

# philippine studies

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**Rizal's Unfading Glory**  
**by Jesús Ma. Cavanna y Manso, C.M.**

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published material on the Kalinga, I do not wonder that Barton and his editor included these "scraps torn from a field notebook." Aside from their orientational function in the book, the disputed pages have a less contingent significance. Evans-Pritchard recently put it this way: what the anthropologist does not publish "may be, and often is, lost for ever. The anthropologist is not only the collator and interpreter of sources. He is the creator of them" (*Social Anthropology* [Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1951], p. 88).

This is a readable study of a Philippine people. I recommend it to all Filipinos interested in their fellow-nationals. Certainly government officials and missionaries dealing directly or indirectly with Mountain Province peoples should study it with care.

FRANK LYNCH

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RIZAL'S UNFADING GLORY. By Jesús Ma. Cavanna y Manso, C.M. Mandaluyong, Rizal. 1952. pp. 345. 42 illustrations and 32 autograph documents. Cloth, P6.00; paper, P5.00.

This book deals satisfactorily and systematically with all objections and doubts raised during the last half-century regarding the return of the Hero of Bagumbayan to the Faith. It is conclusive.

Written in very simple and readable language, *Rizal's Unfading Glory* presents indisputable documentary evidence for the conversion. No one with an unbiased mind can fail to admit the conclusions drawn by Father Cavanna in his book. Even those who have hitherto withstood all arguments for the retraction and who have clung to the conviction that the document was a forgery, that the Jesuits who participated in the final drama of Rizal's life were deceivers, and that Rizal was never buried canonically, should now at last be satisfied with the evidence presented in the book we have under study.

*Rizal's Unfading Glory* begins with a translation of the testimony presented in Piñana's very famous volume *Murió El Doctor Rizal Christianamente?* Although the English translation is somewhat inadequate in certain instances, because it is too literal and therefore unidiomatic, still one can see that the work has been very thorough, analytical and painstaking. No stone has been left unturned. Every possible angle, every possible detail, and every possible statement has been meticulously checked and rechecked before its inclusion in the book, in order that the testimony may be truly definitive and convincing.

The first part of the book deals with an analysis of the evidence presented by eye-witnesses of the conversion. Then follow details

regarding the acts of faith, hope and charity recited and signed by Dr. Jose Rizal and attested to by conclusive witnesses—just before the supreme sacrifice at Bagumbayan.

The book then proceeds to record the sacraments of Confession and Communion received by the Hero at Fort Santiago just before his execution. The fact of Rizal's Catholic marriage to Josephine Bracken, and the acts of piety performed by the great Calambeño during his last hours, his Christian burial in the Catholic cemetery, and the public celebration of Catholic rituals for the repose of Rizal's soul, are then presented vividly and clearly. The first part, therefore, forms the positive evidence in support of Rizal's Catholic death and burial.

The second part consists of a refutation of all the arguments so far presented against the retraction of Dr. Rizal. All the authors who have cast doubt upon the retraction, or have imputed fraud, are successfully answered. A catalog of all the documents mentioned as having been found by Rev. Manuel A. Gracia, C.M., in the archives of the Manila Archdiocese is presented, and this appendix is very comprehensive.

Chapter XII of the book is the most significant in the volume because it states beyond shadow of doubt what so many detractors of the Jesuits and of those who believe in the conversion, have failed to see all along during the last half century. Chapter XII states and explains the secret of Rizal's conversion.

Men have asked repeatedly: "How could Rizal with all his determination, after writing such explosive novels as *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, after exposing the immoral practices and questionable lives of some priests of the Philippines, after declaring himself a free-thinker, how could he have turned about in the last twenty-four hours of his life and become a Catholic?"

People have asked without ceasing, how Rizal could have "weakened" at the last moments of his life. Would not the retraction serve as a testimony of weakness and in effect neutralize all the transcendental and significant propaganda and patriotic work that he had done for the Philippines in the short span of his crowned life?

And they continue to ask: "Why should he sign a retraction of his religious errors, knowing that the next morning he would die, as he had anticipated all along, in Bagumbayan field—on the same field where Gomez, Burgos and Zamora had ignominiously perished by the *garrote*?"

Father Cavanna answers these questions by advancing three major reasons for Rizal's conversion: (1) The power of prayer, (2) Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and (3) The sincere piety and deep religion imbibed in an early and solid Catholic education at home and in the school.

There are many who will scoff at these reasons, but this is because they reject the supernatural premises upon which they are based.

If the scoffer will take the pains to examine these premises dispassionately, he will find them entirely reasonable and plausible, and will also find no difficulty in admitting that Rizal in the last moments of his life once again felt their force and acted upon them.

With quiet sincerity Father Cavanna says:

For those who are devoted to Him, the Sacred Heart of Jesus has made these promises: "I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all in death . . . Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy . . . Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart, never to be blotted out . . ."

This then is the answer to all the enemies of the Church and to all those that would deny the return of the Hero of Bagumbayan to the faith in which he was born and bred. He did return, and that is the fact, and this is the explanation. And no act of his life was performed for loftier motives and with clearer light. This is his unfading glory, here and hereafter.

JOSÉ M. HERNÁNDEZ