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-- BIPEDIA - BIPEDIA n° 17 --

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**Comments and
responses :**

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Résumé :

RESPONSE TO MY CRITICS

Comments and responses :

In addition to the second part of my piece on footprints in solid rock, let me refer to some of the objections raised by Dr. Horst Friedrich and Dr. Hans-Joachim Zillmer.

First, Dr. Friedrich seriously misrepresents my conclusion, which was very carefully worded. I never said there was "*no evidence for the existence of humans in (the) far geological past*", I stressed that "*more research is needed into the few cases where no definite identification has been possible yet*" and that my conclusion was only true "*at this point of time. ... This may change tomorrow.*"

But then he insinuates that I arrived at my conclusion at a very careless way. There is no proof, he claims, that the Hildburghausen prints are those of a *Chirotherium*, as "orthodox science" (who is that ?) says. Yes, but Friedrich does rely as well as I do on the existence of these tracks. Yes, we can certainly doubt the scientific identification, but then where do we stop ? Maybe we doubt the existence of the tracks as well, and then, when we see them in the museum, we doubt that they are tracks and assume they are sculptures made last century. Nobody ever has suggested that the tracks show anything but the footprints of the *Chirotherium* and they do not in any case but superficially look like human hands. Following Friedrich's logic, we do not even know whether dinosaurs existed at all, because they have been discovered by the same orthodox scientists as the *Chirotherium* tracks. Such doubt is honoured by the fortean tradition, but if I simply doubt everything scientists have ever said, I must also doubt that fossils are the remains of ancient animals (Perhaps they were created by God to confuse us, as it was formerly thought). If geology and palaeontology and "orthodox science" are so wrong that I cannot believe them, the question whether humans lived in the geological past becomes pointless, as I doubt geological past, fossils, footprints in stone, dinosaurs, etc. Dr. Friedrich only doubts when it fits him. And, more important, he offers no evidence for doubting the *Chirotherium* identification other than it came from "orthodox science". He then goes on to ask how I could be sure that the Piemont print was only an eroded cup. To this I can only answer : go to places where rocks are, examine erosion on a small scale (such as in rain) and then compare. Everybody can see the Piemont print in Kolosimo's book, and it simply is just the result of erosion. Yes, I can always doubt the obvious, who knows for certain that Italy is in Europe and not on the moon ? Friedrich's arguments go on like that, after claiming that all my conclusions were arrived at in a careless manner he says I give the readers no chance to judge for themselves (just go to the sources, I listed them all). I value Dr. Friedrich's work, but saying that all I write is just debunking and so get rid of the problem is not an argument I can work with. Had he supplied any evidence that I was wrong (in the Piemont case, in the Hildburghausen case) I would have recognised that I was wrong, just as I did when I received Hansen's letter. If Dr. Friedrich knows of such evidence, he should inform me. It is one point to doubt everything I have researched, but another to supply evidence that this scepticism is justified.

Dr. Zillmer's article is, I am afraid, also of no use. He says that dinosaurs must have lived quite recently as sometimes their bones still stick out of the soil or lie on it. This is as naive a statement as any I have seen and I do not know what to respond. Zillmer could read a book on geology which has chapters on faulting and erosion, for example, and he might see how silly such arguments are. But I assume he thinks geology is all bunk, as most of his article is concerned with rewriting it. Yes, there are dragon tales from the Middle Ages, but do they really prove dinosaur survival ?

And what shall I make of his "discussion" of the Paluxy tracks ? He claims that palaeontologists (and I) say the Paluxy prints are fakes. He then disproves that they are fakes, which is quite easy,

Comments and responses :

because they are not, as I had already pointed out. So he disproves me by affirming I was right. His arguments should consider the points I raised so I could really answer him, not some imaginary arguments I never made.

He does not do that, and so, as with Dr. Friedrich's radical scepticism, there is no way I can actually respond to him. If I quote geological textbooks, Dr. Zillmer will say they are all wrong, and if I quote the result of palaeontological research, Dr. Friedrich will simply doubt it. There cannot be a discussion with people who use a priori assumptions without any evidence to back them and who misrepresent and misquote what I say.

Ulrich MAGIN