

Foreword – Welcome address

*13th Conference of the European Society for Clinical Hemorheology (E.S.C.H.), Siena, Italy
June 26th–29th, 2005*

Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon and welcome to Siena. I am honored to welcome you to this Opening Ceremony of the thirteenth Conference of the European Society for Clinical Hemorheology. It makes me particularly happy to be giving this welcoming address in the Aula Magna of my University, in the presence of the University and Hospital Authorities.

The first to give his welcome will be Prof. Egidio Bertelli, Vice Dean and Professor of Dentistry, who has been entitled by the Rector and by the Dean of Medicine to give the address from the University of Siena. Please Prof. Bertelli.

Thank you very much, Prof. Bertelli.

The address from the Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Senese comes from Dr. Gianfranco Autieri Vice-Physician in chief of the Policlinico S. Maria alle Scotte.

Thank you Dr. Autieri.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me now give a few words as President of the European Society and Chairman of this conference, a few words of deep satisfaction for the health of our Society which, long gone the brilliant times of the past (in particular of the 1980's and 1990's . . . this was in the last century . . . or in the last millennium, I could say . . .), after the Vienna schism of 1993, had to confront with some difficulties. At the Rouen Conference, in 2000, I was elected President maybe thinking of a soft clearance sale of the Society. Instead, I bet that we would once return to the glorious past. Seeing such a distinguished audience now here in Siena leads me to believe that this goal has been achieved.

The first important sign of the rebirth has been the Sofia Conference in 2003, thanks to the enthusiasm of the President of that Meeting, Nadia Antonova. Emphasizing the success of this edition of the Conference, a 340 – and plus – pages special issue of *Clinical Hemorheology and Microcirculation* containing the proceedings was then published.

Today, we begin this experience in Siena. The programme based on the scientific contributions we received in the past few months seems to be promising: we will see at the end if these promises are to be maintained. Like for Sofia, the proceedings of the conference will be published on *Clinical Hemorheology and Microcirculation*, the official journal of the Society. As Editor-in-chief of the journal, I would like to thank the publisher, the IOS Press of Amsterdam, in particular Einar Fredricksson and Marleen Berfelo: we have reached with them a perfect collaboration.

As you know, or at least a part of you know, I would have hoped this meeting to achieve an even greater attendance: my aim was to have a Conference which included both the International Society and the European Society. Unfortunately, this has not been possible, and the International Society had his Congress in China with the Society of Biorheology at the beginning of this month. However (this lets

me hope for the future), tomorrow this Conference will host a symposium organized by the International Society. It is my true hope that this spirit of collaboration will last in the future. I hope that the next President of ESCH will realize, together with the new Council of ISCH, this reunification, which I have not been able to accomplish. I want to thank Oguz Baskurt of the ISCH, for his help (Oguz, at least we tried!). In my opinion, two international Conferences in the same year (and this year in the same month) seem to be really too much for the relatively small number of scholars of our research field. As a past president, my first suggestion is that we should hire an exorcist to dismiss the ghosts of the Vienna's schism who are still among us! :-).

Coming back to our Society, I am also really proud of the web sites of both the Conference and the Society. They are "kept to life", if one can say so, by Luca Tralozini: without his precious collaboration I don't know if this Conference would have been possible.

Siena has a certain familiarity with European Conferences of Hemorheology: we hosted the 4th edition in 1985 and the 9th in 1995, perfectly organized by my mentor, Prof. Tullio Di Perri who is here with us and whom I welcome with gratitude. In the word "we" I am enclosing all the "Siena hemorheological group", composed by several pioneers who in the 1970th started to work, in a clinical environment, with strange instruments called "viscometers" or "filtrometers". I am seeing some of them in this audience now. Thank you for your presence here! Prof. Di Perri, why not thinking that we, with all this group, will still be here together in 2015 to celebrate the decennial recurrence of this hemorheological event in Siena?

This Conference is an important occasion also because we have to renew, according to the Constitution, the Council of the Society and we need to elect a new President. This is an argument we will discuss tomorrow with the Assembly, which I hope will see a wide participation of ESCH members. As you know I cannot be re-elected for another term but I will continue to give my contribution to the Society as Past-President. As well, during the Assembly we have also to choose the place for the next 14th Conference in 2007.

On Tuesday we will have, together with the sessions of the European Conference, the sessions of the 1st Conference of the newborn Italian Society for Clinical Hemorheology and Microcirculation: I call it newborn because it is the result of the merging of two different Italian Societies: what I have not been able to achieve at international level has been realized at least at the national level. Even my presidency of the Italian Society is at the end but I am sure that SIECM will be in good hands in the future, and I promise that I will provide my full collaboration to the new Board.

At the end of this, which was a not so boring address of welcome I hope, I would like to thank all the co-workers who contributed to the preparation of this event: both the Scientific and the Organizing Secretariat. A special and particular acknowledgement goes to Prof. Vera Turchetti who cannot be here with us today. Vera is the present coordinator of our group of research. For several years, she strongly contributed to our results in the field of hemorheology, both at the national and international level.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention. I declare opened the 13th Conference of the European Society for Clinical Hemorheology.

Siena, June 26th, 2005

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Sandro Forconi, Friedrich Jung and Michel R. Boisseau



Some participants to the Opening Ceremony of the 13th Conference of the E.S.C.H.