

ries, as Smith has done here, should meticulously research their material, examining and noting contemporary sources.

The fascinating details of a life spent in the councils of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and other Church leaders—summaries of discussions, off-hand conver-

sations, and reactions to revelatory decisions—give readers a great feel for William Clayton and his times. It is unfortunate that the high price of this edition may limit the number of readers who have access to Clayton's universally appealing story.

The Budding of Mormon History in Italy

Le nuove religioni by Massimo Introvigne (Milano: SugarCo, 1989), 429 pp.

Le sette cristiane: Dai Testimoni di Geova al Reverendo Moon by Massimo Introvigne (Milano: Mondadori, 1989), 187 pp.

"Il canone aperto: rivelazione e nuove rivelazioni nella teologia e nella storia dei Mormoni," in *Le nuove rivelazioni* by Massimo Introvigne (Leumann [Torino]: Elle Di Ci, 1991), 277 pp.

I Mormoni. Leggenda e storia, liturgia e teologia dei Santi degli Ultimi Giorni by Michele Straniero (Milano: Mondadori, 1990), 233 pp.

Reviewed by Michael W. Homer, an attorney practicing in Salt Lake City.

SINCE 1844 NUMEROUS BOOKS have been published in Italy containing the observations of travelers who have visited Nauvoo or Salt Lake City. While some of these travel accounts have been remarkably objective, most have been only short, superficial accounts of Mormonism included in books recounting a much larger travel itinerary than Utah. Before 1989 only four books exclusively devoted to Mormonism (other than Italian translations of Church publications) had been published in Italy. Of these, the only objective treatments were by foreign authors translated into Italian. Other books were proselyting attempts by Italian converts inviting others to join the Church or warnings by Catholic priests to their flocks about the message of Mormon missionaries. During the past two years, however, four new books written by non-Mormon Italians have attempted to present an objective view of Mormonism in Italian. Three of these books, writ-

ten by Massimo Introvigne, include chapters devoted to Mormon history and doctrines. A patent attorney from Turin, Introvigne lectured at the University of Turin until 1988 when he founded the Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR). CESNUR has an international board of religious scholars, holds yearly conferences, and has published numerous articles and books on "new religious movements." Introvigne has also presented papers at three conferences of the Mormon History Association.

Le nuove religioni is an encyclopedic treatment of the world's major "new religious movements." Within the group of religions which originated in the United States, Introvigne recognizes Mormonism as the most famous and, together with Irvingism, as one of the most widespread "restoration movements." Although Introvigne relies exclusively on secondary source material, he is familiar with the latest scholarly works on the history and doctrine of Mormonism and avoids the pitfall of most Italian writers of the past 150 years, who have relied almost exclusively on anti-Mormon and sectarian writers. He is also one of the first Italian writers to recognize the historical roots of Mormonism in Italy: Italy was one of Mormonism's earliest missions, and Mormonism was one of the first sects to actively proselyte in Italy.

In *Le sette cristiane*, Introvigne explores the history and doctrines of Mormonism in more detail. The three chapters regarding Mormonism were originally published in a Catholic weekly for a general (rather than scholarly) audience. As in *Le nuove religioni*, Introvigne has relied on scholarly

works by Leonard Arrington, Davis Bitton, Fawn Brodie, Sterling McMurrin, Thomas O'Dea, Michael Quinn, Jan Shipps, James Allen, and Glen Leonard. He has also relied on Bruce R. McConkie and LeGrand Richards for theological perspective. Because of space limitations, Introvigne in a few instances introduces interesting areas of historical debate without fully developing them. For example, he notes that it has been questioned whether a religious revival actually occurred in upstate New York at the time of Joseph Smith's first vision but does not refer to the various scholarly articles which have responded to this argument. In addition, he notes that even at its height perhaps only 5 percent of the Saints ever practiced polygamy, a fact which warrants fuller discussion in a lengthier treatise. Nevertheless, Introvigne's book is both fair and evenhanded. This alone makes it an anomaly in Italy.

Perhaps the most scholarly article written by Introvigne about the Mormon Church is "Il canone aperto: rivelazione e nuove rivelazioni nella teologia e nella storia dei Mormoni," which was first presented as a paper at a CESNUR conference and has now been published for a wider Italian audience as a chapter in *Le nuove rivelazioni*. This article analyzes the doctrine of continuing revelation, revelations received by Mormon prophets, and the interesting dichotomy created in a church which believes in continuing revelation and past "revelations" contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. Introvigne quotes, probably for the first time in a non-English language, portions of various articles which have been published in *DIALOGUE*, *Sunstone*, *Journal of Mormon History*, and *BYU Studies*, as well as the works of authors such as Hugh Nibley and Bruce R. McConkie.

Like Introvigne, Michele Straniero also attempts to present an objective general history of the Mormon Church. Straniero is a free-lance journalist who has written books on Don Bosco, the

Waldensians, San Gennaro, and Songs of the Italian Risorgimento. He has been an observer of Mormonism since 1973 when the late Harold B. Lee visited Italy on his return from a visit to Israel, and Straniero wrote an article concerning a press conference held by President Lee in the Milanese weekly magazine *Il Tempo*. He has since visited Utah and written favorable articles in *La Stampa*, Turin's largest newspaper, and in *Il Giornale Della Musica*, a Milanese musical journal.

Straniero's book takes a journalistic rather than academic approach to Mormonism. Like *Le sette cristiane*, it was published by Mondadori for the casual reader and in much larger editions than most books about Mormonism in Italy. Unfortunately, Straniero reviews only the early history of the Church and fails to discuss important historical developments since the Manifesto. However, the book does attempt to present Mormon history accurately, quoting from Mormon sources such as Joseph Smith, which have never previously appeared in the Italian language. In addition, Straniero quotes from the works of B. H. Roberts, Leonard Arrington, Davis Bitton, Marvin Hill, James Allen, and Glenn Leonard. For doctrinal issues, he relies almost exclusively on Talmage and McConkie.

Straniero does not ignore the works of non-Mormons. But he does not conclude, like many anti-Mormon writers (whose works frequently appear in Italy), that non-Mormon historians or ex-Mormons have any greater credibility than Mormons themselves. Yet he does tend to be jocular in his evaluation of Mormon theology and sometimes patronizing about Mormonism in general. Even though this book is not "faith promoting," however, it is nonsectarian and an improvement over most books written by non-Mormons in Italy. Straniero attempts to state the facts accurately; the book's tone is another matter and may offend some devout Saints just as his books about Catholics have offended some church-going parishioners.