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Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism Dolores Hayden

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HAYDEN, DOLORES. *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790–1975.* Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976. ix + 401 pp. $16.95

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Dolores Hayden's pathbreaking *Seven American Utopias* examines architecture, landscape architecture, and town planning in seven American utopian communities to see how the communities' physical facilities aided or retarded social interaction and larger community goals. The settlements examined range from the nineteenth century Shaker settlement at Hancock, Massachusetts, to the twentieth century Llano del Rio community of California and Louisiana which continued until 1938. The book shows familiarity with historical and anthropological as well as architectural secondary works and benefits from Ms. Hayden's familiarity with the impact of planning on utopian communities of the 1960s and 1970s. In many ways, the study is architectural history as it should be written, integrating a community's history with its design concepts which range from community planning and vernacular building forms to provisions for private and public spaces. She examines each community in terms of three dilemmas: the balance between authority and participation, community and privacy, and uniqueness and replicability.

Readers of *BYU Studies* will find greatest interest in Chapter 5, "Eden versus Jerusalem," the longest chapter in the book, which deals with the Mormon experience in Nauvoo. This chapter examines Mormon architecture from new perspectives and should influence most later studies on Nauvoo and Mormon architecture. Unfortunately, however, the study is often more suggestive than definitive and suffers from a limited familiarity with Mormon history and thought. As the chapter title indicates, Professor Hayden views Nauvoo architecture and planning in terms of a conflict between two goals: "Eden, a model of earthly paradise . . . a garden city of single-family dwellings," and "Jerusalem, a model of heaven . . . a cult center dominated by twin monuments, the temple and the prophet's residence." The interaction between the secular and religious ideals for the city of Zion, in theory and practice, is an important theme in Mormon architectural history which needs further examination. However, building a community of substantial houses surrounded by gardens is not necessarily in conflict with the building of a religious community, any more than present ad-

monitions by Mormon leaders to clean up houses and communities and plant gardens is in conflict with appeals for building funds for chapels and temples.

What is disturbing about Hayden's analysis is that she seems to view the two strains in great conflict without fully understanding the underlying religious motivation of the city. The ideal of the secular city (Eden) was not viewed as an abstract goal separated from the concept of a religious center, but as a method to realize the religious goal. The disagreement over the location of Nauvoo's business district, which Hayden uses to illustrate the conflict between "Eden" and "Jerusalem," for example, was much more a surfacing of growing religious disagreements over resource allotment (which she mentions) and issues such as polygamy than it was an abstract planning disagreement.

The same problem exists in her contention that the conflict between the two ideals was resolved in Utah with a victory of the secular city and a change in the function of the temple from a place of assembly to "a monument in the funerary sense, a tomb." Such a view does not understand the importance of the temple in later Mormon thought and ignores works such as Richard O. Cowan's *Temple Building Ancient and Modern,* which trace changing functions and plans of Mormon temples.

Hayden's chapter on Nauvoo does not fully develop two of the three basic themes she examines about all seven communities. Her discussion of public spaces in Nauvoo concentrates almost entirely on the temple and Nauvoo House, dismissing the Seventies' Hall and the Masonic Hall at one point as "two small institutional buildings." These two halls along with the concert hall, the grove, and such semipublic spaces as Joseph Smith's store played a much more important role in the public life of Nauvoo than she indicates, and it appears that the replication of these forms in later Mormon towns, far more than the creation of definite town centers in Utah fostered the later harmony between public and private space she notes.

Secondly, Hayden's section on the replicability of Nauvoo could have been much stronger. In fact, most of the early architectural history of Salt Lake City and much of Utah can be viewed as an attempt to reproduce Nauvoo. This includes not only the basic city plan but buildings ranging from religious and community structures like the temple, the Salt Lake Theater, and the social hall to private residences. While Hayden is right in noting that the stepped gables which seem to be the most prominent ar-

chitectural feature in the area restored by the Nauvoo Restoration were not transferred in mass to the Great Basin, settlers took another vernacular form directly from the Mississippi River town to the Intermountain West. Throughout Utah and Idaho are still found numerous examples of the "Nauvoo house," a simple rectangular building with a central hall, one or two stories high, one or two rooms wide, often with simple Greek revival details. These houses, patterned after the houses Church members remembered in Nauvoo were built long after the rest of the country had moved on to other styles.

The book's illustrations are excellent, including diagrams and plans for the Nauvoo Temple along with a wide variety of photographs and drawings. Two errors in illustration identification are, however, annoying. She identifies the Jonathan Browning house (Figure 5.10) as the James Ivins printing complex located across the street, and identifies Figure 5.34 as a contemporary view of the temple by C. C. A. Christensen. Since Christensen did not leave his native Denmark until after the temple had been destroyed, it cannot be considered contemporary in the same sense as the two photographs of the temple she also includes.

Such shortcomings, however, should not discourage use of the book by those interested in Mormon architecture and planning. The book examines important questions which have too often been ignored in studies of Mormon architecture. It is not a definitive study, but it is a very important book perhaps more for the questions it raises than for the answers it proposes.