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Contents

Editorial

David M. Morris
Editor

Once again, it is with great pleasure that we publish another issue of the *International Journal of Mormon Studies* (IJMS). This issue brings together a combination of scholars from different parts of the world and academic disciplines. Drawn from Mormon and non–Mormon perspectives, the articles found herein provide interesting insights to Mormonism globally, encouraging further attention and examination. Following on from the successful *European Mormon Studies Association* (EMSA) conference in Torino, Italy (2009), we have published here many of those papers that were presented during that conference. We are grateful for the submissions and support.

Like all aspects of modern life, and the worldwide recession, financial constraints have not left a journal as this and organisations such as EMSA untouched, and we are particularly grateful to those who have supported us financially, who no doubt would prefer that we do not mention them by name. We are, nevertheless, grateful. As editor I am particularly indebted for the efforts of Kim Östman and Zachary Jones who not only bring a professional and academic eye to this journal, but also selflessly give of their time and talents. We also extend our appreciation to those who blind peer reviewed the articles and took time to review publications that have an international flavour. We hope as an editorial board that you will enjoy the contents of this issue.

UTAH AND ALL THESE CHERRIES: MORMONISM IN FALLACI'S *UN CAPPELLO PIENO DI CILIEGE*

Massimo Introvigne

Oriana Fallaci (1929–2006) originally planned to divide her historical novel *Un cappello pieno di ciliege*, which was published posthumously in 2008, into five parts dealing with the branches of her family which descended from her four grandparents. The story is a complicated one, and would be of interest only to the Fallaci family, if it was not for the fact that the late journalist is world famous. The fourth part, particularly, was published as it was left by the author even though it was clearly in need of revisions. The final part on Fascist Italy, and the activities of her parents as anti–Fascist freedom fighters, was never written.

Fallaci's observations concerning religion are particularly instructive. *Un cappello* includes in its second part a number of anti–Islamic remarks, which would sound familiar to readers of Fallaci's post–9/11 anti–Islamic bestsellers. Her maternal grandmother's ancestor Daniello Launaro (1731–1773), who was kidnapped, enslaved, and killed by Algerian pirates. Fallaci paints a grim picture of slavery under North African Moslems, and compares it unfavourably with other forms of slavery which were admittedly practised by Christians. Fallaci claimed that those enslaved by Moslems, unless they converted to Islam, were much more likely to be tortured or killed. The passages are not exactly new, and a number of historians would agree with her conclusions, but they will surely incense critics of Fallaci, who will claim that she does not see the evil of Christian slavery and that her book is full of her vintage anti–Islamic tirades.

Figure 1. Oriana Fallaci (1929—2006).

But *Un cappello* is not particularly pro–Christian. Fallaci's family was secular and anticlerical and she also became an atheist and never converted to Christianity. But after 9/11 she came to the conclusion that Christianity, and particularly the Catholic Church, was the only agency capable of providing the West with the essential moral force to fight Islam. Much to the chagrin of her liberal friends, she came to the conclusion that the public role of the Catholic Church, and its opposition to abortion and gay rights, should be firmly supported in order to defend the Western tradition which was threatened by Islam. She also expressed a new respect for religion and for the Catholic Church, sought a private meeting with Benedict XVI (whom she greatly admired), and on her deathbed she was assisted by the pro–life Roman Catholic Bishop Rino Fisichella. To the further chagrin of her anticlerical family, she left her papers and library to the Catholic Church, although Bishop Fisichella said that in her last moments he respected her willingness to not convert.

It is unlikely that *Un cappello* was revised after September 2001 because of its anticlericalism and criticism of the Catholic Church. One of the characters she most admires in her genealogical tree is Caterina Zani (1765–1841) who is nicknamed "Caterina the Great." She was the wife of Carlo Fallaci (1752–1839) and a typical village atheist of the Enlightenment. An equally typical Italian anticlerical character is Gio-

batta Cantini (1823–1861), great–grandfather of Fallaci's mother. Fallaci praises the socialist activities of Giobatta in the Italian Risorgimento (i.e. the national fight to create a unified Kingdom of Italy, not supported by the Catholic Church since the fight was led by anti–Catholics and would necessarily involve depriving the Pope of his political power on Rome and the neighbouring regions), and his anticlericalism. The Catholic Church is depicted as a sad, sexist, and anti–feminist institution. The only Catholic priests and friars who are treated sympathetically are those who fought Islam, or tried to help the prisoners enslaved by Moslem pirates, in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Arguably Fallaci would certainly not have presented, at least in these crude terms, such a characterization of the Catholic Church after 9/11.

In *Un cappello* Fallaci's grandmother, on her father's side, was raised in a Waldensian family. Although Fallaci praises the Waldensian resistance against Catholic persecution, she regards the Waldensians of the nineteenth century as no better than their Catholic counterparts. Her ancestors were part of the so called Revival Movement, which swept the Waldensian valleys in the mid–nineteenth century and which was similar to revival movements that took place in other parts of the Protestant world. Fallaci depicts the Revival as an explosion of fanaticism and puritanism, which reduced Waldensian women who were caught in the movement to a status where their sexuality was entirely denied, which was even worse than the situation of women in contemporary Catholicism.

Fallaci notes that some of these Piedmontese Waldensians escaped their valleys by converting to Mormonism and emigrating to Utah. This is a subject almost forgotten in Italy, particularly during the 1990s when Fallaci was writing *Un cappello*. Although Fallaci was obviously familiar with this history it is unclear how much of her family history is true and how much was improvised. But Fallaci claims that she is relating family traditions that she heard from her paternal grandmother. Fallaci wrote that her great–grandmother Anastasia Ferrier (1846–1889) was an illegitimate child of a Waldensian mother and since such children were routinely taken from their mothers and educated in the Catholic faith, her birth was not registered and there was no birth certificate. In fact, there is no firm evidence that this great–grandmother ever actually existed.

Fallaci claims that Anastasia was a successful dancer at the Teatro Regio of Turin, until she was seduced when she was 18 and left pregnant by "the Unnamed" who was a famous character in the Italian

Risorgimento. Although Fallaci promised her grandmother to never reveal the entity of "the Unnamed," she does give both his birth and death dates (1816–1878). Those who think they can simply google the dates and identify the Unnamed are quickly disappointed. There is no famous Risorgimento character, living in Turin when Anastasìa was allegedly there, corresponding to these dates (the nationalist painter Domenico Induno would fit the dates, but he lived in Milan and was never as rich and famous as Fallaci's Unnamed). Fallaci's fans, who are part of an active network on the Internet, have speculated that giving the exact dates would have been tantamount to disclosing the identity of the Unnamed. They believe that the death date, 1878, is correct but the birth date, 1816, is a pun on "1861," the date the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed, a clue to the fact that the Unnamed was in fact the first Italian King, Victor Emmanuel II (1820–1878), who had many lovers and illegitimate children, who is mentioned in the book as an admirer of Anastasìa as a dancer, and who otherwise fits the clues disseminated in *Un cappello*. It is of course also true that fans are quite happy to place royal blood in Fallaci's veins.

According to Fallaci, the Unnamed gave a fair amount of money to Anastasìa to permit her to leave Turin and travel to Cesena where she found revolutionary friends, developed an interest in politics and gave birth to a daughter. Anastasia sent her daughter (Fallaci's grandmother) to an orphanage, and shortly thereafter she immigrated to the U.S.A.

Of course, Fallaci's great–grandmother was not one of Italy's poor immigrants. The Unnamed provided her with money and contacts. She travelled in first class accommodations to New York and was met by friends of her new contacts in Cesena. In New York she lived a great lifestyle and her only worry was that she entered the U.S. with a counterfeit passport. When she was about to be discovered and arrested in 1865, she decided to leave New York and travel to Salt Lake City where she joined her former Waldensian nurse. In Utah the nurse had converted to Mormonism and became one of Brother Dalton's polygamous wives. Although Anastasìa realized that she would probably also need to become a polygamist, she did not really care since she was quite promiscuous in her sexual life and anticipated that she will have another exciting adventure in Utah.

Although Fallaci knows the basic facts about Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and the Mormons, her picture is painted in black–and–white—mostly black. She may have read some books concerning the "new Mormon history" but *Un cappello* lacks any sympathy for the pioneers'

predicament. Brigham Young is "a liar," Brother Dalton "a scoundrel," Anastasia's conversion a mockery. Fallaci regards Mormonism as yet another instance of a patriarchal and anti–feminist religion, similar to traditional Catholicism and Revival Waldensianism. In fact it was even worse because of polygamy which reminds Fallaci of her main foe, Islam. Finally Anastasìa sees the light, skips town, and leaves Salt Lake City forever. Fallaci claims that she found very limited and hypothetical clues about Anastasìa's whereabouts after she left Utah. Based on family traditions (or possibly tall tales) she places in a saloon as a dancer, as a friend or lover of several rough characters and famous Western outlaws, and finally as a madam of a luxurious San Francisco brothel. Eventually she finally succumbs to homesickness and the desire to find her long–abandoned daughter. She returns to Italy to look for her lost child, finds her, and tells her the story. She lives with her for a while before committing suicide in Cesena in 1889.

Of course Anastasìa may not even have existed and may have been a figment of the Fallaci family's imagination that was unwilling to admit that the journalist's grandmother was simply an orphan of unknown origins. It is also suspicious that Anastasìa's last name, Ferrier, is the same of Lucy Ferrier, the unfortunate girl involved in Utah polygamy in Arthur Conan Doyle's anti–Mormon novel and his first novel featuring Sherlock Holmes, *A Study in Scarlet*. Nevertheless Anastasìa, who was created under the pen of such a marvellous writer, is a great character and one that readers will affectionately remember. Less memorable is Fallaci's treatment of the Revival among nineteenth century Waldensians and of Mormonism. Although she did some homework, and avoids the most obvious mistakes, Fallaci reinterpreted the material she obtained through the prejudices of classical Italian secular humanism and anticlericalism.

We know that in her last years Fallaci changed her mind about Roman Catholicism and Christianity in general. Unfortunately, the illness prevented her from revising *Un cappello*, although she regarded it as her magnum opus. We will, accordingly, never know whether her later, kinder treatment of religion would have extended to Mormonism. Perhaps not, since polygamy was in Fallaci's mind connected to Islam, and her negative assessment of Islam and Islamic treatment of women (which was born in years of active duty as a journalist in the Middle East, but became a veritable obsession after 9/11) never changed.