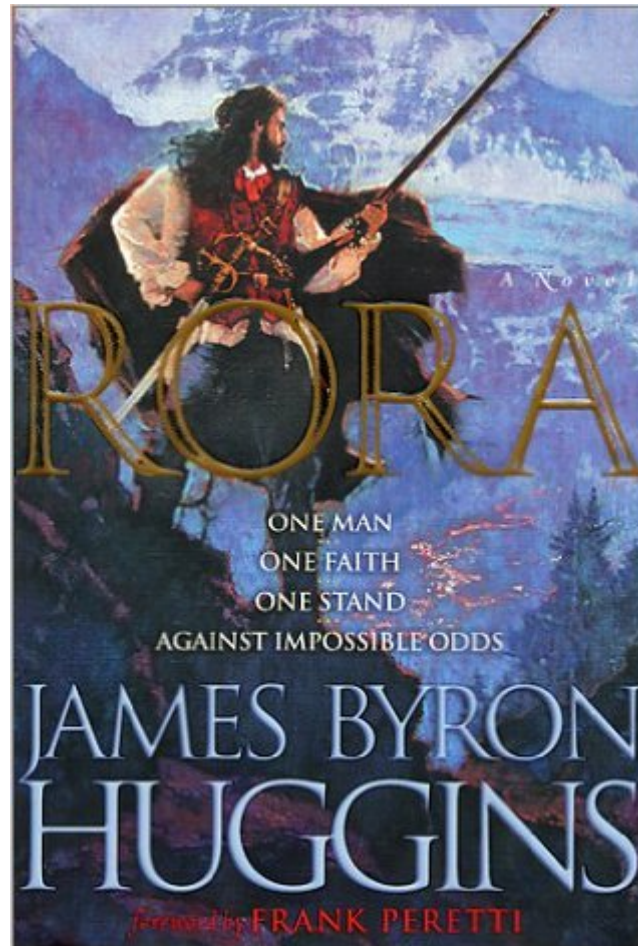


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# Rora



## Synopsis

In an eloquent word painting that could be his most significant and profound work ever, author James Byron Huggins has resurrected the magnificent story of RORA from the yellowing and dusty records of history, robed it in flesh and blood, infused breath and spirit, and created a vivid saga that is part poetry, part painting, part cinema. -from the forward by Frank Peretti.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a work of such stunning brilliance that it has sent me out to look for the rest of Huggins' writing. He takes the few known facts about the battle between the Waldenses' and the Inquisition's determination to exterminate them and turns those facts into a novel of remarkable wisdom and insight. The Waldenses were Protestants marked for extermination by the Inquisition in 1655. Those Waldenses, unlucky enough to be living in relatively accessible country were massacred (about 6,000). The last refuge was a mountain valley of enormous difficulty to attack with only three easily defended points of access. About 150 men fought off 26,000 for weeks and cost the Piedmont Army about 12,000 casualties before being overrun. Even when their valley was overrun the remaining men hid in the caves of the mountains and continued the war. The extraordinary military leader of this campaign was a mountain man named Joshua Gianavel. His wife and three daughters were burned at the stake when he refused to surrender (he and they would have been killed anyway if he had surrendered) and when he crossed the Alps to take his young son (the only surviving member of his family) to Geneva for safekeeping another 300 men volunteered to fight at his side. Ultimately

they defeated the Piedmont Army in a campaign of extraordinary brilliance. Huggins captures the essence of leadership. One follower observes: "In such a situation a man makes a decision by what he has brought to the battle, by what he decided within himself long before the first blow was thrown. Men do not become heroes in a war; they are heroes before a war. War is only the place where their heroism is easily seen." If you would care to understand how history can be made by stubborn idealism reinforced by courage and applied intelligence this is a book you must read.

Think "Braveheart" and "The Patriot" with a better story than either and you will catch a glimpse of how profound this book is. Character development was as thorough as in any book I have read. The story is one of an undying faith that would not be quenched by any evil thrown against it. I walk away from this book examining my own faith and how I would respond to what the people of Rora faced. Joshua Gianavel is a historical figure that must be recognized and lauded as one of the truly great men of history. My fear is that the lack of political-correctness of this book (the war between Catholics and Protestants) will keep it from becoming a major motion picture, even though the story screams for that. I'll be thinking about this book for some time!

This was my first book by James Huggins (I bought it after reading Newt Gingrich's review) and I was not disappointed. I have studied church history in the past and am familiar with the Waldensians, whose story this is based on, but had never heard of Rora, or the hero, Joshua Gianavel. One reviewer said that the characters are unbelievable, and I can see how someone would say this. So, I looked around for more on Joshua Gianavel and found accounts of his life and the story of Rora in Foxe's Book of Martyrs and Wylie's History of Protestantism. Suffice it to say, the true Gianavel was quite a guy. This story is inspirational on several levels. It shows what one person can do against seemingly insurmountable odds and it gives a good demonstration of someone with the courage of their convictions. I would recommend this to anyone who is looking for a good story, as I had a very hard time putting it down. It will also give some insight into the Waldensian movement and the Inquisition. But I believe it especially needs to be read by those in leadership, as Gianavel is one who truly was a great leader.

Out of all his books, this one is the best. It has a larger than life main character, but very believable. The bad guy (whose name I can't pronounce) is like a mid-evil Darth Vader, very ruthless. The Roman Catholic church sends an army of 20,000 plus to destroy a Protestant town, which can only field an army of 20 or more, yet they hold them for days. Plenty of intrigue, action, family and brotherly

love, and strong faith in JESUS CHRIST. There are no supernatural monsters in this one, but one of the best stories I have ever read. (I have actually read it twice, and planning to read it again). Well worth your time, it will have you crying in sorrow and shouting in triumph at the same time.

I'm not a fan of historical fiction because it typically is more fiction than historical, and the author's attempt to rationalize his or her popular-hero-worship. But, with *Rora*, Huggins produces what historical fiction should be: Taking a piece of unpopular history, and showing us that faith, liberty and justice do indeed have a price, how great that price is, and how ordinary people have paid it. We live in a time when we can hardly imagine that price, let alone ourselves ponying it up. If you believe that there is a cycle to history, this book is for you. If you believe that faith is too extreme for Modern Civilization, liberty is dangerous, and justice is doing what you are told, this book is not for you. "What chains can hold is man's. The rest is God's"

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