

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Lynn Picknett

I see that you chose to back up my theory by printing Isabel Piczek's article 'Why Leonardo da Vinci could not have painted the Shroud'. I'm glad that I'm in such good company. Whatever else the so-called Shroud is, it is not a painting - and I said so in my talk 'How Leonardo faked the Turin Shroud', which was reviewed by Clive Prince in the BSTS Newsletter [no. 28].

Something else I said in my talk, which was not attended by the Editor (who saw fit to print some astonishingly silly allegations about my words), was that orthodox 'shroud' scholars seem not to be able to see the wood for the trees. The treatment of my talk in the Newsletter seems to underline this tendency. First you get bogged down with arguments, some of them libellous, about the source of my information, then with a discussion about whether I should give a talk to the BSTS. Perhaps it might be a better idea if someone did me the honour of discussing my theory, instead of other issues.

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From Shirley Wade

With regard to the question of whether Lynn Picknett should be invited to give a talk to the Society, and your suggestion that members might like to express an opinion, I am writing to say that I am not in favour of the idea. I have been interested in the spiritual and esoteric side of life for around 30 years; have read widely on both Eastern and Western Traditions, and have participated in events as an individual and as part of a group. It is clear from this reading and experience that while channelled material can be very helpful, it is all too easy for people receiving such material to be misled either by distortions arising in their own unconscious, or by mistakes about the nature of the entity being channelled.

In my view it would be bad for the reputation of the Society, with scientists and experienced esotericists, to include a talk based on such material in its programme. Scientists tend to consider it rubbish anyway, and serious esotericists are well aware of the difficulties. I am quite happy to see such material briefly mentioned in the Newsletter because there is always the possibility that it might provide new ideas for research. However I feel strongly that it should be the results of any such research which should be the subject of a formal talk, not the channelled material.

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