

BOLOGNA - A VERY SUCCESSFUL 'SIMPOSIO'

However 'ostrich-like' it might seem, it was the decision of the Bologna International Symposium "La Sindone e Le Icone" not to discuss the Shroud carbon dating. And in the event this kept the discussion firmly concentrated on the artistic and historical evidence that the Shroud was around well before the fourteenth century. Held in Bologna's Collegio S. Luigi the weekend of May 6 and 7, the Simposio was chaired by Professor Lamberto Coppini of the Bologna anatomy school, and opened with an address of welcome by Bologna's archbishop Giacomo Biffi. Among the English-speaking delegates were U.S. psychiatrist Dr. Alan Whanger, who gave a graphic demonstration of his polarized overlay technique for comparing coin and icon Christ portraits with the Shroud face, Rex Morgan from Australia, who spoke on his researches on the Templecombe panel painting, and the Revd. Kim Dreisbach, who presented a paper on behalf of Paul Maloney of ASSIST.

Among the other papers delivered, Père Dubarle of Paris spoke on the pre-1532 burn-marks, Professor Werner Bulst of Germany (via Professor Heinrich Pfeiffer), presented a paper on the Shroud-like Christ image on the Pray manuscript of Budapest, Professor Pfeiffer of the Gregorian University gave his own paper on the iconography of crucifixion wounds in art, numismatist Mario Moroni of Rome presented a paper on indications of Shroud/Edessa Image influence on Byzantine coinage from the 7th to 13th. centuries, Byzantine specialist Maria Theocharis of the University of Athens showed the rich variety of apparently Shroud-influenced epitaphioi, and Professor Gino Zaninotto of Rome gave a highly informative account of the 6th. Century "Acheropita" Christ Icon in Rome's Sancta Sanctorum chapel.

One surprise was that the hypothesis of Shroud/Edessa Image identity is now receiving much greater acceptance among Italian sindonologists than hitherto. Another was that special arrangements had been made for the Mandyion icon of Genoa (see below), which is rarely ever seen publicly, to be put on show as part of an exhibition of otherwise modern icons that was staged simultaneously within the Collegio. S. Luigi. For security purposes the icon was kept in Bologna's police headquarters at all times when the exhibition was closed.

CHUCKLE FROM BOLOGNA ...

Sometime last year leading Italian Shroud researcher Professor Giuseppe Ghiberti attended a U.K. conference, staying as guest at an Oxbridge college. The room number he was given brought a wry smile ... C14!