX$ cal years moving Meerfedler Maar chronology to younger ages. A shift to younger ages is in direct contrast to what has been proposed by aligning Vedda Ash tephra from different chronologies³⁶, which highlights chronological issues. Lastly, resolving issues in 10 Be of ice-cores will enable synchronisation of common production signature found in our 14 C tree-ring record teasing out solar and oceanic forcing. All of which, would provide a framework for testing probable outcomes of solar forcing coupled to anthropogenic induced changes.

METHODS

Subfossil pines (Pinus sylvestris L.) were discovered over the course of three decades with their dendrochronological links and geological context being discussed in detail^{16, 37, 38, 39}. Three trees were sampled from the youngest Swiss chronology (ZHYD3) with tree-rings sampled biennially, triennially and quadrennially. Six trees were sampled from the floating Zurich YD-1 (ZHYD-1, an

updated YD-B chronology), which includes tentative dendrochronological links to Binz trees (Reinig et al., submitted). Tree-rings were sampled from ZHYD1 annually except the youngest ¹⁴C-dated tree-rings due to narrow rings. From the floating YD-A chronology³⁷ two trees were sampled with tree-rings sampled annually to octennially as a consequence of narrow rings and a gap of 25 rings is present as a result of ring deterioration. Three pines were sampled from the floating SWILM chronology³⁸ with tree-rings sampled annually. A single tree was sampled in annual resolution with 14 C overlap to the SWILM but not cross-dated by dendrochronology (see results).

All dates performed on Swiss pines adhere to the Quality Dating protocol (Sookdeo et al., submitted) and were measured as graphite on an in-house Mini CArbon Dating system (MICADAS, Ionplus). In brief, cellulose was extracted using Němec et al. 40 base-acid-basebleaching steps, placed in a freeze dryer overnight, combusted and graphitized with an in-house AGE-3 system (Ionplus). Samples where measured in batches of 25 accompanied by seven standards, a mixture of oxalic acid I (OXI; NIST SRM 4990B) and II (OXII; NIST SRM 4990C), four wood process blanks- two brown coal wood and two kauri samples-one chemical blank, phthalic anhydride (PhA, Sigma-Aldrich,PN-320064-500 g), and duplicates of a reference material, TK121 with consensus 14 C age of 10968 ± 21 (1- σ)⁴¹. Samples were measured until >200 kcounts of ¹⁴C age per were obtained on the MICADAS. A least square (χ^2) distribution model was built in-house with MATLAB (R2017b; The MathWorks Inc™) to 14 C wiggle-match high-precision datasets. The least square function we used is defined by Ramsey et al. (2001) as:

$$
\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(x_i - x(t_s + \Delta t_i)^2}{\delta x_i^2}
$$

where $x_i \pm \delta x_i$ is ¹⁴C measurements, t_s is the death year of a tree and Δt_i are tree-rings relative to t_s. The reduced χ^2 distribution ($\chi^2{}_{\rm red}$) is obtained by dividing χ^2 by the degrees of freedom (n-1). To create equidistant data when possible the calendar ages were extrapolated based on the number of tree-rings with a constant ¹⁴C age and the uncertainty was multiplied by $\sqrt{}$ of the number of rings; otherwise, via linear interpolation. As such the degree of freedom is reduced

to n-2. For comparison of towai (Hogg et al., 2016) and this study's datasets, an additional loss of freedom (n-3) occurred with the consideration of interhemispheric gradient^{14, 42}. An additional uncertainty of 1‰ was added to account trees growing in different hemispheres. The uncertainties are reported within a 95% confidence interval (2- σ) based on a maximum value, F_{crit} from statistical tables.

Spectral analyses were carried with a Butterworth band-pass filter of 5 yr⁻¹ and 30 yr⁻¹, power spectrums were produced using MATLABS's built-in fast Fourier transform and wavelet analyses were generated with MATLAB's wavelet toolbox (The MathWorks Inc™, 2018).

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Supplementary information

Placements of chronologies

Extension of the absolute German chronology

The 95% CI of a wiggle-match of the ZHYD3 to the 170 high-precision ¹⁴C of PPC (Sookdeo et al., in press) falls within the tentative absolute dendrochronology link proposed by Reining et al. (submitted). The placement and subsequent placement of other chronologies discussed below can be found in Tab. S1. The ZHYD3 extension of the PPC introduces 389 nearly annually resolved 14 C in 150-years. This period contains a prominent 'wiggle' (10‰ in Δ^{14} C) at 12.2 cal kBP and an additional 'wiggle' (6‰ in Δ^{14} C) found at around 12.3 cal kBP, Fig.1.

Placement of the SH towai record

As the towai chronology was published with decadal 14 C dates (with up to five replicates per sample; Hogg et al.2016) the ¹⁴C dates of ZHYD3/PPC (henceforth referred to as PPC) were converted to weighted decadal blocks for wiggle-matching. The wiggle-match, after accounting for the different ¹⁴C ages of trees growing in North and South –the Interhemispheric gradient (IHG) – Fig.S1 shows good agreement with structures discussed by Sookdeo et al. (in press) and alignment with two prominent wiggles mentioned above (Fig.1).

Placement of the ZHYD1 and YD-A

Tentative dendrochronological links for trees within the ZHYD1 are supported ^{14}C in this study and stable isotopes work that is on-going by Reinig et al. The 635¹⁴C dates of ZHYD1 were converted to weighted decadal blocks for wiggle-matching to towai, in the same manner as the PPC. The agreement of a rise in ¹⁴C (18‰ in Δ^{14} C), a plateau, a decline (11‰ in Δ^{14} C) followed by another increase (25‰ in Δ^{14} C) and two prominent 'wiggles' (both 8‰ in Δ^{14} C) of the towai and ZHYD1 securely places the chronology (Tab. S1). The uncertainty of this placement and subsequent floating chronologies is the sum of squared uncertainties from the wiggle-match and that of the existing floating chronology.

The tentative dendrochronological link of the YD-A to ZHYD1 (Reining et al., submitted) is supported by a wiggle-match of 160¹⁴C dates from the YDA to ZHYD1, Tab. S1. The chronologies were combined for ensuing discussions. Calendrical and ¹⁴C overlap between the ZHYD1 and PPC is limited, Fig.1.

Placement of the SWILM, BINZ0020 and Barbier chronology

The 375¹⁴C dates SWILM chronology was wiggle-matched to towai in the same manner as the PPC and ZHYD1. The alignment of a climb in ¹⁴C (20‰ in Δ^{14} C), a plateau, two 'wiggles' (both 7‰ in Δ^{14} C) and intense increase of (35‰ in Δ^{14} C) in SWILM to towai, firmly places the chronology (Tab. S1). The 98 14 C dates from BINZ0020 were wiggle-matched to SWILM. In addition the barbier chronology was wigglematched to the SWILM placement.

Table S1 Placements of 14C dates by wiggle-match or dendrochronology. Chronologies from previous studies are PPC (Sookdeo et al., in press), towai (Hogg et al., 2016) and barbier (Capano et al., 2017). Wiggle matches are reported with a 2-σ uncertainty. An average IHG of 40 ±10 14C yrs (2-σ) was found between the chronologies. All dendrochronological placements corresponding to Reining et al. (submitted)

Figure S3 Wiggle-match of the towai chronology (Hogg et al., 2016) to extended PPC (see text). (a) Reduced chi-square model, values shown in blue are within the 95% CI. (b) The decadal ¹⁴C **averages of the extended PPC (green), the towai placement by Hogg et al., (2016; gray-blue) and the new position based on our wiggle match (black). The 14C age of the towai has be altered by - 35 14C yrs to account for interhemispheric gradient.**

Chapter 5

Trees in north, trees in the south

Here we present a discussion on the Interhemispheric gradient (IHG) during the YD. The IHG is the occurrence of tree-rings growing at the same time having different hemispheric ^{14}C ages, which is controlled by the carbon cycle. In particular, the IHG is governed by more expansive ocean and strong winds in the Southern Hemisphere for the Holocene. We use the high-resolution and high-precision measurement produce in this dissertation accompanied by an independent record from France and a well-replicated Southern Hemisphere chronology to determine precisely the IHG. A long-lasting elevation in the IHG is discussed in relation to known climatic changes during the YD derived from various paleo-records. This precisely defined IHG also highlights calendrical uncertainty in the critically important Meerfelder Maar chronology.

5.1 The Interhemispheric gradient during the most recent cooling

5.1.1 Introduction

The 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has reported that 1.5◦C global warming above pre-industrial levels will negatively impact: resources, biodiversity, ecosystems, food security, cities, tourism and extreme climate events (O. Hoegh-Guldberg et al., in press). The models used to describe such projections are based on scenario 'x' rather than a prediction. These projections, as well as scenarios, can be tested and better modelled by understanding the processes behind previous large-scale climate-change. Mass ice-sheet movements originating from the Laurentide ice-sheet towards the North Atlantic ocean are associated with rapid cooling in the Northern Hemisphere (NH; Broecker et al. 1994). These types of mass ice-sheet migration are seen as ice-rafted debris in ocean sediments (Henrich, 1988) and have become known as Henrich events. The input of freshwater to the North Atlantic triggers a reduced flow of warm Southern Hemisphere (SH) waters to the NH-formed by Meridional Overturning Circulation (MOC, Broecker, 1994). The reduced MOC creates colder airs over Europe, eventually leading to cooling over the entire NH (Broecker, 1994). The most recent cooling to near glacial-like conditions was the Younger Dryas (YD) but much remains uncertain about the origin and timing of events.

The onset of the YD is marked by similar temperatures to those associated with Henrich events but is notably quicker (Kindler et al., 2014) with limited evidence of ice-rafted debris (Broecker, 2006 and references therein). Flood pathways of the mass ice sheets suggested by Broecker et al. (1989) were discovered in St. Lawrence estuary (Carlson et al., 2007) and the Mackenzie River (Murton et al., 2010), both of which were radiocarbon (¹⁴C) dated (within uncertainties) to ~ 12.9 kyr BP (Before 1950 AD). The collapse of the MOC during the YD was predicted to be weaker than a Henrich event based on the multiple flood pathways not directed towards North Atlantic Ocean (Murton et al., 2010). In agreement with a kinetic proxy $(^{231}Pa/^{230}Th)$ for MOC that observed a smaller change in the YD than the first Henrich event (McManus et al., 2004). Such a weakened state of the MOC would not explain the cooling that marks the YD; thus, additional mechanisms

were proposed.

Initially, the comet impact theory hypothesized that an asteroid striking in North America would trigger the YD (Firestone et al., 2007). The impact of an asteroid would cool America through the release of light-blocking dust particles. South of the fiery impact, projectiles would set forests alight, resulting in soot that would advance the blockage of light and cooling (Kennett et al., 2008 &2009). In the absence of an impact crater in North American and non-reproducible geochronological evidence, the forest fires could have resulted from natural processes (Pinter et al., 2011). An impact crater found on Greenland, which could be millions of years old or as young as 12 kyr BP, has reignited the compact impact with a twist. The same light blocking particles would be emitted along with an injection of fresh-water from the impacted Greenland ice-sheet, but indications for such a flood remain elusive. In place of a comet, the effect on solar forcing was theorized to be by a weak Sun (Renssen et al. 2000).

A weak Sun was based on an increasing trend of ${}^{14}C$ (inversely related to Solar activity) seen in floating chronologies (Hajdas et al., 1998, 2003; Wohlfarth et al., 1998; Kromer et al., 2004). In chapter four we showed this increase was more significant than previously thought, better calendrically constrained and similarly we associated it to a grand solar minimum. Curiously, the grand solar minimum, which starts at $12\,810 \pm 20$ kyr BP $(1-\sigma)$ occurs about 100 years after the onset of YD in NGRIP ice-core that is defined by a substantial observed change in Deuterium excesses.

Deuterium excesses $(d = \delta D - 8 \delta^{18}O)$ is a measure of the fractionation effects caused by
portion of the source water. NGPIP at 12806 + 1.5 kyr BP is marked by an increase of d by evaporation of the source water. NGRIP at 12896 ± 1.5 kyr BP is marked by an increase of *d* by 2-3‰ associated to cooling transition (Steffensen et al., 2008). This uncertainty of *d* is relative to the ice-layers within the core of which has calendrical uncertainty of \pm 50 years (Muscheler et al., 2014). Ice-core GRIP, which is on the same time-scale as NGRIP observes a cooling of air temperature¹ also ∼200 years after the detected increase in marine moisture temperature (Steffensen et al., 2008). This is likely the result of delayed response or *d* being oversensitive during this period. No delay (within uncertainties) is seen for the onset of the YD in air temperature and indicators in Europe.

Figure 5.1: Weighted 10 year blocks means of ¹⁴C Sookdeo et al Capaneo et al. 2017 (orange). Part of the towai was measured in annual (n> 100) resolution at our lab (gray). And the towai chronology introduced by Hogg et al. 2016 (black).

¹Cooling of air temperature is observed as a decrease of ^{18}O in ice-cores (Pearman et al., 1976).

Sediment cores from Meerfelder Maar (MFM), Germany mark the onset of YD with consistently thick varves and the cessation of siderite after ∼12.7 kyr BP (Brauer et al., 1999 & 2008). The thick varves and absence of siderite were interpreted as indicators of stormier conditions that passed over a cold North Atlantic Ocean before entering Germany (Brauer et al., 2008).

Here we use the sharp rise in ${}^{14}C$ production (Chapter 4) and the Interhemispheric Gradient (IHG) to investigate the sequence of events surrounding the YD. The IHG is a measure of the difference in ¹⁴C ages of trees-rings growing at the same time in NH and SH (Cain & Suess 1976). For the Holocene, the IHG is observed to be 35 ± 3 ¹⁴C yr (1σ) , a result of more ¹⁴C-depleted CO₂ in the SH (see supplementary information). This depletion is considered to be a result of more in the SH (see supplementary information). This depletion is considered to be a result of more expansive ocean coverage along with stronger winds in the SH compared to NH (Cain and Suess 1976; Braziunas et al., 1995). A first attempt to determine any change in the IHG at the beginning of the YD was performed by Hogg et al. (2016) However, the measurement precision did not allow for a safe interpretation due to low sampling resolution on the NH record.

5.1.2 Results and discussion

A subset of tree-rings in the towai chronology was annual ${}^{14}C$ dated at our laboratory, figure 5.1. No visible discrepancies between annual towai measurements (n > 100) and Hogg et al. (2016) ensure that the IHG we observe is not a product of laboratory offsets (McCormac et al., 1998; Hogg et al., 2009a). The Barbier chronology (Capano et al., 2017) was incorporated into NH record of this study to further increase the robustness of the observed IHG. We use decadal weighted means of chronologies introduced in this dissertation and the Barbier chronology to compare to decadal blocks of towai measured by Hogg et al. (2016).

Figure 5.2: The IHG for 10 years block of the NH and SH, shaded blue errors indicated $1-\sigma$ uncertainties.

While the IHG for this period is similar to values observed in the Holocene, a remarkable increase of ~3 ‰ in Δ^{14} C), occurs around 12.8 kyr BP. After, the mean IHG remains elevated for \sim 600 years, with large fluctuations (\geq 4) before returning to Holocene-like levels, figure 5.2. The longevity of this IHG change cannot be explained by a reduced phase of the MOC, as it remains for the majority of the YD (McManus et al., 2004). Further, it is also questionable whether the IHG change is the result of a comet impact. A comet impacting Greenland around 12.8 kyr BP (Kjaer et al., 2018), should cause a distribution in the carbon cycle that would change IHG. This change would have dramatic and within a year or two eventually leading to sustained IHG for duration

Figure 5.3: ¹⁴C production (Chapter 4). GRIP ice-core $\delta^{18}O$ (Johnsen et al. 1992). Byrd
ice-core $\delta^{18}O$ (Blunjer et al.) EDML ice-core $\delta^{18}O$ (Enica community members 2006). Taylor ice-core δ
Glacial δ^1 ¹⁸O (Blunier et al.).EDML ice-core δ^{18} O (Epica community members, 2006). Taylor
³C CO₂ (Bayles et al., 2016).OCE326 GGC5 sediment core ²³¹ Ba/²³⁰Th (McManus et Glacial δ^{13} C-CO₂ (Bauksa et al., 2016).OCE326-GGC5 sediment-core ²³¹Pa/²³⁰Th (McManus et al. 2004). WAIS CO₂ (WAIS Divide project members 2015). NGPIP *d* excess (Staffensen et al. al., 2004). WAIS CO₂ (WAIS Divide project members 2015). NGRIP *d* excess (Steffensen et al., 2008). The gray patch indicates calendrical where an elevation of IHG occurred. Black and red vertical lines indicated the start and end dates of YD in the NGRIP and MFM, respectively.

of the YD. Neither of which, is visible in the IHG for the period. Thus the comet-derived crater

discovered by Kjaer et al. (2018) has to be older than 13 kyr BP. Without a comet, the elevated IHG must arise from some other forcing.

We consider a combination of three primary forces to be responsible for the observed IHG change, figure 5.3:

- 1. A grand solar minimum seen in the in production of 14 C.
- 2. A reduced MOC noted by McManus et al. (2004) as an increase $^{231}Pa/^{230}Th$.
- 3. More active Southern Oceans perceived as the anti-phase trend in ¹⁸O from SH ice-cores (Broecker, 1997; Stocker and Johnsen 2003) for which we have plotted Bryd & EDML.

A grand solar minimum would increase production of ${}^{14}C$ at the poles eventually causing a larger gradient due to the carbon cycle dynamics as the signal in SH is more dampened due to the larger surface of the ocean. Such an effect was most likely also seen with global measurements AD 774-775 event (Büntgen et al., 2018), where due to a globally increased 14 C production a stronger 14 C increase in the atmosphere was observed on the NH than the SH. Similarly, the combined effects of a grand solar minimum, weak MOC in the NH (enriching atmospheric $^{14}CO_2$) and increase SH ocean (depleting atmospheric ${}^{14}CO_2$) would further drive the IHG. The stronger SH westerlies winds that are associated with cold phases of the North Atlantic oceans (Anderson et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2011) would also deplete ${}^{14}C$ in the SH. The change in the westerlies winds may not be constant but frequently reoccurring, explaining the significant variations in the IHG (figure 5.2). These variations may also be the result of an increase in biological pump activity, which is associated with the rise of CO_2 and decreasing δ^{13} C-CO₂ (Bauska et al. 2016). While
there is relatively linearly increase of CO₂ (WAIS) and gradual decline of δ^{13} C-CO₂ (Taylor) there there is relatively linearly increase of CO_2 (WAIS) and gradual decline of δ^{13} C-CO₂ (Taylor) there may have been more sporadic changes not captured because of the resolution of the ice cores. may have been more sporadic changes not captured because of the resolution of the ice cores. These sporadic changes would introduce depleted $^{14}CO_2$ from the SH ocean, affecting the IHG. The above changes are synchronous with the beginning of the IHG change and also corresponds to (within calendrical uncertainties) the onset of YD in GRIP.

The onset of YD in GRIP proposed by Johnsen et al. (1992) is 12700 ± 100 kyr BP and in agreement with the beginning of the change in the IHG (figure 5.3). NGRIP is not with change *d* excess occuring ∼100-yr before the IHG (Steffenson et al. 2008). This ∼150-yr difference could again point to a delayed response of marine moisture and air temperatures changes or oversensitive of *d* excess for this period. The start of IHG change does not align with the onset of YD in MFM at $12\,680 \pm 50$ kyr BP (Brauer et al., 1999).

This begs the question, are the calendrical uncertainties in the MFM underestimated? Underestimated calendrical uncertainties would explain why the forcing mentioned above, that affect the IHG does not affect varve and siderite formation until ∼100 years later in the MFM. If the start date of YD in the MFM were to be shifted to start of the IHG, it would still align with the onset and agree with the end date of the YD recorded in GRIP (figure 5.3). However, this shift would then disagree with Lane et al. (2013) finding that Vedda ash (another tephra marker) in MFM should be shifted younger to align with other records containing Vedda ash. It is, therefore, uncertain were the calendrical issues in lie in the MFM and should be the study of future investigation.

5.1.3 Conclusion

The IHG allows for new insights into the timing of paleoclimate events that resulted in a general cooling of the NH. The IHG allows primarily detecting changes in the carbon cycle and thus adds important information for a better understanding of the cause of the YD cold event. The study presented here relies heavily on high-resolution and high precision measurement on the SH as well as the NH to determine precisely the IHG. We measured a significant increase in IHG starting at ∼ 12.8 kyr BP, delayed about 150 years compared to the increase in the deuterium excess in Greenland ice cores, which defines the onset of the YD. The IHG offset changes back to pre-YD and Holocene levels after roughly 600 years. We think the observed change in IHG is a result of three major forces influencing the carbon cycle:

- A grand solar minimum
- A reduced Meridional Overturning Circulation
- More active Southern Oceans accompanied by increase in SH westerlies wind.

The onset of the YD in the MFM chronology is outside the 95% CI for calendrical onset of the elevated IHG, which is possible due to have underestimated of the MFM. One feature remains unsolved, why the IHG returned before the end YD.

Supplementary information

This weighted mean of the IHG is calculated based on values in table S.1. It ignores IHG observed by Stuiver and Braziunas (1998) because of an issue with radon-blank corrections and values between AD 245-335 due to 30% of data points be anomalously low (see Hogg et al., 2009)

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Chapter 6

Summary and outlook

On that fateful day in 2013, the 253 Binz trees were discovered leading to (in part) this dissertation. One of the main goals of the project was to extend the absolute German dendrochronology with Binz trees, a preliminary ${}^{14}C$ dating of ten trees overlapped and extended several hundred to thousands of years older than the absolute chronology. Thus began my PhD: to methodological find and date the 'right' trees, place those trees precisely on calendrical time-scales and finally figure out the underlying story behind those dates.

The technique used to date those ten trees involved a chemical process, along with measurement times that could last several days. Determining the ${}^{14}C$ age of remaining Binz trees would take \sim 10 weeks. We deliberated if there was a way we could somehow skip or reduce the chemical processes involved, leading to the creation of Speed Dating. Speed Dating, made use of the existing Elementar Analyzer (EA) coupled to a MICADAS, which had limited applications. The EA was used to combust wood samples with the resulting $CO₂$ -a fraction of which contains ¹⁴C-measured on the MICADAS. This application of EA-MICADAS, Speed Dating was shown to have:

- Robust standard normalization
- Reproducible blanks
- accurate ${}^{14}C$ dating of reference materials
- Capable of 14 C dating samples older than 25 kyr.

The Speed Dating application increased sample throughput by 15x, reduced the cost by a third and uncertainties \leq 2% were obtainable. The paper, 'Speed Dating: A rapid way to Determine the radiocarbon age of wood by EA-AMS' was submitted to the journal of Radiocarbon within the first year of my PhD.

The Speed Dates of Binz dendrochronologies were either too old or too young to extend the absolute chronology. One chronology, Binz 7 overlapped with floating Swiss chronologies with a small number of trees. In the hunt for more trees, we visited storage facilities in Germany and Switzerland, Speed dating over 800 samples, all of which were too young to extend the absolute chronology. In lieu of new trees, we decided to work with the absolute chronology, the Swiss floating chronologies (built by Felix Kaiser and his colleagues) as well the newly discovered Binz 7 chronology. As these chronologies overlapped in time-based on over 100 decadal ¹⁴C dates and Speed Dates-leading us to pursue the possibility of linking chronologies by high-precision 'wiggle' matching.

Oddly, the term, 'high-precision ${}^{14}C$ dates' is used in numerous publications (a google search yielded 895 results) with minimal discussions on quality control. A main control for testing the quality of a ^{14}C date is a laboratory-to-laboratory comparison. These intercomparisons are few and far between with only a handful of published. In light of this, we submitted 'Quality Dating a protocol for reproducible high precision ${}^{14}C$ dates applied to Late Glacial wood' to the journal of Radiocarbon, which was accepted with revision on 01/2019. The Quality dating protocol was an outcome of the 1705 samples we measured at ETH always being accompanied by

- Four process blanks rather than chemical blanks due to significantly different ^{14}C ages.
- Seven standards, four or three of which were OXAI and the remainder OXAII to ensure robust standard normalization.
- Two references, representative of the sample material and age to confirm reproducible results.

Also, we had an intercomparison experiment with CEZA in Germany that showed a minimal difference in ¹⁴C ages and appropriate uncertainty estimations. During Quality Dating, we worked on wiggle-matching trees from floating chronologies to the absolute chronology. In combination with the measurements from CEZA ($n = 75$), 1780¹⁴C dates were used to draft the paper 'There goes the Sun: Reconstructing atmospheric ¹⁴C reveals prolonged solar minimum in the Younger Dryas' submitted to Nature Geoscience. Tree-ring chronologies in this were:

- extended and increases the resolution by a factor of six for the absolute dated chronology.
- Precisely calendrically places the floating SH towai chronology.
- Increase the resolution by a factor of four for the floating ZHYD1 chronology, which is shifted by +70-years.
- Increases the resolution by a factor of three for the floating SWILM chronology, which is shifted by +35-years.

The extension of the absolute chronology and precise calendrical placement of the floating chronology enables the investigation of solar variability. We see that in the YD there is 40% increase in production that is unmatched in the Holocene. This is the start of a 400-yr period that on average remains 20% elevated when compared to the Holocene. Both the 40% rise and variations during the 400-yr period are shown to be solar driven with patterns matching those seen in Holocene, albeit with larger amplitudes. Moreover, solar forcing in the YD is speculated to be reduced by more than 5 W m−2, which is greater than previously estimated. This weak Sun could have played more of a role in the onset of the YD.

The almost continuous overlap between the Swiss and German ${}^{14}C$ dates presented in this dissertation and the New Zealand chronology enabled an investigation of the InterHemispheric Gradient (IHG). The IHG allows primarily for detecting changes in the carbon cycle and thus adds important information for a better understanding of the cause of the YD cold event. The study presented here relies heavily on high-resolution and high precision measurement on the SH as well as the NH to determine precisely the IHG. We measured a significant increase in IHG starting at ∼ 12.8 kyr BP, delayed about 150 years compared to the increase in the deuterium excess in Greenland ice cores defining the onset of the YD. The IHG offset changes back to pre-YD and Holocene levels after roughly 600 years. We think the observed change in IHG is a result of three major forces influencing the carbon cycle:

- A grand solar minimum
- A reduced Meridional Overturning Circulation
- More active Southern Oceans accompanied by increase in SH westerlies wind.

The onset of the YD in the MFM chronology is outside the 95% CI for calendrical onset of the elevated IHG, which is possible due to underestimation of the MFM. There is ongoing work by F. Reinig to precisely date Laacher See tephra-an anchor in the MFM- by wiggle-matching to SWILM chronology produced in this study (figure 6.1).

In the future, similar studies will be able to take advantage of Speed Dating, to find the 'right' trees and Quality Dating to investigate modulation of atmospheric ¹⁴C. These modulations can highlight variations in Solar activity and the Earth systems making it an exciting time to be in the field of 14 C.

Figure 6.1: Work be F. Reining to wiggle a tree, LAAC0001 (red), which is believed to have died during the Laacher See eruption to SWILM dates produced in this dissertation (blue). IntCal13 is given gray and the towai chronology in black.

Appendices

Appendix A High-precision ¹⁴**C dates**

Below is a table containing all high-precision ¹⁴C dates produced during this dissertation.

Table appendix A : All 1705 highly resolved, high-precision ¹⁴C performed at ETH-Zürich during this dissertation. All dates listd below followed the Quality Dating protocol.

Appendix B

Publications

B.1 Primary author

Sookdeo, A., Kromer, B., Adolphi, F., Beer, J., Büntgen, U., Friedrich, M., Guidobaldi, G., Helle, G., Hogg, A., Muscheler, R., Nievergelt, D., Palmer, J., Pauly, M., Reinig, F., Tegel, W., Treydte, K., Turney, C., Synal, H.-A., Wacker, L. in preparation.Here comes the Sun: Solar variability in Allerød and Younger Dryas from a redefined high resolution atmospheric 14 C record. Quaternary Science Reviews

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B.2 Co-authorship

Wacker, L., Bollhalder, S., Sookdeo, A., H.-A Synal. Accepted. Re-evaluation of the New Oxalic Acid Standard with AMS. Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research Section B: Beam Interactions with Materials and Atoms

Pauly, M., Helle, G., Miramont, C., Büntgen, U., Treydte, K., Reinig, F., Guibal, F., Sivan, O., Heinrich, I., Riedel, F., Kromer, B., Balanzategui, D., Wacker, L., Sookdeo, A., Brauer, A., 2018. Subfossil trees suggest enhanced Mediterranean hydroclimate variability at the onset of the Younger Dryas. Scientific reports 8, 13980.

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Appendix C

Radiocarbon dating course

As part of effort to get undergraduates at ETH engaged in ¹⁴C I along with L. Wacker and C. Welte created an advanced student laboratory course. I have taught this course for last two year as ETH. It was received extremely as I awarded the Experimental Innovation award. The manual for the course is presented below.

Radiocarbon Dating

Advanced Student Laboratory Course

Laboratory for Ion Beam Physics Fall 2016

Adam Sookdeo, Caroline Welte and Lukas Wacker

Version 1.1 30.09.2016

Overview

You will gain a concrete knowledge of radiocarbon dating. In this course you will learn about 14 C, why it is useful and why radiocarbon is used in various scientific disciplines. In addition, you will gain an understanding about the workings of Accelerator Mass Spectrometer, a tool crucial for dating radioisotopes. And you will gain comprehensive knowledge of the statistical analysis involved in $¹⁴C$ dating.</sup>

1.1 Task

In this course you will chemically extract cellulose from Swiss trees. Along with the extracted cellulose you will measure blanks, standards and reference materials on a MIni CArbon DAting System (MICADAS). With the raw data you will perform the necessary data reduction and submit a report showing their calculations and answering the questions below:

- i) What is radiocarbon dating?
- ii) Determine the decay constant for radiocarbon, using Libby's half-life.
- iii) What is the activity of 2 grams of modern of carbon? (Hint use atmospheric $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio)
- iv) Briefly explain why ${}^{14}C$ ⁺ ions collected in gas ionization chamber rather than a Faraday cup.
- v) Why do we isolate cellulose?
- vi) What consequences would you expect if no "pre" was prepared?
- vii) Why is the graphitization process carried out in the excess of hydrogen?
- viii) Why does the pressure decrease overtime during the graphitization process?
- ix) Describe a situation in how we can determine if contamination come from the BABA bleaching treatment.
- x) If the extraction potential is -40kV what is the momentum of 14 C⁻?
- xi) If the radius of low energy magnet is 25cm, what is the magnetic field required for 14 C? What should the pulse offset be for 12 C?
- xii) If the terminal voltage on the tandem accelerator is 200kV and the radius of the high energy magnet is 35cm, what is the magnetic field required for 14 C⁺?
- xiii) If the radius of the ESA is 35cm, what magnetic field is required?

2 Introduction

2.1 What is Radiocarbon Dating?

Radiocarbon (^{14}C) dating can be used to determine the age of a variety of materials. The principle of 14 C dating was first presented in 1949 by W.F. Libby (Arnold 1949) for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1960. The concept was, and still is that material containing carbon can be dated based on the radioactivity of 14 C, as 14 C decays according to the law of radioactive decay. To understand properties of radioactive decay there are a few basic principles to understand:

$$
Activity (A) = -dN/dt = \lambda N \tag{1}
$$

Where N is number of atoms, t is time and λ is the decay constant (yr⁻). The change is number of atoms from time $0 \, (N_0)$ is thus represented as

$$
N = N_0 e^{-\lambda t}
$$
 (2)

The half-life $(t_{1/2})$ is the time it takes for half of the original number of radioactive atoms to decay. Libby reported the half-life ($t_{1/2}$) of ¹⁴C as 5568 yr, which is called the conventionally Libby half-life (Libby 1955). Later, it was discovered the $t_{1/2}$ of ¹⁴C is 5730 yr (Godwin 1962). To further understand the principles of 14 C dating we must know how it is formed and where it is incorporated.

 14 C is continually formed and in the upper atmosphere by the interaction of neutrons formed as secondary cosmic ray particles and nitrogen atoms.

$$
^{14}\text{N} + \text{neutron} \rightarrow ^{14}\text{C} + \text{proton}
$$

¹⁴C atoms combine with oxygen to form $CO₂$ that is transported and mixed throughout the atmosphere, where it dissolves into the oceans and enters the biosphere via photosynthesis. The formation and decay of ¹⁴C is somewhat constant throughout time; the 14 C/¹²C ratio in the atmosphere is approximately 1.2×10^{-12} . This noteworthy because as certain organisms grow and incorporate carbon into their structures they incorporate 14° C from the atmosphere. However, the 14 C/ 12 C ratio in the organism is not the same as the atmosphere because of isotope fractionation.

Trees, for instance, experience fractionation because for photosynthesis stomata cells preferentially up-take lighter $CO₂$ from the atmospheres, figure 1.

Figure 1 Schematic of mass-dependent fractionation happening between ¹²C and ¹³C during photosynthesis. The ratio in the tree is shifted towards the lighter isotope compared to the atmosphere.

In this case, the 14 C/ 12 C ratios in trees are depleted compared to atmosphere. Fractionation affects have to be taken into account to accurately 14 C date samples, something we discuss in the calculations part of this course.

Furthermore, it is important to note that when $CO₂$ exchange is stopped (when a tree-ring is formed or the tree dies), the radiocarbon clock begins to tick. This is because as no new 14 C is being incorporated the 14 C/ 12 C ratio begins to drop, the decrease in this ratio can be used a marker of time. For instance, if 14 C/ 12 C ratio of a tree was determined to be roughly 50% (1 $t_{1/2}$) of what it is today, the tree would have grown ~5568 years ago. However, this date is not completely accurate because we assumed that the 14 C/ 12 C ratio in the atmosphere has been constant between now and when this tree grow, this known as a "uncalibrated date" or "conventional date." Conventional dates are reported using Libby's half-life and are calculated as follows:

$$
T = -8033 \cdot \ln(F^{14}C) \tag{3}
$$

Where T is time and $F^{14}C$ is fraction modern (a term discussed in section 2.3). Although, this can be useful, we know the atmospheric 14 C concentration varies over time; therefore, to accurately date an object, the uncalibrated 14 C age needs to be converted into a calendar age.

In order to determine the calendar age of an object uncalibrated 14 C date needs to be compared to a 14 C record that is independently dated, for example through dendrochronology, where the age is derived from tree-ring counting. Tree-rings are used because as mentioned they uptake ¹⁴C from the atmosphere while growing. The same treesrings can be assigned a calendar age by dendrochronology.

Dendrochronology is the evaluation of tree-ring growth patterns and by creating groups of trees with overlapping by extending tree-ring growth patterns a chronology is formed. There are two types of dendrochronology dates i) *absolute* and ii) *floating*. A dendrochronology date is considered to be absolute dated when part of the chronology is cross-dated to the present. If no cross date to the present can be established a dendrochronology record is considered floating. Floating chronologies can have multiple placements throughout time, e.g. placement one 500 BP, placement two 7000 BP. A more accurate placement (\pm 20 years) can established, by ¹⁴C dating a subset of a floating chronology. In addition, absolutely dated dendrochronology records have been 14 C dated to create a calibration curve.

By 14 C dating numerous absolutely dated dendrochronology records a calibration curve extending back to roughly ~12 000 years Before Present (BP) has been established. For samples older than 12 000 BP, marine sediments are used to fill the calibration curve. The combination of dendrochronology and marine records form the International Calibration curve (Intcal, (Reimer 2013)), which extends back to 50 000 BP.

For the practical part of this course you will prepare and 14 C date tree-rings that are part of a Swiss floating chronology.

Questions

- *i) What is radiocarbon dating?*
- *ii) Determine the decay constant for radiocarbon, using Libby's half-life.*
- *iii) What is the activity of 2 grams of modern of carbon? (Hint use atmospheric ¹⁴C/¹²C ratio)*

2.2 Radiocarbon measurements

Initially, measurements of 14 C were carried out via radiometric techniques as the decay of 14 C emits beta particles with energies around 0.15MeV. Radiometry measurements of 14 C have been come to known as the "conventional method". The conventional method involves using a beta-counter to measure the number of beta particles emitted from the nucleus per unit time by the decay of 14 C. At times, samples were chemically treated to remove material with 14 C that changes over time; for instance in trees lignin's continually incorporated 14 C overtime, while cellulose once it is formed does not incorporate new 14 C content. Chemically treated samples were combusted in the presence of excess oxygen to produce $CO₂$ and the $CO₂$ was measured by a gas proportional beta counter. With the induction of liquid scintillation counters, samples were converted to benzene and a scintillator was added so that the samples could be measured photometrically. Both techniques require approximately 1 gram or more of carbon and counting times could vary between days and month depending on the desired precision and age of the material. Nevertheless, the conventional method was used since the discovery of 14 C to the late 1990's and even sporadically nowadays. However, today the determination of ^{14}C is dominated by Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS).

AMS was first used in 1977 in Toronto, Canada at the IsoTrace Laboratory (Bennett 1978). The main goals of AMS at the time were to eliminate the isobar 14 Ne and measure 14 C by directly counting the proportion of 14 C atoms to 13 C and 12 C (which requires accelerations of atoms).

By directly measuring 14 C results in much quicker measurements times (1-3days) and yield sensitivities of up to 4 orders of magnitude higher than beta-counting. There are various types of AMS setups but the principles remain the same.

Commonly AMS systems are equipped with $Cs⁺$ sputter ion sources that are used to produce negative ions a process known as ionization. This is particular advantageous for 14 C analysis as the enormously abundant isobar $14N$ does not form negative ions and is suppressed at this ionization stage. The negative molecules are extracted and sometimes run through an electrostatic analyser (ESA) that allows for the passage ions with specific energy and the negative ions are always run through a low energy magnet. The low energy magnet is a momentum filter and thus is used to discriminate and select for 12,13,14 C ions. The selected ions are then fed through a tandem accelerator. Here the ions are accelerated towards the terminal at high potential (sometimes several MV) where the ions enter the "stripper" (either a gas filled volume or a foil). The stripper is important for two reasons: i) the charge state of the entering ions is changed to positive, as electrons are being ripped off. The newly formed positive ions are accelerated back to ground potential. ii) Interfering molecules (e.g. 13 CH) injected together with the rare isotope (14 C), are destroyed. Depending on the setup, either outer electrons are ripped off and molecules break apart due to Coulomb explosion, or the molecules dissociate due to multiple collisions with the residual gas in the stripper. After the tandem accelerator the positive ions are passed through a High-Energy (HE) magnet and $^{12, 13}$ C⁺ are collected in Faraday cups, while 14 C⁺ ions in addition to the HE magnet are passed through a ESA and are counted in a gas ionization chamber.

For this course we will be using a small AMS with a terminal voltage of only 200 kV know as MIni CArbon DAting System (MICADAS). Further details about this machine will be discussed in section 2.2.

Questions

iv) Briefly explain why ${}^{14}C^{\dagger}$ ions collected in gas ionization chamber rather than a *Faraday cup.*

3 Methods

There is a wide range of materials that can be dated using the 14 C method, from wooden objects to paintings to archaeological artifacts to bone, but regardless of the chemical compositions some sort of sample preparation is required for precise 14 C measurements. Sample preparation is done for primarily two reasons, 1) eliminate containments or remove part of the material that contains interchangeable 14 C and/or 2) to ensure that material is in an appropriate chemical state to be measured (either $CO₂$ gas or graphite).

It is beyond the scope of this course to discuss all the various sample preparation techniques. Instead we will focus on one of the most commonly 14 C dated objects, wood.

3.1 Sample Preparation

Students will be responsible for preparing and graphitizing their samples (3-5) along with two standards and two blanks

Prior to any chemical preparation steps, samples measured at the LIP must be labeled by entering them into the database via a program called LAMA. This can be done using an excel sheet that will be provided. *It will be the job of the student to fill in the relevant sections of this excel sheet for their samples.* When the excel sheet is uploaded into LAMA, a unique ETH sample ID consisting of a lab prefix (ETH) and a number (ETH-xxxxx) will be generated. LAMA will also create a preparation number (e.g. xxxxx.1 if it was a second preparation it would xxxxx.2) this number will be used as a label for the chemical extraction procedure. And lastly the program LAMA will we create a target ID (e.g. xxxxx.1.1) this number is used when samples are being measured. You can print samples by right clicking on sample number in the LAMA and selecting print label. Be sure to label your vials accordingly. Samples and targets are contained in Eppendorf vials, but preparation vials are 10 ml glass tubes from Faust.

Once you have labeled your vials, weigh in 20-30 mg of your sample and place it into 10 ml glass tube. To ensure the best possible results make sure your samples are cut into thin pieces.

3.1.1 Isolation of Cellulose

Typically, when dating wood/plant material only the easily exchangeable components are removed (such as roots). This is normally clean enough for standard radiocarbon measurement but in some cases it is desirable to have pure cellulose; part of wood/plant that has remained unchanged and immobile since it formed (Hoper 1998). *For this course students will isolate cellulose from tree-rings and measure the ¹⁴C content with a MICADAS*.

For the samples you weighed in the preparation vial we will chemically extract cellulose with an Base-Acid-Base-Acid-Bleach (BABAB) protocol, figure 3 (Brock et al. 2010, Němec 2010a)). The base steps removes humic acid and degrades part of the cell walls particularly the polysaccharide component, the acid step eliminates carbonates and the bleaching step degrades ligands (Le Moigne 2010). In-between, changing solutions from base to acid (or acid to base) samples have to be washed twice with MiliQ water. It is not required to wash the samples with MiliQ water when switching from an acid to bleach.

Figure 3 Reaction protocol to extract cellulose from wood.

The BABAB procedure from start to finish takes about two days. After, bleaching the samples are washed twice (or more until cellulose is white) with MiliQ water and the samples are placed in a freezer for an hour. Then the samples are placed into a freeze dryer overnight to remove H_2O .

Once the samples are dried, weigh out approx. 2.5-3 mg of cellulose in aluminum capsules (4x4x11 mm³, Elementar, Germany) and place it in the target vial. Please write down the weight of the samples on the vial. For a single sample, please make a duplicate, but instead of using a target label, on the vial write *PRE*, the last 3 digits of the ETH number and the weight. A preconditioning (PRE) sample is used when switching between samples with large radiocarbon activity difference i.e. a standard and a blank or a blank and sample etc, to help remove cross contamination from the graphitization process, see Wacker 2013.

Questions

- v) Why do we isolate cellulose?
- vi) What consequences would you expect if no "pre" was prepared?

3.1.2 Conversion to Graphite

For the purpose of this course we will measure the carbon content of our samples in a solid state as graphite rather than in a gaseous state. Graphite measurements by AMS are a standard in the field and provide the highest precision, with uncertainties down to 2‰ (±16yrs uncalibrated). While gas measurements are also possible these measurements are not as precise but can be done much quicker.

Graphitization is a chemical process in which $CO₂$ is converted to graphite with the use extreme temperatures, excess H_2 and Fe as a catalyst (Vogel 1984)(Němec 2010b). For graphitization, the samples are placed in an Elemental Analyser (EA, vario MICRO cube, Elementar) where the material is combusted and carbon is converted to $CO₂$ in the presence of excess oxygen. The $CO₂$ produced is then fed into a 3rd generation Automated Graphitization Equipment (AGE-3) (Wacker 2013). Students will be will responsible for graphitizing their samples.

For the graphitization, the following preparations are necessary: first add Fe from the dispenser to 7 glass tubes and place and securely tighten the tubes in the AGE-3 (Figure 4). Then in the AGE-3 program, click on "Condition" and under options make sure "Auto" is deselected. Conditioning will heat up the Fe and air in the tube (to 500 °C) and the system will perform a leak test, to ensure the system is airtight. If the leak test fails, tighten the connection of the tube to the AGE. When the leak test passes, the tubes will be evacuated, filled with hydrogen and heated to the same temperature three times, to clean the Fe and to get rid of any carbon present in the glass tubes. While this process is ongoing you can start preparing the EA.

Before you enter the sample information, reference the sample carousel wheel and check that it is on position 1. This is accomplished in the EA program (VarioMirco) by selecting XXX then wheel position and in dialog box check all samples removed and reference run then click OK. Afterwards, you can start a "RunIn" to ensure that EA that there is no left over carbon from previous combustion and the combustion process is running smoothly. To start a RunIn, enter "1" in the first row of the weight column, in the name column write or select RunIn and in the method column select G_50s (this method will add excess oxygen for 50 seconds).

Figure 4 The left figure shows the Fe dispenser with a glass tube, which is being filled with Fe. The right figure depicts the AGE-3 system with the glass tubes containing Fe inserted.

Once the AGE is done with conditioning, select single run and a chromatograph will appear on the right side of the screen. Do RunIn's until the peak area corresponding to carbon (at 200 to 300 seconds) is a straight line without peaks or bumbs. Once the system is clean, you can enter the sample info into the EA list and load your samples into the EA. Enter sample information into the weight, name (sample ID), and method columns (G_50s). The row number corresponds to the wheel position number; therefore, it is recommended to double check that both numbers match.

Go back to the AGE program. Under options make sure *Auto*, *EA Sleep* and *Remove H2O* are selected. Click on sample, it will ask if you are sure click YES and each reactor will be loaded with a sample and excess hydrogen. Once all 7 reactors are loaded, the ovens will heat up to 500 °C the graphitization process will begin, which takes 120min. You can occasionally check in on the reaction; you should see a decrease in pressure in the reactors overtime.

Once the graphitization process is finished and water is removed from the reactors, transfer the graphite to cathode targets and press them. This process will be demonstrated to you in the lab. The pressed targets are then entered in LAMA as being squeezed and a magazine is created using the program PrepMag40. The details on how to accomplish this will be shown to you in the lab. Lastly, the pressed targets are then loaded in a magazine and are ready for analysis (see section 2.2).
Questions

- *vii) Why is the graphitization process carried out in the excess of hydrogen?*
- viii) *Why does the pressure decrease overtime during the graphitization process*?

3.1.3 Standards, Blanks and Reference Materials

Standards

In order to determine the radiocarbon age of a sample, a standard with a known 14 C activity is measured. The principal modern radiocarbon standard is National Institute of Standards and Technology (N.I.S.T) Oxalic Acid ($C_2H_2O_4$). There are two types of Oxalic acid designated as HOxI and HOxII. The activity of HOxI is defined as 95% of the 14 C activity from the year 1950 (Stuiver 1980). This is equivalent to activity wood from 1890 AD. Wood from 1890 AD was chosen as the radiocarbon standard because it was growing prior to the fossil fuel-fossil fuels are radiocarbon dead-effects of the industrial revolution. The activity of 1890 AD wood is corrected for radioactive decay to 1950. Thus 1950, is year 1 BP by convention in radiocarbon dating and is deemed to be the 'present'.

The HOxI standard was made from a crop of 1955 sugar beet. In total there was roughly 1000 lbs made; however, as 14 C measurements became more common supplies began to dwindle and HOxI was no longer commercially available. Therefore, another standard was created, HOxII. HOxII was made from a crop of 1977 French beet molasses (Stuiver 1983). The ¹⁴C activity of HOxII is about ~23% higher than that of HOxI. *For this course we will use HOxII.*

Blanks

The weighted means of ${}^{14}C/{}^{12}C$ for a blank is subtracted from the weighted means of sample to account for background correction. Therefore it is important that a blank be radiocarbon dead (older than 50 kyrs BP).

There are two types of blanks that we will be using for this course, a *chemical blank* that is phthalic anhydride (PhA) and *process blanks* that are brown coal and Kauri wood. PhA is a chemical that is radiocarbon dead i.e. made from carbon that is over 100 kyrs old. The chemical blank is graphitized but is not chemical treated with a BABA bleaching method. In this respect, if a PhA blank shows signs of contamination it likely came from the graphitization process or pressing of targets. Brown coal and Kauri are both older than 200 kyrs and are subjected to a BABA bleaching treatment as well as graphitization.

Reference material

A reference material is a sample that has been measured in the past by previous laboratories and there is consensus value in the community. The reference material should be selected carefully as it is used for quality assurance of the analysis. Ideally it is of similar age to the samples being measured. The measurements of reference material should be within 1-2 σ of the cited value. If the measurements fall outside of the 2 σ range the measurement may be considered void. For this course we will use part of a Kauri tree (TK121) that grew over 10 kBP ago and has been measured by five other laboratories (Hogg 2013).

Note: for blanks, standards and reference materials have an ETH sample ID but we will show you how to create a preparation and a target ID.

Question

ix) Describe a situation in how we can determine if contamination come from the BABA bleaching treatment

3.2 MIni CArbon DAting System (MICADAS)

Programs Panda, Squirrel and Nemo will be discussed in during the course.

For this course will be using a MICADAS with permanent magnets at both the Low-Energy (LE) and High-Energy (HE) side to 14 C date our samples. There are many components to a MICADAS and it is beyond the scope of this course to go into details of all of them; rather, we will focus on the `tunable` components. Tunable components are part of a MICADAS that are regularly modified to maximize measurement precision and efficiency, which is done using the program Panda.

- i. The extraction potential controls the potential of the extraction lens that in turn affects the energy and path of ions after $Cs⁺$ sputter. Therefore, at the start of a measurement we tune the extraction potential by maximizing the $^{13}C^{+}$ current.
- ii. x- and y-steerers: The x- and y-steers are changed by altering the Potential Energy (PE) and this then modifies where the carbon ion beams sit in space. The x- and ysteers are tuned by again maximizing the 13 C⁺ current by changing the PE of the steers. In addition, a box lens is used to change the divergence of the carbon ion beams and thus the focal point of beam. This is done to ensure the focal point of the beam has maximum transmission through the LE magnet, which is considered to be at maximum by optimizing 13 C⁺ current.
- iii. LE-magnet: A LE scan is performed to minimize fractionation of carbon isotopes caused by AMS. The currents of ${}^{12}C$ ⁺ and ${}^{13}C$ ⁺ should lay on top of each over a varying magnet fields and minimal fractionation is expected when the ratio of 13 CH/ 12 C is stable over a narrow magnetic field this is called as a flat-top range. Before you begin a LE scan note the set-point of the LE magnet then lower the magnetic field until background currents are measured in the Faraday cups. In Squirrel start a LE scan with steps sizes of +300, the magnetic field should then slowly increase in stepwise manner all the while the $^{12, 13}$ C⁺ currents are measured. If no flat-top region is observed at the set-point of LE magnet the pulses of either A (12 C) and/or B (13 C) are changed accordingly. The pulse system makes uses of small accelerators tubes to accelerate either ${}^{12}C$ or ${}^{13}C$ so that they have the momentum as ${}^{14}C$ and thus follow the same path through the LE magnet. By lowering the PE of pulse A, 12 C⁻ will deflected less by the magnet and vice versa. Once the pulse A and B are adjusted so that at the set-point LE magnet is in a flat top region, the LE magnet is tuned.
- iv. HE-magnet: Normally a tuning of the HE magnet is not necessary. However, it should be checked that the carbon beams are passing through the centre of the magnet. For a HOxII we expect the ratio of 14 C/ 12 C to 1.5x10⁻¹² ± 0.3x10⁻¹², the position of the 14 C beam is checked by manually decreasing the aperture of the beam path by 3 mm, the beam path itself is slightly over 6 mm. Therefore, expect roughly half the citied ratio when the slit is inserted by 3 mm. However, if the ratio is not between 0.8-0.85 the voltage of accelerator or the pressure in stripper is adjusted rather than HE magnet as the magnet is permanent. Increasing the voltage in the accelerator or decreasing the pressure of the stripper results in more energetic carbon ions and vice versa.

When the appropriate ratio of $^{14}C/^{12}$ is reached, the slit has to be manually retracted by 3 mm.

The extraction potential, y-steerer and box-lens can be adjusted a final time to double check that maximum currents are achieved. Afterwards, you can start your measurement (this will be discussed in person).

Questions

- x) If the extraction potential is -40kV what is the momentum of 14 C⁻?
- xi) If the radius of low energy magnet is 25cm, what is the magnetic field required for 14 C \cdot ? What should the pulse offset be for 12 C \cdot ?
- xii) If the terminal voltage on the tandem accelerator is 200kV and the radius of the high energy magnet is 35cm, what is the magnetic field required for 14 C⁺?
- xiii) If the radius of the ESA is 35cm, what magnetic field is required?

3.3 Statistical Data Evaluation

Once the measurements are complete students will be given the raw data and it will be their job to calculate the radiocarbon age of their samples along with errors. Below students will find the relevant information that they need.

3.3.1 Overview

In general, calculations follow the procedure suggested by Stuiver and Polach (Stuiver 1977). An overview of the calculations performed for 14 C analysis can be seen in figure 5.

Figure 5 Overview of the data evaluation steps necessary after ¹⁴C analysis. The abbreviations stand for: $bg = background$ corrected, $bl = blank$ subtracted, $f = mass$ dependent fractionation corrected, std =after standard normalization, $BI = blank$, $Std =$ standard, S = sample.

3.3.2 Calculations

You will have to use the equations and methods below to evaluate your data!

Typically, two uncertainties are calculated when performing radiocarbon analyses: the "internal error" derived from counting statistics (i.e. Poisson) and the external error, which corresponds to the standard deviation of the repeated measurements. Both errors should be on the same order and comparing them gives information about the quality of the measurement (χ^2 -test).

Often, a dependency of the measured ratios on the beam current intensities can be observed during ¹⁴C measurements. In the following, weighted mean values are calculated according to:

$$
\langle X \rangle = \frac{\sum_i (X_i \cdot p_i)}{\sum_i p_i}
$$
, where the weighting factor p_i is given by $p_i = {}^{12}C \cdot t$

Below is table abbreviations used for calculations:

Table 1 Overview of variables and their abbreviations used in the calculations:

3.3.2.1 Background Correction

The MICADAS instrument is equipped with three Faraday cups on the HE-side: two cups are installed to detect the 12,13 C⁺ currents. The third one is used to measure 13 C⁺ions coming from broken-up ¹³CH molecules. A small portion of these broken-up molecules reaches the detector, where it is counted as if it was a 14 C⁺ ion. Generally, a linear correlation is observed between the detected 14 C/ 12 C-ratio and the measured 13 C(H)/ 12 C ratio for blank samples.

This allows us to perform a background correction, which is applied to all runs of all samples (blanks, standards, samples):

$$
R_{mol} = \frac{^{14}C - k^{.13}C_{mol}}{^{12}C}
$$
 (4)

The uncertainty is derived from the error propagation of the uncertainty δ_k of the correction factor k (experimentally determined) and of the uncertainty δ^{14} C, which corresponds to the counting statistics error of the 14 C counts.

$$
\delta_{mol} = \sqrt{\delta_{14C}^2 + \delta_k^2} \tag{5}
$$

3.3.2.2 Blank subtraction

The weighted mean of all background corrected blank measurements and its corresponding uncertainty are calculated. Sometimes, when blanks are analysed for either long periods of time or a large number of blanks are measured the uncertainty of the blanks may be underestimated. Therefore, the uncertainty of blank should be set to $3x10^{-16}$ unless it is higher.

A relative blank correction is performed to all standards and samples:

$$
R_{mol,bl} = R_{mol} - \langle R(bl)_{mol} \rangle \tag{6}
$$

The uncertainty is derived by error propagation:

$$
\delta_{mol,bl} = \sqrt{\delta_{bl}^2 + \delta_{mol}^2}
$$
 (7)

3.3.2.3 Mass-Fractionation correction

Fractionation and δ-notation

The different isotopic ratios of different reservoirs are expressed in the δ-notation (definition see first part of equation (5)).

In order to 14 C date it is crucial to translate the stable isotope ratio of the material to be dated into a substance with a known stable isotope ratio. Since in 14 C dating, the activity of the sample is compared to the activity of tree rings, it is translated into the activity it would have if it was wood with a $\delta^{13}C = -25\%$. For mass-dependent fractionation, the mathematical relation between the fractionation of $^{13}C/^{12}C$ and $^{14}C/^{13}C$ is known and is approximately quadratic. This allows us to perform a fractionation correction using the following calculations:

The δ^{13} C of **standards and samples** (in the following equation denoted as "sample") for each run is calculated according to:

$$
\delta^{13}C_{sample} := \left(\frac{\binom{13}{C}^{12}C_{sample}}{\binom{13}{C}^{12}C_{_VPDB}} - 1\right) \cdot 1000 = \left(\frac{\binom{13}{C}^{12}C_{sample} \cdot (1 + \delta^{13}C_{std} / 1000)}{\binom{13}{C}^{12}C_{std}} - 1\right) \cdot 1000
$$
\n(8)

For the algebraic transformation, the fraction was expanded with $(^{13}C/^{12}C)_{std}/(^{13}C/^{12}C)_{VPDB}$.

Fractionation correction

The fractionation $F_{13/12}$ happening between 13 C and 12 C is known to be approximately quadratic compared to the fractionation $F_{14/12}$ between 14 C and 12 C. Considering this relationship, the fractionation correction can be performed with all *samples and standards* according to:

$$
R_{mol,bl,f} = R_{mol,bl} \cdot F_{14/12} \approx R_{mol,bl} \cdot F_{13/12}^2 = R_{mol,bl} \cdot \left(\frac{\binom{13}{C}^{12}C_{-25}}{\binom{13}{C}^{12}C_{sample}}\right)^2 = R_{mol,bl} \cdot \left(\frac{0.975}{(1+\delta^{12}C_{sample}/1000)}\right)^2
$$
\n(9)

For the last algebraic transformation, the definition of δ^{13} C was substituted. The uncertainty is calculated from:

$$
\delta_{mol,bl,f} = \delta_{mol,bl} \cdot \left(\frac{0.975}{(1+\delta^1 \mathcal{C}_{sample}/1000)}\right)^2 \tag{10}
$$

3.3.2.4 Standard normalisation

Mean of standards, χ² -test and sample scatter:

For the standard normalization, we first have to calculate the weighted mean $\langle R (std)_{_{mol,bl,f}}$ of all fractionation corrected standards and its uncertainty. This is also a good point to get an estimate on the quality of our measurement by comparing the internal $\big<\delta({\mathit{std}})_{{\mathit{mol}},b\wr,f}\big>$ and external uncertainty $\langle \sigma(\mathit{std}) \rangle$. The $\,\chi^2$ is calculated according to:

$$
\chi^2 = \sum_{i}^{N} \frac{(\overline{x} - x_i)^2}{\sigma_i^2}
$$
 (11)

An approximation of the χ^2_{red} is given by:

$$
\chi_{red}^2 = \frac{\chi^2}{(N-1)} \approx \frac{\sigma^2}{\delta^2} = \frac{\langle \sigma(std) \rangle^2}{\langle \delta(std)_{mol,bl,f} \rangle^2}
$$
(12)

For a measurement to be considered good, the χ^2_{red} should be close to 1, which means that the internal and external uncertainty are in agreement. A χ^2_{red} that is larger than 2 is a sign for an additional external error source that has not been taken into consideration. This could be caused by variation in target preparation or measurement instabilities. Consequently, the scatter of the samples is larger than the error derived from counting statistics. By adding an additional external error $\sigma_{\tiny ext}^2$, this can be corrected for:

$$
\langle \sigma(std) \rangle_{mol,bl,f,ext} = \sqrt{\delta(std)^2_{mol,bl,f} + \sigma_{ext}^2}
$$
 (13)

From long-term experience it is known, that the value of σ_{ext}^2 is typically around 0.2% (verify this by calculating the χ^2_{red} and also check the limits in a table for a confidence interval of 95%).

Standard normalization calculations

There are numerous conventions to report radiocarbon data. Depending on the purpose, the most suitable reporting mode should be chosen. There are three different ways of reporting 14 C data:

- i) Absolute activity
- ii) Activity ratio (ratio between the absolute activities of a sample and the standard)
- iii) Relative activity (comparable to δ-notation of stable isotopes)

In this lab course the unit Fraction Modern ($F^{14}C$) will be used, which falls under category (ii). It corresponds to the activity ratio of the sample relative to the radiocarbon standard (OxII). F^{14} C does not change with time and it is independent of the year of measurement.

$$
F^{14}C = \left\langle R_{mol,bl,f}(sample) \right\rangle \cdot \frac{F^{14}C_{oxll,nom}}{\left\langle R(std)_{mol,bl,f} \right\rangle} \tag{14}
$$

Where $\left\langle R_{\scriptscriptstyle mol,bl,f}(sample)\right\rangle$ is the weighted mean of the 14 C/ 12 C ratios of all runs of the sample and $\left\langle R(std)_{_{mol,bl,f}}\right\rangle$ is the weighted mean of corrected 14 C/ 12 C ratios of all standards and $F^{14}C_{\mathit{\mathit{\mathit{O}xH}},\mathit{nom}}$ is nominal fraction modern value of OxII standard.

The uncertainty of the $F^{14}C$ value of each run is derived from propagating the error of R_{mol,bl,f} and of $\left\langle R(std)_{\scriptscriptstyle mol,bl,f} \right\rangle$.

$$
\delta_{F^{14}C} = F^{14}C \cdot \sqrt{\left(\frac{\delta_{mol,bl,f}}{R_{mol,bl,f}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{\langle \delta(std)_{mol,bl,f} \rangle}{\langle R(std)_{mol,bl,f} \rangle}\right)^2}
$$
(15)

4 Appendix

4.1 Constant Contamination

Chemical purification methods such as gas chromatography (GC) or high-pressure liquid chromatography (HPLC) allow radiocarbon analyses on specific organic compounds. However, only small amounts of these substances (i.e. low ug level) can be isolated with commercially available GC and HPLC instruments in a single run. Thus, even very small contaminations will bias any radiocarbon determination of the isolated compound. The measured ¹⁴C/¹²C ratio (R_m) is always a superposition of the ¹⁴C/¹²C ratios of both the sample (R_s) and the contaminant (R_c) . R_s can be extracted applying the model of constant contamination, if the total carbon content (m_m) and the contaminant mass (m_c) and ¹⁴C/¹²C ratio (*Rc*) is known:

$$
R_s = \frac{R_m \cdot m_m - R_c \cdot m_c}{m_m - m_c}
$$

To determine $m_c \pm \sigma_{m_{\scriptscriptstyle C}}$ and $R_c \pm \sigma_{R_{\scriptscriptstyle C}}$ reliably multiple processing standards of different but known radiocarbon content (typically modern and dead) need to be analyzed. The relative errors for both parameters are typically large compared with the relative measurement uncertainty of m_m. Error propagation yields $\sigma_{\!R_S}$:

$$
\sigma_{R_s}^2 = \left[\sigma_{m_c} \left(\frac{R_m \cdot m_m - R_c \cdot m_c}{(m_m - m_c)^2} - \frac{R_c}{(m_m - m_c)} \right) \right]^2 + \left[\sigma_{m_m} \left(\frac{R_m}{(m_m - m_c)} - \frac{R_m \cdot m_m - R_c \cdot m_c}{(m_m - m_c)^2} \right) \right]^2 + \left[\sigma_{R_m} \frac{m_m}{m_m - m_c} \right]^2 + \left[\sigma_{R_c} \frac{-m_c}{m_m - m_c} \right]^2
$$

As an example, the uncertainty σ_{R_S} of the 14 C/ 12 C ratio of a 10 μ g C sample is shown as a function of its radiocarbon content in Fig 1. For the constant contamination two typical values are used (red and blue lines). A minimal absolute uncertainty is observed when the radiocarbon level of the contamination (here R_c = 0.6 \pm 0.2 F¹⁴C) is close to that of the sample R_s . We note that the contribution from the counting statistics ($\sigma_{\!R_{\,\bm{m}}},$ dashed lines) to the total uncertainty σ_{R_S} is relatively small, even for a contamination of only 0.6 \pm 0.2 μ g C. In reality, contaminations of more than 1 µg C are frequently observed.

Figure 6 *Calculated total uncertainty of a 10 µg C sample as a function of its radiocarbon concentration. The dashed lines show the uncertainty from counting statistics; the solid lines represent the total uncertainty including a constant contamination with 0.6 ± 0.2 µg C (blue) and 1.2 ± 0.4 µg C (red) with 0.6 ± 0.2 F¹⁴C, respectively.*

The results shown in Fig. 1 demonstrate the importance to precisely determine the total carbon amount and the $^{14}C/^{12}C$ ratio of the contaminant when processing very small radiocarbon samples. The propagated uncertainties derived from counting statistics alone are not the limiting factor anymore.

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Appendix D

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