

LETTERS

From Holger Kersten and Dr. Elmar Gruber:

The review of our book *Das Jesus Komplatt (The Jesus Conspiracy)* [BSTS Newsletter 35, p.181, raises several fundamentally wrong assertions and accusations. In the interest of all who really care about the Shroud we feel the urgency to respond.

We have not 'repeated the Bonnet-Eymard claims' in respect of the use of material from the cope of St. Louis, with which the Shroud samples were switched. In fact it was our discovery, and the information went exactly the other way. If the problem of substitution is studied in a very superficial way, as Lindner and Wilson do (and try to make readers believe we did as well), one could easily quite erroneously conclude that the tested samples were from the Shroud. Objective research needs a higher degree of precision and one has to abandon old prejudices.

Eberhard Lindner has arranged the samples in such a way that they seemingly fit a part of the original Shroud. But in this way they occupy a large portion of the Shroud which was not cut off at all! As a proof we have presented the photographs as evidence to the Editor [see opposite). If the samples are arranged in the 'proper' way, i.e. to fit just into the area that was removed from the shroud, they would reach beyond the borders of the Shroud!

Although this is already evidence enough to conclude that the tested samples cannot have originated from the Shroud, we have asked several scientific institutions to carry out comparative analyses. Technically, it is relatively easy to compare each thread on two photographs apparently of the identical piece of cloth.

In this instance one photo is a sample as tested; the other the original portion of the Shroud officially removed by Riggi. To cite just some of the results from these computer-assisted studies (i) the two tissues [fabrics? Ed.] differ in density (a fact earlier independently corroborated by Prof. G. Raes); (ii) the tested samples do not have common cutting edges, and do not fit together; (iii) the goniometry of the angles of the herring-bone pattern differs considerably; and (iv) the single threads differ notably in their thickness. All these facts Dr. Lindner would have found in our book if he had abandoned his prejudices and read it carefully. The English edition is in preparation, and will be published in the spring of 1994.

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[Editor's Note: While it was impractical to reproduce all the photos supplied by Kersten and Gruber, nothing has caused me to alter the support for Dr. Lindner as given in the last Newsletter. It is important to note that the photo reproduced on p.19 is a composite from independently-supplied photographs, the apparent variations in the Shroud's weave being due to whichever side of the sample was uppermost when photographed. Different thread thicknesses occur throughout the Shroud, and are due to it being handmade.

While we await Kersten & Gruber's English edition, a copy of Dr. Lindner's reconstruction (BSTS Newsletter 35, p.19) was sent to Prof. Tite for his confirmation of whether this matched what he could remember of the original locations of the Shroud samples. Prof. Tite replied: 'My memory now is inevitably very hazy. However, in general your reconstruction (i.e. the Lindner/Wilson one) is consistent with what I remember. Certainly a sizeable portion of the sample removed from the Shroud was not given to the three laboratories, but, I assume, remained in Turin. The Arizona sample puzzles me slightly as I was fairly certain that all three laboratories received more-or-less the same weight of sample.']