

## DR. ALAN WHANGER - A NEW CLAIM

The urge for some fresh, independent means of dating the Shroud - the *modus vivendi* behind the late Fr. Filas' coin hypothesis - has found unexpected expression in a new claim by Duke University psychiatrist Dr. Alan Whanger: that he has found signs of influence from the Shroud image on a relief sculpture of Zeus Kyrios, precisely dateable to AD. 31, found at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates. According to Whanger: "By using the polarized image overlay technique [see *Newsletter* No. 1], we compared the image of Zeus with the face image of the Shroud of Turin, and found a very good match of 79 points of congruence between the two. In a court of law 45 to 60 points of congruence are sufficient to establish the identity or same source of face images. Thus there is excellent evidence that the face image of Zeus Kyrios was based on that of the Shroud of Turin."

That the face of Jesus should have been used within two years of the earliest likely date for the crucifixion as a model for a *pagan* statue of the king of the gods is in itself quite sufficient to put an intolerable strain on our credulity. But in any case what Dr. Whanger seems sadly to have overlooked is the fact that with little doubt the source of inspiration for Dura Europos' Zeus Kyrios was the magnificent chryselephantine (gold and ivory) statue of Zeus at Olympia, created by the famous Greek sculptor Phidias back in the fifth century BC., and hailed as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Although this statue no longer exists - along with several other notable ancient statues it was burnt in a fire at a palace in Constantinople in 462 AD. - it is known from several copies, such as the Boston Museum of Fine Arts marble Zeus found at Mylasa, Caria (see below).



As will be noted, this is even more like the Shroud face than Whanger's Zeus Kyrios, and not without justification some art scholars have even suggested that it was this, the classical Zeus, which was the source of inspiration for the likeness of Jesus that has come down to us in art [see, for instance, J.D. Breckenridge, *The Numismatic Iconography of Justinian II*, The

American Numismatic Society, New York, 1959, pp.56-59]. The real lesson is that in the most well-meaning way the points of congruence argument can be overplayed, and with respect to Dr. Whanger one can only hope, for the sake of human justice, that American courts of law do not take it quite so literally as Dr. Whanger's statistics suggest...

NOTE: For the benefit of BSTS members Dr. Whanger has kindly made available some copies of his paper 'Polarized image overlay technique: a new image comparison method and its applications', as published in *Applied Optics* 24, March 15, 1985, pp.766-772. Xeroxes can be made, price 35p, (or three second-class postage stamps), on application to Susan Black, enclosing a large S.A.E.