

PUBLICATIONS (3) BOOK REVIEWS



Evidence of the Crucifixion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

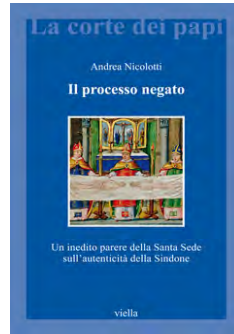
Simon Brown

Life Application Ministries Publishing

Simon Brown has kindly sent his book to me for review, following my meeting him for the first time at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jalsa Salana in the Summer. He is a freelance investigator into the death and resurrection of Christ, and maker of several videos, mostly published on YouTube and his own website:

<http://www.realdiscoveries.info>

This book, as its rather cluttered cover suggests, is an eclectic collection of articles on sindonological topics, including published papers, transcripts from videos, interviews and some chapters by other studiers of the Shroud, some of which were new to me. Simon comments on them uncritically, from a firmly established position of historical authenticity, and in the conviction that he has himself proved that the original tomb of Christ was not under the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but in the so-called “Garden Tomb”, about a kilometre further north. This book, and its author, are enthusiastic proselytisers for Christianity, an attitude which, although infectious and uplifting, leads to considerably overoptimistic and often unjustified interpretation, overstatement, and occasionally misinterpretation of the evidence. The byeline: ‘Nothing but facts, proof, evidence, peer reviewed scientific papers & articles by the best researchers in the world’ is hardly justified, given that it is mostly commentary. The chapters are somewhat randomly ordered, and a second edition would benefit hugely from both an editor and a proofreader, as it is littered with inconsequences and typographical errors, which make it difficult to read.



Sindone: Storia e Leggende di una Reliquia Controversa

Andrea Nicolotti, Enaudi

and

Il Processo Negato:

Un Inedito Parere della Santa Sede sull'Autenticità della Sindone

Andrea Nicolotti, Viella (part of the La Corte dei Papi series)

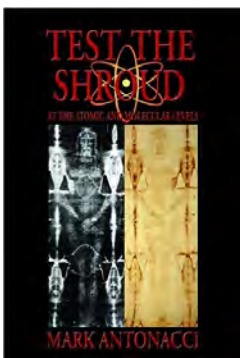
Andrea Nicolotti has produced two more fruits of his extensive research into the historical archives of France and Italy, much of which has never been published before.

In the first (*Shroud: History and Legends of a Controversial Relic*) He takes us on a detailed journey through documents from the fourteenth to the twenty-first century, ending with a section entitled: 'La Creazione di un Mito' (The Creation of a Myth), which is devoted to 'dismantling historiographical assumptions that do not hold up to the test of criticism, the thorny problem of the authenticity of the relic and the difficult relationship between history, faith and science.' Although his work is well argued, Nicolotti does not suffer fools gladly, and is dismissive of some of the research, particularly historiographical, in favour of authenticity. In this he has aroused the ire of Emanuela Marinelli, whose experience in Shroud studies has recently led to her being awarded an International Gold Medal Prize from the School of Catholic Culture in Bassano del Grappa. Her critiques of Nicolotti's previous works have been published in the BSTS Newsletter, and she has written a detailed 15 page

examination of this one, which is available in English at <http://www.sindone.info/SINDFOB2.PDF>. If Nicolotti's book is ever published in English, it will appear here too.

In the second book (*Progress Denied: Unpublished Opinions of the Holy See about the Authenticity of the Shroud*) which forms part of a series forming a historical investigation into the working of the papal court through the ages, Nicolotti attempts to rehabilitate the tarnished reputation of the eminent 19th century historian Ulysse Chevalier, whose own researches convincing him, and most of the rest of the Church, that the Shroud was not authentic were overturned in the light of Secondo Pia's photography and the work of Paul Vignon. By modern standards, his rather naive suspicion of photography, his guess that the image was brighter on the back, and his undoubted manipulation of the surviving versions of the d'Arcis memorandum (see Jack Markwardt's 2001 BSTS article '*The Conspiracy Against the Shroud*') seem major objections to his authority, but it is Nicolotti's contention that in the face of Chevalier's evidence, the Church, in the person of Pope Leo XIII, had declared in 1903 that the authenticity of the Shroud was not established. However, this finding was suppressed by the Royal House of Savoy. Nicolotti claims that he has found papers to that effect among the personal correspondence of Chevalier and in the archives of the Holy See, which he publishes here for the first time.

PREVIEW



Test the Shroud, Mark Antonacci

LE Press, LLC (Not yet published in the UK)

Arguing that the Shroud is indeed authentic, Antonacci describes testing techniques that could be applied to the cloth and its bloodstains which could demonstrate their true age, where and when and how they appeared, the identity of the victim, and whether they are the result of a miracle.