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The True Story Behind "Silence": The Mystery Of The Last Five Jesuits In Japan (1905 Article)



The True Story Behind "Silence"

The Mystery of the Last Five
Jesuits in Japan

HERBERT THURSTON



Synopsis

In this 1905, 30-page article reprinted from "The Month", Vol. 105, Herbert Thurston provides a historical background of Giuseppe Chiara (1602 - 1685) a Jesuit missionary active in 17th century Japan. He was the historical basis for the lead character of Sebastião Rodrigues in the novel Silence by Shūsaku Endō. "Silence" is a 1966 novel of historical fiction by Japanese author Shūsaku Endō. It is the story of a Jesuit missionary sent to 17th century Japan, who endures persecution in the time of Kakure Kirishitan ("Hidden Christians") that followed the defeat of the Shimabara Rebellion. The recipient of the 1966 Tanizaki Prize, it has been called "Endō's supreme achievement" and "one of the twentieth century's finest novels". In 2007, American film director Martin Scorsese announced his intention to direct an adaptation of the book which he had hoped to film in summer 2008. In 2013, Andrew Garfield, Liam Neeson, Issei Ogata and Ken Watanabe were attached, which entered production in January 2015. In 2014, Adam Driver was attached to the film adaptation. In January 2015, Watanabe was forced to leave the project due to scheduling issues and was replaced by Tadanobu Asano. The film is set to release on December 23, 2016.

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Customer Reviews

I read the article because I was motivated to know the context history of the movie "Silence", before I see it. Even though the article shows contrasting narrative details on the fate of the five Jesuits in the Edo area of Japan, it shows the human element of people who endure persecution on behalf of their profession of Christ. I like the details showing that they were not always heroic, just as some Biblical characters too had their foibles in being consistently faithful. Why did God allow the closure of the gospel message to be closed after initial contacts by Xavier? I do not know that. How does this translate to missionary work presently? That again is an initial answer of "I do not know".

Couldn't follow all the different testimonies. Probably only of value to people already highly informed on the subject. I can't imagine why God would punish any of those courageous men who weakened under extreme torture. To commit a mortal sin willing and free consent must be given. Impossible under those conditions.

A short article, with many quotes, seems well researched, a very interesting and thought provoking statement on the torture of Christians.

Good helps to get a better understanding of the movie

The exposure of intolerance of the Japanese leaders in the past of other cultures

The copy was very poorly assembled! As a result very difficult to read. One page double spaced and the next was single spaced with overlapping words. It was very hard to follow! I am shocked sells such bad quality material.

Not what I thought it would be. Disappointing in that nothing was ever said to definitely tell that what happened was in fact a record of truth. Thought that this story had more truth to it.

I was interested in reading the book, The True Story behind "Silence" after seeing the movie. The information was very helpful. I think people think the movie and book by Endo is a true story but it is not!

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