

This book is dedicated to  
Giovanni Cardinal Saldarini  
And to the memories of  
Don Pietro Rinaldi, S.D.B.  
and  
Alan D. Adler

## FOREWORD

Never did an assignment so tax my natural inadequacies. Here before me lies a document envelope marked DCMS beside a stack of Alan Adler's published papers wherein he addressed fundamental questions we ask about the Turin Shroud. There is a steady, studied and consistent progression, from one article to the next, of information acquired, facts established and communicated. Fitting each article into the event that shaped it should be an easy way to compose a Foreword.

But reading the Adlerian contributions in sequence, one begins to sense along the way that while the discourse never deviates from the chemistry of the Turin Shroud, the author is really talking about the Shroud of Christ. His thought penetrates ever more deeply into the significance of what his science has revealed until the academic approach to the Shroud of Turin rings an alarm with the insistence of the prophets of ancient Israel. To convey this in a few inarticulate paragraphs - *hoc opus! hic labor est!*

John Heller and Alan Adler were good friends. They had worked together on many scientific problems so when Heller, a member of new-founded STURP, was given the task of identifying a red speck on a slide from the STURP on-hands examination in Turin, 1978, he called Adler, proposing "a fun project, involving porphyrins". He was sure that "*porphyrins*" would whet his friend's interest. Adler had already published close to a hundred articles on his blood research; forty-odd concerned porphyrins. Heller reports that when he told Adler the project was for the Shroud of Turin, Adler blurted, *The what of where?*

A year later, their joint paper, «Blood on the Shroud of Turin», appeared in *Applied Optics*. «A Chemical Investigation of the Shroud of Turin» followed in 1981, and in 1982 Adler spoke at a meeting of the American Chemical Society in St. Louis, afterwards curbing the curiosity of a crowd of questioners wanting to know more about the blood marks. "Blood. Whole blood. It is remarkable," Adler admitted, "but not impossible." «The Origin and Nature of Blood on the Turin Shroud» was his theme at a university lecture in Hong Kong; and that same year he collaborated with Gilbert and Bonnie Lavoie in an interesting experiment showing that the blood marks were contact images, while the body image was produced by a "distinctly different mechanism". «Blood on the Face» demonstrates a fundamental characteristic of the Shroud, to which Adler often calls attention.

While Adler concentrated his research on blood, other members of the American team, seconded by the British, were eager to return to Turin for new tests, and thought to pressure the ecclesiastical authorities by stating what they hoped to accomplish. Clamor had been growing over the demand for carbon dating "to settle the question of authenticity once and for all". Accused of being "afraid of the truth", the Vatican called a meeting in 1986 of 20 international scientists, including Adler, for the purpose of drawing up a protocol for the C14 test. The

medieval date that ensued roused high emotion in believers and scoffers alike; but in Paris, André van Cauwenberghe, indignant and defiant, called an international symposium for September, 1989. Adler was unable to attend, but sent a paper, «Chemistry of the Cellulose of the Linen Fibers», which was read by Larry Schwalbe. The Acts of the Paris Symposium were never published and the paper is no longer recoverable, but Adler's research in textile studies would be of primary importance later in conservation issues.

Meanwhile, in Turin, a new archbishop had been appointed, and to him revolved custodianship of the Shroud. The advent of Archbishop Saldarini made an entirely new impact on Shroud research. Soon after the Vatican announcement that proposals for a new examination of the Shroud would be considered, Archbishop Saldarini granted an audience to Don Peter Rinaldi of blessed memory. Don Rinaldi reported that the Archbishop wished to encourage research with special emphasis on conservation. "I should like to make it clear," the Bishop said, "that conservation of the Shroud will have precedence over any study or test directly involved with the relic's authenticity. But I am in no hurry...."

Conservation studies had been an issue of long-standing, even after the Pellegrino Commission had avowed that the linen was in excellent condition. So while Saldarini's concern was not new, his emphasis was, and many scientists did not fully appreciate it. In October, STURP prepared a dossier outlining proposals for new tests, and the proposal was presented to the Archbishop. The group waited, on their toes, for a positive response. Or, as time passed, for any response. But in April 1991, Adler wrote to Don Rinaldi, expressing his concern for the condition of the Shroud. "The linen is darkening and it could reach the point that it is the same tonality as the Image; in which case the Image would no longer be discerned. Another problem is the flaking of the blood areas...."

Carrying a tone of urgency, Adler's letter to Don Rinaldi found its way to the Archbishop's desk. A few weeks after writing to Don Rinaldi, Adler sprained his back and had to remain in bed. There is not much one can do lying flat on one's back for a week. One can think. Alan Adler thought about blood. How science showed that the globs on fibers from the Shroud were not paint but blood; primate blood; human blood; traumatic blood. The blood of Christ. "If it is blood," he reasoned, "then the Shroud must be conserved." «Conservation and Preservation of the Shroud of Turin» was written soon after. In the background of this article, another idea rumbled; elements searching for form. It would be another span of years before DCMS would be put on paper.

When the French group, CIELT, went to Rome for their second International Scientific Symposium, Adler presented «Conservation of the Shroud of Turin» written jointly with Larry Schwalbe. A reviewer's note records: "(Adler) stood center stage and spoke resoundingly from the depths of his conviction, needing neither notes nor written text". It was typical Adler. What need had he of notes or written text? His mastery of every aspect of Shroud science is well illustrated by an incident during the Nice symposium. After a speaker had given a competent paper, he took questions from the audience. At one question the speaker stuttered and mumbled, clearly confused, while Adler, in the audience, waved his arm mightily until he was given leave to speak. Lurching to the front of the

## VII

room, Adler declared, "I think I can answer that question," and for 25 minutes he held the audience spellbound. As he went modestly back to his seat, the room resounded with applause.

But to return.... In February of 1994, Adler received a letter from the Papal custodian of the Holy Shroud, now Cardinal Saldarini, inviting him to become a member of a Commission of Experts being formed for conservation recommendations. With his letter of acceptance, Adler sent a copy of his Rome presentation, «Conservation of the Shroud of Turin». After scrupulous preparation, the first Study Commission was held two years later, and another 16 months passed before the conservation experts met again with the Cardinal, who, as he had assured Don Rinaldi, was in no hurry....

There were two meetings in June, 1997; Adler flew to Turin on June 8 for the first meeting and returned home, only to fly back again on the 24<sup>th</sup> for the intensive deliberations of the Conservation Committee, starting at 5 A.M. on the 25<sup>th</sup>. On the 27<sup>th</sup> he was home again, exhausted, but keen to write his report for Cardinal Saldarini.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, Adler saw the Shroud for the first time. It was, for him, an awesome experience. It was a recognition, by sight, that, as he had been demonstrating in tireless experiments, the Shroud could not be a painting. "When they unrolled the Shroud.... Just look at it! It takes two seconds.... This is no painting! That blood is *blood!*"

Early in August, he received a letter from Bruno Barberis and Gian Maria Zaccone, requesting that he collaborate in the realization of a volume to be published on the Shroud Exhibitions of 1998 and 2000; the theme suggested was "Chemical and Physical Characteristics of the Sindonic Image". His text was needed by September 15, and the editors apologized for the short notice. Fortunately, by his time, DCMS was in Adler's computer and this first version, translated into Italian, served as his contribution to the Polygraf edition.

From now on, it was a whirlwind of activity for Adler. In June 1998, at the Turin Congress, he presented «Further Spectroscopic Investigations of Samples of the Shroud of Turin»; the paper was published in the Proceedings of the 1998 Dallas Symposium. Two more conferences: November in Dallas, «The State of the Shroud; its Conservation Now and in the Future» (lost, or possibly never written) and June 1999, «The Nature of the Body Images on the Shroud of Turin», given at Richmond. He was working on his haptoglobin project for the Orvieto Congress, a linen dating for Australia and rewriting some sections of DCMS. In the meantime, he had made another trip to Turin, where he and Karlheinz Dietz and Mechthild Flury-Lemberg minutely examined the Shroud for three hours.

Between the two great Expositions of 1998 and 2000, Giovanni Cardinal Saldarini retired because of failing health. He celebrated his last Mass in the Cathedral on June 24, Feast of St. John the Baptist, his patron. On September 5, Monsignor Severino Poletto was installed as Archbishop of the Turin diocese.

A man of astonishing energy, Mons. Poletto took up the responsibilities of the Exposition of 2000, and carried forward the conservation program planned by his predecessor. Cardinal Saldarini's project of a quiet meeting of a few experts

## VIII

in fields related to conservation was expanded to a closed symposium of 40 scientists, held in Turin March 2-5, 2000. For this meeting, Adler split the material of the Poligraf edition into two presentations, one on the Fabric and Body Image, the other on the Blood Stains.

In the context of a scientific symposium, Cardinal Poletto had arranged a private showing of the Shroud, on March 3, for the conferees. Unframed, the Linen was suspended at eye-level, discreetly cordoned off by a red silk torsade. After a brief speech, the Cardinal made a surprising request: that Chapter 53 of the Prophet Isaiah be read there beside the open Shroud. Avinoam Danin read first, in Hebrew. Alan then read Isaiah's oracle in English. As he spoke, the longing of ancient Israel reverberated through the prophecy, no longer as a reading, nor even a recitation, but as a revelation. Words, stiff sentinels girding the sanctum of the mystery they serve, melted away and what they had concealed was revealed in vibrant grandeur.

Don Rinaldi once remarked, "The marvel is no longer what the Shroud is, but what it does." What it did to Alan Adler would be glimpsed, but never fathomed, as he stood at the lectern, announcing the Suffering Servant three feet from the serenity of a bloodied Image.

Without our knowing, the meeting of March 2-5 was the culmination of Adler's work. He had brought with him the envelope marked DCMS, Dorothy Crispino Manuscript. At long last, what he wanted to say and how the material should be composed had been reduced in the crucible of his searing, scientific mind and was ready for final revision. "Here it is," he said. "It is the most important thing I have ever done. It must be published. I think we should take our time and get it right. I'd like to see our paper in *Spectrum*." There was an urgency in his voice, an impatience with interruptions, an utter disregard of the fact that *Spectrum* was, no more.

Alan died in June. And I was left with an orphaned manuscript. Not to publish was out of the question. But a monograph, even under the cover of a *Shroud Spectrum Special Issue*, seemed a paltry tribute to the memory of one who had given so much of himself to the Shroud. It would be more appropriate to gather all Adler's publications on the Shroud of Turin but I balked at the thought of such a difficult undertaking. Later that summer, my quandary was resolved by Karlheinz Dietz. Cheerfully he assured me that it could be done, indeed it should be done; and without hesitation he put aside the project he was working on and with irresistible good humor started scanning into my computer many Adler papers from my collection.

With this sheaf of preliminary papers in hand, it was like old times again, except that now came challenges that *Spectrum* had never encountered. Bringing together thirteen articles from ten various sources determined one rule that governed all: that in casting the different texts into *Spectrum* style, each one should be rendered exactly as it originally read.

Respecting this rule resulted in a diversity of Reference listings, according to the particular arrangement of each publication. In this dilemma, *Spectrum* sacrificed uniformity to preserve total fidelity to each original.

IX

Thirteen articles, published from 1980 to 2000, follow one article waiting to appear; Adler's DCMS, the orphaned manuscript. As the *raison d'être* of this book, it is presented first, entitled "Chemical and Physical Aspects of the Sindonic Images".

Prof. Karlheinz Dietz launched the project on the seas of his boundless optimism; skilfully, with earnest enthusiasm, Signor Paolo Pellegrino and the crew of Effata towed it to realization. May they all receive my thanks and share my joy.

Dorothy Crispino



Photo by Alberto DiGiglio

ALAN DAVID ADLER  
5 October 1931 — 12 June 2000  
Nyack, NY — West Redding, CT

(Crispino, D., "Foreword," to Adler, A.D., 1998, "Concerning the Side Strip on the Shroud of Turin," in Adler, A.D. & Crispino, D., ed., 2002, "The Orphaned Manuscript: A Gathering of Publications on the Shroud of Turin," Effatà Editrice: Cantalupa, Italy, pp.viii-ix).