

NEWS AND ACTIVITIES AROUND THE WORLD

On February 15-16, 1986, a conference on the Shroud of Turin was held in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, under the aegis of the Political Science Department of Elizabethtown College. Dr. W. Wesley McDonald, who organized the conference, achieved a broad coverage never previously attained in any public symposium. Three original STURP members participated: Drs. Eric Jumper, Alan Adler and John Jackson. Dr. Gilbert Lavoie detailed the medical picture, giving strong support to the STURP position.

Dr. Walter C. McCrone and Mr. Joe Nickell presented the case for the fabrication of the image.

Mr. Paul C. Maloney, General Projects Director for the Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin, Ltd. (ASSIST) presented a general overview dealing with the archaeology of the textile and the pollen findings by Dr. Max Frei. On Sunday afternoon, a round table discussion was led off by the prominent writer, Dr. Russell Kirk.

Both STURP and McCrone have refined or modified their published views about the Shroud. The conference made it quite apparent that the distance between them remains wide. On the one hand, Dr. Adler delved deeply into the chemistry of the Shroud, with special emphasis on the blood. It now appears certain to him that what he is seeing is a blood exudate high in bilirubin and that this is what gives the blood area its red color. On the other hand, McCrone maintains that the color is due to the relatively high quantity of iron oxide with a superficial admixture of vermilion. He has found microscopic evidence for fibrils coated all the way around with iron oxide. He believes this evidence demonstrates that an artist used a brush in a thin liquid mixture of iron oxide and tempera to paint the image on the cloth.

Clearly, the controversy is far from settled, since Dr. Jumper pointed out that the image goes no deeper than one fibril.

PAUL C. MALONEY