"The Church and Colonel Saunders": Mormon Standard Plan Architecture

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"THE CHURCH AND COLONEL SAUNDERS": MORMON STANDARD PLAN ARCHITECTURE

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of arts

by
Martha Sonntag Bradley
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This Thesis, by Martha Sonntag Bradley, is accepted in its present form by the Department of History of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

James B. Allen, Committee Chairman

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23 July, 1981

Date

James B. Allen, Department Chairman
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PREFACE

For 150 years Latter-day Saints have been raising temples and churches to their God that serve, in part as positive proof of their faith. This study is concerned with the Mormon Church's program of standard plan architecture, which with its $1 million a day building pace directs architectural standards in the Church. It covers the period 1930-1980 and asks the question: Is standard architectural planning an appropriate answer to the demands of the building program of the Mormon Church?

This study is in no sense a history of Mormon architecture in those years. Rather, it is an account of one aspect of Latter-day Saint architecture, namely, standard planning. At least three distinct stages are discussed: 1) the experimental stage under Joseph Don Carlos Young and Theodore Pope, 2) the labor missionary program and the beginning of the bureaucratic approach to architecture, and 3) the institutionalization of the program under the Church Building Department.

An attempt is made to trace the development of standard plan policies and the consequences of those policies on Mormon architecture. This is done by focusing on the statements of architects involved in the program, critics of the structures, secondary material in news-
papers, conference talks and other sources that reveal various attitudes towards standard plan buildings. To make a comparison between new attitudes and policies and those expressed in the period before the 1960's it is also necessary to look at the literature of the periods in which key buildings were built.

The questions, Is the Mormon Church's exploitation of standard plans unique for official Church architecture?, or, Are there similar programs in use by other religious groups? will be discussed in an effort to view the Latter-day Saint Church program in the context of American religious architecture.

There is clearly some interesting literature on the subject, including a few articles in Dialogue. In 1968, an enlightening roundtable discussion between five architects was published: "Mormon Architecture Today", which focused on the importance of educating Mormons to the expectation of excellence in architecture. The article was a frank and candid portrayal of those architects' fears for the future of architecture in the Mormon Church.

Another article, "Why the Coalville Tabernacle had to be razed", Dialogue Summer 1973, considered the Mormon Church's attitude towards the preservation of existing structures. The author, Mark Leone, presented some important ideas about the expendibility of contemporary
buildings and argued that the new "Standard" buildings do not stimulate an intimate response between the member and his chapel. Donald Bergsma, again in Dialogue 1968, in "The Temple as a Symbol" presented a compelling argument as to the appropriateness of the new Latter-day Saint temples as symbols of the truth as represented in Mormon doctrine. Finally, a much more neutral and unabrasive treatment of the subject was published in Building Design and Construction in December of 1979, "Building at a $1 million a Day Pace".

Other sources that have been used include oral interviews which were conducted under the auspices of the oral history program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with men who served in the Building Missionary program of the Church in the 1960's. Interviews also have been conducted with key individuals involved in the standard plan program after 1960. These people have made available for research numerous floorplans, elevations, models and slides of standard plans currently in use and those used in the past. Most specific financial information however, is not available.

Officials in the standard plan and special projects divisions of the Church Building department have been particularly accommodating and generous in their contributions of slides, information and insight. Without their kind assistance this study could not have been done.
Chapter 1

MORMONISM

Mormonism began in a period of religious fervor in New York State in the early 19th century. In 1820, in response to a fervent prayer occasioned by his confusion over the multiplicity of churches in Western New York, Joseph Smith, Jr. saw in vision, God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, who told him that there was no true church on the earth. Through subsequent revelations Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon and in 1830 organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹

In Mormonism's formative period doctrine was revealed, converts gathered together and communities were established in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois. Even in the

¹The most extensive overview of Church History to date is B.H. Robert's A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 vols., (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1930). Recently some new one volume works have been done which are useful in establishing a basic understanding of Church history. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard's ambitious work, The Story of the Latter-day Saints, (Salt Lake City: 1976, Deseret Book) and Leonard J. Arrington's and Davis Bitton's, Mormon Experience, (New York: Alfred P. Knoph, 1979) are particularly important.
early years of the Church it was apparent that Mormonism was a force, albeit not always a welcome one, to be recognized. Controversy and conflict followed wherever groups of Saints gathered. Paradoxically, much about Mormonism was typically American.\(^2\) As Ralph Barton Perry observed in 1949 in his book *Characteristically American*:

Mormonism was a sort of Americanism in miniature; in its republicanism, its emphasis on compact in both church and politics, its associations of piety with conquest and adventure, its sense of destiny, its resourcefulness and capacity for organization.\(^3\)

Thus, Mormonism like Americanism, was based on dualities that both contradicted and sustained it. The pragmatic, earthly concern for this life, the emphasis on order and structure and even the peculiar cooperative ventures of the Church were typical of Jacksonian America.

Many New Englanders felt comfortable with the new religion and found much in it that reflected typical Puritan ideas. Both ideologies described a personal intimate Father who directed the lives of his chosen few.


Both groups went into the wilderness both to separate from and serve as an example to the world. And finally, Latter-day Saints, like their Puritan forefathers, strained toward perfection convinced that the effort itself was a virtue.\(^4\)

The first fifteen years of the Church were dominated by the charismatic figure of the Prophet Joseph Smith. As a leader he directed both temporal and spiritual activities and suggested that there was little difference between the two. "All things unto me are spiritual," the Lord said, "and not at any time have I given unto you a law which is temporal."\(^5\)

After leaving their homes in Jackson Co., Missouri, Far West, Missouri and Kirtland, Ohio a large group of members gathered together on the banks of the Mississippi in Commerce, Illinois. Called Nauvoo by the Saints, this town would be by 1845 one of the two largest cities in


\(^5\)Doctrine & Covenants, Section 29, Verse 34.
Illinois and would at one time have an estimated 12,000 inhabitants.⁶

As in their earlier homes, relations between the Mormons and the citizens of the state quickly detriorated. The new doctrines, rituals and secret ceremonies that were revealed in Nauvoo were at the base of the conflict in Illinois; particularly the notion of the political Kingdom of God and the rumors that the heirarchy of the Church was practicing polygamy.⁷

Despite the similarities, despite common traditions and philosophies, Mormons and Gentiles, like water and oil, didn't mix. The millenialism of the Mormons was based in part on the expectation that the governments of men would fall and that the political Kingdom of God would be established instead. Latter-day Saints during 1830-40 interpreted this literally and diligently attempted to produce visual and temporal evidence of their spiritual

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⁶ Two recent studies on Nauvoo are useful: Robert B. Flanders, Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), and David E. Miller, Nauvoo: The City of Joseph, (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1974).

commitment. Klaus Hansen in his book, *Quest for Empire*, claimed that this curious mixture of church and state, which centralized social economic and political power under one body, alarmed outsiders who saw only its un-American, exclusive and antipluralistic elements rather than seeing it as an attempt to establish a community.  

The confrontation between Saints and Gentiles culminated in 1844 with the assassination of Joseph Smith and two years later in the expulsion of the Saints from Nauvoo. Under the leadership of the new Prophet Brigham Young the Church left the United States and sought a new home in the West.

The Mormon settlement of the Great Basin was an impressive accomplishment. When Brigham Young died in 1877 more than 300 settlements had been established. Under his direction, colonizing efforts extended the Mormon sphere of control in the effort to achieve local autonomy and self-sufficiency.

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8 Several studies have been made on the Kingdom of God idea in Mormon history, of which the most exhaustive is Klaus J. Hansen's, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967).

After the achievement of territorial status the preservation of an independent kingdom appeared to be dependent on statehood. However, the twin issues of polygamy and the close connection between church and state delayed Utah's efforts to become a state. After six abortive attempts at statehood over a period of almost fifty years, a vigorous legislative campaign to "Americanize" Utah, and the "manifesto" ending official polygamy, Utah, in 1896, became the 46th state in the union.¹⁰

The price of statehood was, however, dear for the Mormons and it was only through what one author has called, "creative adaptation"¹¹ that the Church became more palatable to the general public of the United States. In the twentieth century and after statehood members were no longer urged to gather to Zion but were encouraged instead to help the Church grow in their local areas. The emphasis at the turn of the century was in

¹⁰A detailed account of the crusade against Utah's statehood efforts is presented in Gustive O. Larson's study, The Americanization of Utah for Statehood, (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1971) in which he argues that polygamy more than any other issue barred Utah from statehood and it was only after sufficient, albeit painful change, that Utah entered the Union.

building up the Church rather than in colonization efforts. It was also necessary to adjust and adapt the internal organization of the Church program for missionary work to accommodate the great change that had occurred in the number and nature of the membership.\(^{12}\)

Growth more than any other single element marked the development of the Church in the twentieth century. The increasing international nature of the Church prompted expansion in church administration in the attempt to accommodate members across the globe.

New problems, other than conflict with the government of the country, demanded the attention of Church leaders. Thomas O'Dea suggested in his sociological study, *The Mormon's*, that Church programs attempted to create institutional cohesiveness and order. Increased membership in foreign countries demanded unity, continuity and uniformity in Church programs across the world.\(^{13}\)

Mormonism was a vibrant force in the lives of its members and was indeed a force to be recognized. Changes in programs and organization represented the changed


nature of the membership and the world itself. To match the growth in membership and activity, the international nature of the Church, and the involvement of the Church in an increasing number of business activities, Church administration grew to a size and complexity that would have been unrecognizable to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Much about the Church was similar in scope to big business, in which the business of the Church was missionary work, temple work and the job of keeping Church members active and faithful.

Throughout Mormon history, temples, churches and other buildings have been erected by members in diverse locations around the world. These structures stand together as a distinct group in terms of form and function. New Church buildings erected by the Latter-day Saints differ from earlier ones because of the changing needs of the Church. Whatever the design, whether Prairie style or Gothic Revival, each Mormon church building was expressive of the cultural climate of its own time.

The building program of the Mormon Church historically reflected the dynamics of the Church itself. Growth stimulated a tremendous building effort to build the Kingdom and to sustain the membership. Mormons have always been a building people. They have erected temples and churches, wherever they have lived, for worship and to serve as monuments to the Lord.
The first century of Mormon architecture was distinguished in both scope and concept. Latter day-Saints erected a variety of different types and styles of buildings that housed members as they worshipped God. Throughout the period the effort was made to create proud monuments to the Lord. These early temples, tabernacles and meetinghouses display the finest craftsmanship, materials and technology available to the Church and collectively represent a "golden age" in Mormon architecture.

The earliest temples built by the Church were basically conceived as New England meetinghouses. The Kirtland temple, dedicated in 1836, was divided into two main levels which were large assembly halls. (See Figure #1). The main floor had, unlike congregational church buildings, a double front with pulpits on each end of the rectangular space.

The pulpit on the east end consisted of three tiers of triple seats, which symbolized the three offices the Aaronic Priesthood. A similar pulpit was built on the west end of the hall which represented the Melchizedek
Figure #1 Kirtland Temple, 1836
Priesthood and its three offices. Veils or curtains could be lowered from the ceiling by hidden ropes and pulleys to divide the pulpit area from the rest of the room for private meetings between church leaders.

The upper floor of the temple was used for educational purposes. The attic level was divided into several smaller rooms which were used as offices and for small gatherings of Church leaders.\textsuperscript{14}

The temple built in Nauvoo, while still basically in the form of a meetinghouse, added new elements to the Kirtland temple design. (See figure #2). A basement story was built which included an elaborate baptismal font for baptisms for the dead. Revelations about temple work, the endowment,\textsuperscript{15} baptism for the dead, and marriage sealings, prompted change in the interior of the temple to


\textsuperscript{15}The Endowment. James E. Talmage, in The House of the Lord, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), pp. 99-101, gives the following explanation of the endowment: "The Temple endowment, as administered in modern temples, comprises instruction relating to the significance and sequence of past dispensations, and the importance of the present as the greatest and grandest era in human history...The ordinances of the endowment embody certain obligations on the part of the individual,... With the taking of each covenant and the assuming of each obligation of a promised blessing is pronounced, contingent upon the faithful observance of the conditions."
Figure #2 Nauvoo Temple, 1845
accommodate the new ordinances. The main level, as in Kirtland, was used for general Church services while the endowment was performed in the upper levels. A mezzanine of offices and classrooms ran along the sides of the assembly room on the main level.

The Latter-day Saints did not start with a clearly articulated concept of Mormon temple design. Nineteenth century Saints were willing to utilize features from a variety of different styles to create a beautiful building. But even in this early period it was evident that the temple would be, to the Mormons, significant in both form and function.

The building of the "City Beautiful" was marked by an aggressive, self-confident attitude towards building. Although brick houses lined the streets, no meetinghouse was constructed other than the temple. Large church meetings were held each Sunday in fields or under boweries, for the entire group of Saints. While some small gatherings were held in homes, most preaching services were held outdoors and were city-wide affairs.

It was under Brigham Young's direction that the design for the interior of the temple was further

elaborated. The original plan for the Salt Lake Temple was, as in Nauvoo, like a meetinghouse but by the time work on the temple began church architect Truman Angell Jr.'s concept of the progression of the endowment from room to room had been developed and incorporated into the temple design. 17

The four 19th century Utah temples were generically related and can be considered as a body with stylistic, functional and ideological limits. They were the cumulative result of an evolution in Latter-day Saint architecture which reflected the increased importance of temple work.

Each of the four temples was constructed with massive thick walled masonry. (See figure #4). The style of each temple was a variation of the castellated Gothic Style with non-functional buttresses, crenellations, towers, turrets, battlements and other Gothic elements super-imposed upon the simple rectangular shape of the Kirtland and Nauvoo meetinghouse design.

Figure #3 Salt Lake Temple dedicated 1893
With the exception of the St. George Temple, the Utah temples were double ended. Facades on the west and east ends were symbolically and functionally prominent. The Salt Lake Temple was the first to express externally the hierarchy of the Priesthood. The three part elevation of the facade, like the pulpits of the Kirtland temple, was a visual enumeration of the idea of the importance of the Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthoods. The Priesthood was an element of Church doctrine that solidified an hierarchal order within the organization of the Church.

From the exterior the Salt Lake Temple gave the impression of being multi-storied because of the rows of windows along the side walls. This illusion didn't express the intricacies of the arrangement of rooms on the lower levels that were used for the procession of the endowment. The rows of windows did not necessarily correspond to the internal arrangement. To provide for better, more spacious accommodations for the endowment and because of a new emphasis on the ordinances performed in the temple and not its use as a place of assembly, the lower assembly hall was eliminated from the plan. It included, instead, five large ordinance rooms that connected in progressively higher elevations and that were separated and divided by a few steps of a processional hall.

The Church, through these 19th century temples, attempted to create magnificent monuments to the Lord.
Laborers and artists of all varieties, including mechanics, masons, plasterers, carpenters, glaziers and painters were utilized in the decoration of the temple. Many large paintings were hung throughout; eventually ceilings and walls in many of the endowment rooms were themselves painted to depict the different degrees of glory. The combination of art windows, fine paneling and molding which became progressively richer and more elaborate from room to room symbolized the steps in the endowment ceremony itself. There was a special atmosphere created in the elegant and lush environment of these fine old temples that was particularly conducive to communion with the spirit. The intuitive sense of craftsmanship and excellence, pride in the workmanship and lavishness in detailing reflected the importance of the work that went on in the temples.

When a meetinghouse was erected in the Great Basin the emphasis was on pragmatic functional shapes. Early examples of Church buildings were vernacular structures with little, if any, decoration. They were essentially subsistence structures that provided vital services first. Used simultaneously for Church meetings, school sessions and social gatherings these boxy structures were considered adequate while the population was fighting for survival in the new and sometimes harsh environment. (See figure #5). It was not until the 20th century that Church auxiliary programs became institutionalized and
spaces within the Church became specialized in function.  

It was suggested by Church leaders that Saints look to the land for building materials. Though wood was scarce, the Saints were able, with handmade adobe bricks, to build structures similar to familiar Colonial prototypes. Sturdy rock meetinghouses, like that built in Farmington, Utah, 1862, were also built in many of the fledgling settlements. (See figure #6). Again, Mormon architectural types expressed the changing availability of materials and technologies and illustrated the pragmatic functionalism of the Church in its early years.

Typically, the gabled end of the steeply pitched roof of these multi-purpose Church schools faced the street. Many of these small rectangular structures were built with two stories so that an even greater number of activities could take place within. One story would often serve for worship services and the second for secular affairs.

The Pine Valley, Utah chapel, built in 1868-84, had the gabled end of the two story structure facing the

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Figure #5 Salt Lake Tenth Wardhouse, 1873

Figure #6 West Jordan Rock Meetinghouse, 1860's
street. (See figure #7). Two flanking staircases led to the entrance on the second level in the center of the facade. Its Greek Revival details lent quiet dignity to the structure. Most decoration in the 1850's and 60's reflected the Greek Revival that was popular back in the United States. Classic cornices, integrated quoins and fine wood moldings combined with the familiar vernacular forms to produce a new feeling of integrity and refinement in these Church buildings.

Often in this early period, however, factors other than stylistic ones determined the spatial expression of Mormon needs in buildings. During the pre-railroad days, the late 1850's and early 60's, new industries were established in the Great Basin which supplied a variety of materials and technologies for building. These included window sashes, elaborate wood moldings and kiln dried bricks.

Responding to the reorganization of the Relief Society in 1867, to the organization of the Retrenchment Societies in 1869, and to the organization of the Primary in 1876 many wards built separate recreation halls and Relief Society halls for auxiliary and social activities. These auxiliary buildings were again simple vernacular structures with no claim to individuality in style or form. Some were identifiable as Church buildings, by carved symbols on entrance mantles or on stone cornice moldings.
Figure #7 Pine Valley Chapel
The year 1869 was critical in the history of Mormon architectural styles and forms. When the railroad first came to Utah, it brought with it a new world of architectural forms. Perhaps most important was the availability of a multitude of new and sometimes glorious materials and technologies. Larger panes of window glass, machinery and furniture could more easily and rapidly be brought to Utah for use in the construction of new Church buildings.

Clearly, the exposure to national styles had a profound effect on Utah church architecture. Though the Mormon Church was based on revelation of new Church doctrine and procedures, its cultural traditions and heritage were related to Christian Gothic forms. Several Gothic revival chapels were built with the typical pointed arches, stained glass windows and vertical spires. The Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward, 1879, as well as the four Utah temples showed the use of Gothic decorative elements. (See figure #8).

Churches of local materials and forms combined with decorative elements of the Gothic revival or Classical styles, continued to be built into the 1890's across the Great Basin. This was particularly true in the more remote or recent settlements that were isolated from national trends in architecture.

Early Mormon churches often had a simple cupola or bell tower in the center of the pitched roof. Starting in
Figure #8 Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward, 1879
the late 1870's a centrally engaged tower and steeple was often used instead, which was familiar in form, to Saints from both New England and England. Through the work of James Gibbs in America, Christopher Wren's tower at St. Mary-le-Bow influenced a number of architects who modified, imitated and created hundreds of towers for churches throughout the United States. Surely this tower type, its size, proportions and style represented to the Mormons simplicity, rationality and stability.

These larger churches of the late pioneer period were often built with kiln dried bricks, though the use of adobe also persisted. More variety in window shapes, door bays and interior decorative detailing created a more clearly church-like, sacred space. The painting of murals in chapels would be considered throughout the 50 years after 1870 an appropriate form of chapel elaboration. The variety of different details, styles and sizes of Church buildings revealed that this was a period of intense groping for an appropriate "Mormon" style from a plethora of different types.

Mormons have always met together regularly in large groups, as directed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 20, for quarterly conferences and other Church gatherings. Some large regions built larger and more elaborate structures known as tabernacles. These buildings expressed a sense of strength and the enduring power of the Kingdom of God on the earth, or at least in
those particular areas. Tabernacles made a most powerful and imposing architectural statement about the Saints who built them and the Church they represented.

Tabernacles were built for a different purpose than temples and wardhouses. They were clearly not social centers, as were the ward meetinghouses, to be used intermittently for dances, plays or socials. Nor were they designed for the performance of special temple ordinances. They were primarily built for the assemblage of large bodies of the membership. In their size and often elaborate ornamentation, they were proud monuments to the Kingdom. They were distinctive not only in purpose, but also in their large scale, increased seating capacity and spectacular forms and detailing.

Tabernacles were built with considerable freedom in matters of style and form. And though they were each built for the similar reasons, they exhibited dissimilar styles as a group. The elliptical dome of the Salt Lake Tabernacle dominated the center of Salt Lake City for several years before the temple was finished. Its innovative design and relatively unique appearance were specifically determined by the function of the building. The elegant Bountiful Tabernacle, built in 1857-63, represented the flowering of the Greek Revival in the Great Basin. Members in St. George raised a stately Colonial tabernacle which was constructed with native red sandstone, and the Coalville Tabernacle was an eclectic
mixture of the elements of the Gothic revival and Second empire styles. These four examples formed a group distinct from the temples and wardhouses that were built in the 19th century. (See figure #9).

The Mormons have always been a building people. The image of "building the Kingdom" was familiar to them and encouraged the raising of monuments to the Lord. The temples, tabernacles and wardhouses built in the late 19th century were tremendous undertakings that anticipated the future growth of the Church and visualized the confidence that the Saints had in their mission.

The period from 1890-1910 was marked by a reaching out on the part of Church architects towards a new variety of styles. The 1890's were years of international exhibitionism, expressionism and architectural bedlam in the United States. In the year 1893 the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Illinois presented the last massive tribute to ancient architectural types. The new century began with the hope of new attitudes towards form, function and particularly style.

The 1890's marked the end of official Mormon isolationism with the entrance of Utah as a state of the Union. With statehood, the Church agreed to ease its political control in directing settlement of the Great Basin. Consequently, this was reflected in a growing autonomy in local church construction which resulted in
Figure #9 Bountiful Tabernacle
1857-84
more pronounced individuality in new buildings, particularly in areas out of the Salt Lake Valley.

Prior to 1890 wardhouses were primarily functional. However, after 1890 and into the 1920's, several architectural monuments to the Church were built. Many of these chapels were unique, though not progressive in style, again reflecting a turning to elements of the past or of exotic foreign cultures. The Nebo Stake Tabernacle built in 1906 in Payson, Utah, was an Italianate design which expressed the height of individuality in the period. (See figure #10).

Although detached ward recreation halls were built as late as the 1920's, after the turn of the century it became more common to have the two main assembly rooms in one structure. Many recreation halls were remodeled for use as ward chapels or were used temporarily until new churches could be built. This flexible attitude towards the secular vs. sacred nature of the chapel space was first seen in Mormon architecture at Kirtland. Moreover, this liberal attitude foreshadowed a predilection for multiple uses of interior space that would increase in the late 1970's and 1980's.

The decade after statehood was marked as well by a new emphasis on expanding the horizons of the Church; there was a new move towards the establishment of worldwide missions. The organization of several new stakes and wards created an increased demand for
Figure #10 Nebo Stake Tabernacle
1906
meetinghouses and an expanded building program. Even in this early period it was evident that the Church would need a progressive attitude towards building.

After the Salt Lake Temple was completed in 1893, there was a gap of twenty-six years before another temple was built, this time in 1919 at Laie, Oahu, Hawaii. (See figure #11). This ushered in a new era of temple building for the Latter-day Saints, accompanied by a change in attitude towards temples and the importance of increased accessibility to temple worship for members of the Church around the world. Reflecting the worldwide expansion of the Church missionary program and sufficient growth in membership to warrant a temple project, temples in the next ten years, were built in Hawaii, Canada and Arizona, which broadened the areas temples could service.19

These three temples departed dramatically from the castellated Gothic style of the Utah temples and stand as a distinct group with stylistic, volumetric and ideological similarities. All three were designed in the office of Hyrum Pope and Harold Burton, whose influence in private practice would profoundly effect contemporary Mormon Church architecture.

19See Paul Anderson's paper presented in October, 1980 at the "Mormon Mosaic" at Brigham Young University, "Early 20th Century Mormon Temples."
Figure #11 Hawaiian Temple, 1919

Alberta, Canada Temple, 1923
Control over the temple design, though technically still in the hands of the Church President, shifted in fact to individuals involved in secular practice. This attitude of confidence in the professional architect created a new atmosphere of artistic freedom in which these men worked through the 1930's. The result was a flowering of Church architecture that produced an excellence in concept and building design that many critics of Mormon architecture still consider to be the best ever produced by the Church.

Under the direction of truly creative and talented architects working in the firm of Pope and Burton the three temples built in this period were in a contemporary mode reflective of the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright. The double ended form of the Utah temples was rejected and instead of the longitudinal axis of the earlier temple Canadian and Hawaiian temples were centralized Greek or Maltese crosses. The Arizona temple was essentially a square.

The heavy geometric shapes of these temples were similar in dimension to the temples of the Mayan and Aztec civilizations. The volumes and surface articulation formed a visual and tangible link between modern day temple work and the Book of Mormon civilization. The Book of Mormon was described by Joseph Smith Jr., as the keystone of Mormon theology. This connection between style and
symbolism appears to have significance in the context of Mormon religion.

Both the interiors and exteriors of these temples were distinguished by greater flexibility and innovation in design. A variety of different shapes, sizes and relationships were experimented with which facilitated the progression of the endowment through different rooms. The Alberta Temple, as well as the Mesa and Laie Temples, expressed, externally, the progression of the endowment within. The major rooms determined the exterior shape of each temple and created a strong sense of continuity in purpose and design. Each room was built slightly higher than the proceeding one, culminating in the central space of the celestial room. This visually represented the progression towards eternal life that was called "the plan of salvation" in Mormon doctrine. This unity of form and purpose was a remarkable achievement and produced three powerful and honest architectural expressions of the Mormon faith.

The close relationship and continuity between the interior and exterior spaces of the temple was particularly successful in the building of both the Cardston and Laie temples. In the Hawaiian Temple, the best of Church art created a powerful architectural statement through the integration of the decorative, visual and architectural arts. Murals by some of the finest artists working for the Church covered walls
throughout the temple. Sculptures by Avard Fairbanks, that portrayed the Hawaiian people in Mormon theological images, stood in the gardens surrounding the temple. The interior of the Cardston Temple, like the basic temple form itself, departed radically from the traditional forms for surface elaboration of previous temples. Choice woods in a variety of types and arranged in intricate geometric patterns covered walls throughout the temple, again reflect the Incan and Mayan designs. The warmth of the rich panels created a dramatically different environment from the baroque lushness of the Salt Lake Temple and were, as the design of the temple itself, reflective of a progressive attitude toward design. These materials, though unconventional, were appropriate glorification of the temple interior.

The early temples of the Church were representative of the best available talents and materials of the Church. Created with a positive concern for monumentality and as powerful statements about Mormon theology, the seven temples built before 1920 were representative of the finest in Mormon art and architecture of the time.

The Salt Lake firm of Pope and Burton, was established in 1910, and was active in meetinghouse design for the Mormon Church as well as in temple design. Hyrum Pope and Harold W. Burton were familiar with the innovations and ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright. The Liberty Stake, First Ward building also reflected, through the
Figure #12 Liberty Stake Center
1913
the building was articulated with strongly contrasting vertical horizontal elements.

The innovative use of new temple forms and materials was not universally acclaimed by the membership of the Church. Many members criticized what they considered unchurchlike, awkward, bulky forms. The unfamiliar plain styles, it was felt by critics of the modern temples, were plain or at best inappropriate. Unfortunately, in the wake of this criticism, this modern approach to the concept and design of new temples was soon abandoned by Church leaders and would be replaced by a growing conservatism in church building programs.22

Many observers and critics of Mormon architecture consider the years 1910-1921 the most exciting in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in terms of artistic expression. It was a period when incredible lee-way was given to talented architects who created some of the most memorable monuments to the Lord ever built by the Mormon Church.

Figure #13 Northwestern States mission chapel, Portland, Oregon 1914
Chapter 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD PLANNING

The internationalization of the Church was reflected not only in the expanded meetinghouse building program but also in the three temples that were built in 1951-56. Contrasting the strong and powerful masses of the three modern temples built in the early 1900's succeeding temples established a trend in temple design towards an "astylastic" modern plan exhibiting a combination of abstract shapes and geometric decoration. (See figure #14).

The designs of the three temples were nearly identical. Although designed in the rectangular shape of the exterior of the Salt Lake Temple the interior of the new type of temple was adapted to permit temple worship by foreign members. The unique situation required that the endowment be presented in a variety of languages and that smaller, less expensive temples be built. The idea of using audio-visual equipment for the presentation of the endowment was being discussed by Mormon architects as early as the 1930's. However, the idea was not seriously evaluated until the 1950's by President David O'Mckay and Church architect Edward O. Anderson. A large scale model of the temple was built, including a motion picture
projector, that enabled them to visualize the procedure of the endowment in the new type of temple.

The first European temple, the Swiss Temple, posed special problems because of the variety of neighboring countries it would have to service. It was in this temple that this new concept of temple design was articulated. Furthermore, the same message was presented in the procedure but with new methods.

The temples in New Zealand, England and Switzerland exhibited an early tendency in the Church towards standardization in temple design. The proportions and surface articulation of these three temples was almost identical. Each temple was divided into three levels. The foundation level circled the base of the rectangular structure and jutted out from the main temple mass. The offices and utility rooms were on this floor and were visually separated from the sacred functions of the main volume of the temple. The central rectangular mass of the temple was divided into two levels with the baptismal font, locker and dressing rooms on the lower level and the ordinance rooms upstairs. The endowment was presented in different ordinance rooms which led into the celestial room. Earphones for the audio of the presentation in different languages were available in the ordinance rooms.

These temples were smaller in scale than previous temples and like those built in the early 1900's had no assembly rooms. Unlike the Utah temples each of these
Figure 14 London, Temple 1958

New Zealand, Temple 1958

Swiss, Temple, 1955
Temples had a single facade with a central tower mass which projected upwards as an extension of the temple itself. The greatest variation between the three temples was made in the articulation of the tower mass. The tower and spire of the London Temple reflected the influence of Sir Christopher Wren. The tower itself was quite squat and topped by a lovely bronze spire reminiscent of St. Mary-Le-Bow or Christ Church in Philadelphia. It was clearly aesthetically familiar to the English people.

Other than the tower of the temple in England, there was little surface decoration or style that identified each temple with its unique environments. The New Zealand and Swiss Temples had nearly identical decorative cut stone work. The walls of the temple were covered with stucco and tile and were constructed of reinforced concrete and brick. The decorative details were in neither case reflective of the native culture. The exteriors of all three temples did not suggest the function of the sacred interior.

Before this period temple building and after rejecting the modern styles exemplified in the temples and ward meetinghouses that were built by Harold Burton in the 1900's-10's, the Church, under Church architects Willard Young and Colonel Joseph Don Carlos Young, again used architectural styles from the past. The modern style of the Liberty Ward and the three temples had been to many members, foreign and uncomfortable. The Church adopted
instead revival designs for new buildings that created a visual link to the Church's New England heritage as well as the mainstream of American culture. Colonial Georgian style motifs were clearly the most popular for church architecture throughout the country and were particularly well suited to a typically American religion.

In the 1920's and 30's the Church architect prepared the first standard plans for use by the Church under the auspices of the Presiding Bishop's office, which was the temporal branch of Church government. These early plans, marked J.D.C. Young, were so closely identified with the work of Colonel Joseph Don Carlos Young that they were usually called the "Colonel's twins" or the "Young twins." Unlike the use of mass produced plans of the 1970's, these repetitive buildings were often built from exactly the same set of plans. The "Colonel's twins" were built throughout Idaho, Utah and California. Many excellent examples were standing in 1980, particularly in the small towns of Utah and Idaho.

The basic functional demands put on ward buildings were established as early as 1930 and would persist into the 1980's. In this period the integration of an increasing number of rooms under one roof became the rule

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rather than the exception. Bishop's offices, relief society rooms, and recreation halls were incorporated into a single meetinghouse design and were no longer built as adjacent buildings.

The exterior detailing on these chapels was pseudo-Colonial Georgian and became typical of that period of Mormon architecture. The particular distinguishing characteristic of the "Colonel's twins", however, was the arrangement of the main masses of the cultural hall and the chapel. (See figure #15). These two storied rectangular structures were usually built side by side and were connected by an entry vestibule and foyer. Here were stairways which led to the classrooms, relief society rooms, and kitchen as well as offices in the basement level. This lower level was usually not a full basement but rather was more like a cellar. Half of the wall extended out of the ground which resulted in a nicely lighted lower level.

Church architect Joseph Don Carlos Young experimented with and produced a variety of different floor plans distinguished by the arrangement of the two main masses, which were known as the alphabet plans. Through variations on the position of the primary rooms these plans reflected the shapes of the letters U,H,T, and L. In some situations the ward was financially able to build only one side of the building, usually the cultural hall, which would be used for several different purposes. Later
Figure #15 "Colonel's Twins", Smithfield, Utah
the congregation could build an adjoining chapel which could easily be connected to the original structure.

In the late 1930's and 40's the Church continued with the basic shape of the twins but simplified and modified the detailing of the structures. They were, for the most part, a disappointing group of plain churches that reflected the financial conservatism necessary during the depression years. These chapels had a strictly sacred function. Their simple, squat and flat elevations did not produce, when stripped of decor, an aesthetically pleasing formula. They were evidence of the Church's attempt to accommodate the newly institutionalized programs of the Church, as function clearly dictated the design of the buildings. J. Reuben Clark called these squat chapels, "tomato can factories" as they were in dimensions, style and fabric undistinguishable from secular structures.24

Church President George Albert Smith did not see the necessity for excess decoration on church buildings and particularly discouraged the use of towers or steeples to identify Mormon churches as religious buildings. Consequently, even those chapels designed by private industry did not, under his direction, have towers. In the three years under Church President George Albert Smith

this plain architectural style, marked by a lack of decoration, reflected the architectural austerity typical of the post war years.  

In the 1940's and early 50's the repetitive plans that were produced were primarily used by private industry. Church architect E. O. Anderson continued to design churches that were boxy, flat roofed and that had few windows. (See figure #16). Likewise, Harold Burton, working in these years as well, produced some equally disappointing boxy meetinghouse buildings. Few of these buildings built through the church had either standard plans or styles and expressed little that was unique in detail, mass or dimension. Consequently, few of these structures built for the Church were distinguished or outstanding examples of architecture.  

Those standard plan buildings that were built in this period were built by private architects. Beginning in 1949, in spite of the rather mediocre work that had been progressing throughout the Church, Theodore Pope, through his private architectural firm, designed some handsome pseudo-Colonial, Georgian ward meetinghouses that would become not only popular but representative of church architecture for the period. (See figure #17). President  

25James McRae, Personal interview with Martha Bradley, March, 1980.
Figure #16 Bryan Warehouse, Salt Lake City
David O. McKay's personal taste and preference for towers on church buildings meshed readily with the vision of Theodore Pope.

While Pope was a cooperative architect he designed an estimated 250-300 buildings during the period 1949-1955, which is more than any other single architect who has worked for the Church. The Church monopolized his practice during these years which implied as one architect described it, that "He was pretty much a captive architect in private practice."^{26}

The standard plans that came out of his office were used by the Church because of their popularity, their functional efficiency and the low fees Pope charged for his work. Pope had an intuitive sense of the functional limits of his spaces and their relationship to Church programs. Many elements of his designs in detailing, arrangements of rooms and traffic patterns became a part of the modern standard plan program. The first use of the juxtaposition of the recreation hall area to the rear of the chapel in order to achieve a more flexible expansion of the assembly space for large gatherings was seen in some of the Theodore Pope buildings.

^{26}Richard Jackson, Church Architect, Personal Interview with Martha Bradley. Salt Lake City, Utah, February 15, 1980.
The motifs of the Colonial Georgian style were reflected in elegant interior detailing and were reflected externally in moldings, towers and decorative elements as well. The Parley's Stake Center on Parley's Canyon Boulevard in Salt Lake City, Utah, for instance, had one of the best examples of swan neck portico molding in the Church, or at least in the State of Utah. Though these churches were pseudo-Colonial they did not adhere exclusively to the tenets of the Georgian style. Rather than reproductions they were adaptations which adopted Colonial stylistic elements to create the feeling of dignity, serenity, and formality in the meetinghouse.

While Georgian structures were severely symmetrical, the Theodore Pope Chapels were assymetrical and adapted to church programs inspite of Colonial design elements. Constructed of brick these stately chapels seemed to many in the church to be appropriate symbols of their faith and were built all across the country.

The trend towards the increased use of standardized plans from 1940-60 reflected the dramatic growth and spread of the Church in this time. The Church was rapidly becoming more international in nature, making it necessary to adapt some of its programs and organization for the benefit of the diverse cultures represented in Church membership. Likewise, the standard plan program that developed in these years was a response to the strenuous demands this growth put on the Church for new buildings.
Figure #17 Theodore Pope Chapel, Parley's Stake 1953
Between 1940 and 1960, membership doubled, from an estimated 862,000 to some 1,673,000.\textsuperscript{27} Efficient mass production of chapels for the membership became an immediate concern of Church leaders.

Responding to the surge of missionary work the building program of the Church exhibited tremendous growth as well. Between 1946-1955, 1,350 chapels, schools and welfare building were erected at an average cost of $90,000 each. In 1955 alone the Church spent $18,700,000 on building, which was for that year over half its entire budget.\textsuperscript{28} It was evident to many Church leaders that the building program was a major business in which the monies of the church would be heavily involved. A more formal answer to the problem was clearly needed.

In 1953 it was still possible for one architect, to say that there was no unified program for Church architecture. He said:

\begin{quote}
Today the same policy regarding architecture is followed as in the past. An official policy does not exist although the volume of building has grown, especially since the last war, and has created a need for departmental supervision of this activity under
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{27}James B. Allen, Glen M. Leonard, \textit{The Story of the Latter-day Saints} (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1976), p. 537.

the Presiding Bishopric, the First Presidency of the Church retain a keen interest in every structure. Each proposal for building is reviewed by the First Presidency before authorization is granted for building.\textsuperscript{29}

The institutional response to this need came in 1954 with the creation of the Church Building Committee. While functioning under the office of the Presiding Bishop, control of the building program of the Church had been scattered under a variety of different offices. With the official establishment of the Building Committee, and under the direction of Wendell A. Mendenhall, the variety of concerns related to the program were brought under the control of one central agency which would be responsible for all financial and stylistic decisions. Through this bureaucratic approach to the need for accommodating the members the standard plan program evolved, was refined and streamlined to respond to the need for hundreds of buildings for the Latter-day Saints. In 1954 the first official index of church plans was established in the building office. The Church Building Department became the immediate responsibility of the Presiding Bishopric and close supervision of all architectural considerations and decisions would be made by the Committee on Expenditures.

Many architects in the Church in the 1950's, unlike the men formulating the policy of standardization, were alarmed at the proliferation of standard plan chapels throughout the world. They saw that the implications on future architectural design in the Church and felt that it was important to consider aesthetics in the attempt to house the members. A group of five independent Mormon architects in the early 1950's confronted the Building Committee with their concerns. They expressed concerns over the lack of regionalism and local initiative in design. Moreover, they suggested that an independent architectural review board be established which would be divorced from strict ecclesiastical advisement and could more clearly look at cultures represented in Church membership. Harold Burton, while agreeing in essence, felt that the Church gave extensive freedom to architects in the design of Church buildings.

The Church and the general authorities governing it have been most liberal in their instructions to architects regarding style, generally leaving those commissioned to the various projects free rein in this respect, this being the case, I will have to take whatever praise or criticism is expressed regarding the buildings for which I was the architect.30

Despite the concerns of these five architects and others, the building program had to keep stride with a phenomenal growth rate and growth continued to be the primary motivation behind increased standardization. Under the direction of President David O. McKay the missionary program accelerated and reached incredible new proportions in scope and numbers. Consequently, building was a major concern of the Church leadership and demanded an orderly and systematic approach to the massive problem. The twelfth temple built by the Church for the Saints in the South Seas at Tuhikarema, New Zealand initiated the use of a new program which would have lasting effects on the development of the standard plan program. In response to the lack of skilled local personnel, industry and materials the "labor" or "building missionary program" was used as a solution to the unique set of problems in building in the mission field. Because of the program's success in the South Pacific it spread throughout the Church and became the method through which Church control was extended over foreign local building projects.

The building missionary effort reflected, in many cases, anticipated growth as well. As part of the strategy behind the missionary program it was recognized that this affirmative, confident symbol of the Church in local areas would not only provide a building for worship but also would stimulate interest in the Church. With the incredible expansion of the building program in the late
1960's the rate of completion of church building exceeded in many areas, the need. As one official put it:

   It was said at that particular time that the chapel building program, dollar per dollar, was getting more converts than the missionaries because the people could see what was going on and got more interest in the people.31

   These new meetinghouses gave the Church a feeling of legitimacy in new areas and produced a feeling of permanency. At the same time, in South America, it appeared impossible to house even the baptized members. One building missionary described the scope of the problem.

   Each mission had such a great need for buildings that to us the need was the same everywhere. It was tremendous. The idea was to get as many buildings going as fast as we could. They were baptizing faster than we could build buildings to house even the converts.32

   The building missionary program was developed to help foreign members contribute to the costs of the building. Young men were called into service for approximately  


two years and were assigned to work under professional supervisors who also had been called to serve on labor missions. The supervisory system was the basis of the building program throughout the years of the labor missionary program. Foreign missions were divided into five different regions: Mexico, Central America, Tonga, New Zealand and Asia/Tokyo. These areas were divided further into local units each of which had local unit supervisors that led building projects.

It was felt by the department that the supervisory method best served the Church's interests in the variety of different situations in which they had to build. One supervisor observed that:

In some foreign areas that is about the only way we can build buildings. Because of the unstable situation as to prices, we are unable to obtain fixed contracts for building; a building supplier won't give you a quotation on building materials that is good for any longer than seven days.33

The mechanisms of the program reflected the demands of the Church's missionary program, its international scope and local conditions.

The building missionary program gave full impetus to the increased use of standard plans. When the Church

33Erick Albert Rosenwall, Oral Interview by Bruce Blumell, p. 5.
first went into an area a cottage type meetinghouse was built. When the congregation had outgrown the building, it could be sold as a house and the ward could rebuild a more substantial structure. To streamline the building process for local wards, many of which were in isolated rural or impoverished areas, a series of block plans were made available from the main building office in Salt Lake City. These plans were developed in the Building Department offices and came in a variety of different sizes and costs to meet very specific requirements and guidelines. While following the repetitive concept it was necessary to have plans redone for use in virtually every country. For example, plans would come from Salt Lake that had been drawn in feet and inches and they would have to be converted into the metric system. Labor missionary McClellan described the process:

For instance, we would take a plan from the states that was very thorough and complete and we'd give it to an architect and say, 'This building is the building we want, but we want it translated in Portugese, to the metric system, and in the materials that you've got here. Now where there are glue laminated beams you'll have to do something else. Follow your system of doing it, but let's get it done. You can't change the floor plan one little bit...We had to fire architects because they couldn't conform to this policy. Some of them just didn't like the idea of the repetitive.'

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34D. Ross McClellan, Oral Interview by William Hartley, p. 27.
In the early years of the program it was necessary to give plans to local architects most of whom were not members of the Church which created numerous problems. Albert Stirling, a building missionary in Europe, described this problem as it appeared in Europe:

Now you've got to understand that most of these architects were not church members and conceptions of the church and the meetinghouse and how it was used would be entirely different from the way the L.D.S. Church operates and functions. It was realized that a Catholic architect was going to design a chapel with a very different set of assumptions about the function of the facility.35

A standard plan that could be given to a local architect, would specifically delineate the functional necessities of the Mormon church building. It would eliminate expense in the search for functional Church spaces that would facilitate the uniform procedure of Latter-day Saints worship services in every branch of the Church across the world.

Time was another expediency that prompted the use of the standard plan. It was estimated that "if we had started from scratch in each instance, it would have taken

from two to four years to have plans prepared for a given site; this was an essential part of the Church building missionary program. After the establishment of a central church agency that was responsible for all aspects of the building program it was possible for supervisors to consult directly with the department and make rapid decisions about building projects. When necessary, the Church provided expertise in each area of concern, including legal counsel and other services, there was a close connection between this central body and the foreign supervisory units based on the assumption that plans and specifications had to be carefully followed. Furthermore, under no circumstances were local officers or building project supervisors to direct changes in plans unless they had been cleared through the Church Building Committee and subsequently approved by the Committee on Expenditures.

Usually the supervisor of a certain area would be provided with a booklet containing eight to ten standard plans. These sheets could be reproduced and given to a contract architect to guarantee that the architect knew the functional specifications of the building project. The architect would then draw a complete set of working

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36Erick Allen Rosenwall, Oral Interview by Bruce Blumell, p. 4.
drawings, based on the initial conceptual plan drawing he had been given, which corresponded to local circumstances and building codes.

Plans were available in a variety of different sizes which had been designed for different size congregations. In the mission field, it was necessary to develop a program that allowed for spatial flexibility and anticipated growth. During the labor missionary program expandable buildings were widely used to fulfill this need. The basic Mormon standard plan building had a chapel, lounge capacity, cultural hall and classroom facilities. Variations on this basic scheme were determined by membership totals, financial capabilities and the availability of appropriate sites. In European countries it was difficult for the Church to purchase sufficient land to build the sprawling suburban chapels usually erected in Utah.

An expandable plan was one that provided for the eventual addition of modules to the basic mass. The building concept was developed around the design and in each successive phase. A model was constructed in the building office which illustrated the appearance of each of the successive stages. It was possible to visually ascertain the initial appearance of a structure and its potential for growth. While this procedure was often used in the mission field, expandable buildings were not
usually built in the Great Basin. (See figures #18, 19 and 20).

One expandable plan, the "Kent", initially provided for a 3,300 square foot structure. This included a chapel space and some classrooms, which through adding cultural hall, more classrooms, offices and auxiliary rooms could be expanded to 16,000 square feet and have the appearance of a full plan construction.

Despite the standardization in style and plan throughout the years of the Building Missionary Program many of the chapels built in foreign countries clearly reflected the native culture of the new members. Through the use of local materials, building techniques and styles many church buildings had elements indigenous to the era.

Building in the Great Basin in the late 1950's and 60's exhibited a similar trend towards standardization. The standard plans designed for the worldwide church were even more frequently built in the states. In the late 50's, chapels were built that had many of the decorative elements of the Ted Pope era. The Crystal Heights Wardhouse in Salt Lake City was one chapel which represented a transition between the Ted Pope and standard plan era. (See figure #20). Although the tower form was clearly taken from the Ted Pope architectural vocabulary, the "A" frame form of the chapel and classroom wings were more closely related to the future than the past. This uneasy combination of styles marked a turning point between the
Figure 1.8
Floor plan for the Beaumont expandable plan.
Figure #20 Crystal Heights Wardhouse, Salt Lake City, Utah 1956-57
distinct Colonial styles of early Mormon architecture and the newer rather innocuous modern style of the standard plan chapels.

The building missionary program expanded to incredible new limits in the 1960's and the rate of completion continued to exceed the need. Problems with the program were magnified as the number of buildings increased. The building department and others involved in the program became aware that it would be possible to build on a large scale, with the same tight control through the central agency, and improve the result by using professionals instead of amateurs. It was realized that better buildings could be raised with less donated labor and, furthermore, that much of the work on Church buildings had been done under the program by enthusiastic but unskilled workers. Although buildings had been built more inexpensively, structural problems would often arise after a short period of time. Time was wasted teaching missionaries to do technical jobs that could easily have been contracted out to professionals.
Chapter 4

THE MODERN DAY STANDARD PLAN PROGRAM

Change in the philosophy about the Church's building program led, in 1965, to the reorganization of the building department. The 1960's and 70's would be years of expansion and increased sophistication in virtually all areas of building. The Building department would by 1980, have the best available technologies, a specific approach towards building and a constant demand for new projects.

In 1965 the supervisory system was replaced by the contract system in which jobs were awarded to competitive bidders in the attempt to use the finest talents and technologies available. Although the contract system would be used whenever feasible, decisions about plans were still made and approved by the Church Building Committee and the Committee on Expenditures and then passed on to local contract architects. There still were, however, supervisors available from the central office as an advisory source and contracts often had provisions for donated labor.

In 1964 the organizational structure of the building division was streamlined and departmentalized. The division was divided into six major departments:
Administrative Services, Standard Plans, Contract Architecture, Engineering and Real Estate Services, Construction, and International Areas. Each was concerned with specific aspects of building for the Church. The building department was one of three divisions under the Physical Facilities Department. As a temporal concern of the Church the Physical Facilities Division worked under the direction of the Presiding Bishopric. Ultimate authority rested in the First Presidency through the Committee on Expenditures.

These changes and others prompted the temporary curtailment of the building missionary program in the years 1967-68; despite this fact the volume of completed buildings continued to be high. Unskilled individuals were no longer called to go to build in the mission field. After 1968 the policy was that trained professionals would be called to lead and supervise in foreign building programs.

The large building program of the Church demanded a more professional approach to building. Each year in the 1960's and 70's the Church would build from four to five hundred buildings in addition to remodeling existing structures. For this reason, the program was brought under closer supervision and control of the Committee on Expenditures. All of the expenditures of the Church were approved by the C.O.E. which consisted, as directed in the Doctrine and Covenants Section 120, of the First
Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric. Each week the Building department presented requests for appropriations, decisions about plans, and proposals for future policies to the committee.

In 1965 the Standard Plan Department was formed around the base of ten or twelve basic plans that were in use by the Church. From that time department designers continually developed different plans attempting to make standard plans available for a variety of climates, locations and congregations. In the new program, standard planning was no longer considered an alternative approach to building but the fundamental policy and exclusive approach to new church construction. The use of the standard plan had proved to be efficient, economical and functional. These three elements formed the basic philosophy of the program and prompted the transition to complete in-house standardization.

While in the building-missionary program, plans would be used again and again or copied for reuse, in the 60's attempts were made to mass produce standard plans for extensive use in building throughout the Church. Hundreds of churches would be built from the same standard plans. Much of the improvement and refinement of the standard plan program, during the fifteen years from the reorganization of the building committee in the early 1960's to 1980, would be in the technology of the reproduction of plans so that in the 1970's complete sets
of working drawings were available for up to sixty different standard buildings.

In the 1970's the standard plan division of the building department had one of the most rapid and efficient plan reproduction systems in the country. Plans were assembled through scissor drafting cut-and-paste-up techniques. When finished the plan was photographically reproduced. Acetate overlays of specific plans were used when variations in a plan were necessary in elements like engineering, plumbing, or heating. The department was planning, in 1980, to purchase equipment for pinbar layout and the Computer Added Drafting Systems for the drafting department. (See figure #21). These two methods would greatly increase the number of available plans that the department could offer for different climates, locations and construction materials.  

Criticism of the standard plan program and of specific meetinghouse structures was directed to the manager of the standard plan division who would evaluate the validity and relevancy of the criticism and respond to it as he felt appropriate. If the criticism was a legitimate concern the manager would bring the problem to the monthly feedback meeting. The manager of the standard plan

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37Robert Little, Personal Interview by Martha Bradley, October 2, 1979.
Figure #21 Pinbar layout

Pieces of Acetate are layered one upon the other which represent different aspects of the design.
division was the chairman of the feedback committee which met to evaluate new technologies, new methods and materials for construction. This group kept current with the top improvements in the field. It utilized and kept stride with the best techniques and tools available for construction. It was felt, by members of the department, that this was one advantage of a large bureaucratic approach to church building in that it enabled input from a variety of sources and expertise in several fields working for unified objectives.38

The Feedback Committee met each week to consider input. Accordingly, if the idea was considered an improvement of the plan it was incorporated into the program. However, it would often take as long as one year for this change to be exemplified in a structure. Furthermore, ninety percent of the problems dealt with at the Feedback Committee meeting were the result of deviations from the standard plans.39

The Feedback Committee also had a division where they considered, also on a monthly basis, new products and materials that might be included in standard plan

38Robert Little, Personal Interview by Martha Bradley, October 2, 1979

Questions would be asked about the nature of the products like:

1. Is it a Church-wide need?
2. Is it nationally available?
3. Is it of a quality that we can approve?

The Committee would also evaluate problems with different plans in all stages of development, even in the field. Comments from local architects were discussed and evaluated. It was estimated by Robert Little, Manager of the Division in 1979, that about eighty percent of the problems submitted by architects had already been solved by the time the letters got to his office, a fact which he attributed to the efficient evaluation systems.

On procedural matters and non-conforming requests, guidance was obtained from a special committee called the Physical Facilities Advisory Committee, the P.F.A.C., which was comprised of the heads of the three divisions, the director of the department, and a representative of the Presiding Bishopric. Managers in the different divisions contributed upon request in unique situations. This Committee served as a screening committee and made recommendations to the C.O.E.

Contract architects who had been commissioned by the church often had either criticized or proposed changes in the standard plans. It was suggested that they direct these ideas and comments into the proper channels. Recommendations should have been presented to the Project Planning Committee before they had prepared the contract if possible. Each anticipated problem, it was felt, should be dealt with in the preparatory stage. Architects were requested to submit their recommendations in writing and to break down the suggestions for better analysis. It was recommended as well, that the architect detail the problems or benefits of certain changes in terms of cost savings, and so forth. The recommendation was to be considered in the context of the architect's specific contract with the Church Building Program Division, representing the Church as owner, who retained the right of approval or disapproval of any recommendations on a contracted project. 41

After having located, approved and purchased an appropriate site and raised sufficient funds for the project the local ward or branch could proceed with the arrangements to build their new warehouse. Local Church

41 "L.D.S. Church Building Division Architectural Seminar" publication of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, May 4, 1978, pp. 11-12.
leaders would obtain and submit to the Building Department a formal application to enter a building program. These efforts were initiated by the Stake President or Mission President in conjunction with the Bishop or Branch leader.

The first phase of the project, normally required five to eight months to complete. The Project Development Section of the Building Division used the information submitted on application forms, church computer data, and the guidelines established by the C.O.E.

Design criteria that was established and set forth by the division and approved by the C.O.E. formed the basis of the standard plan program. Membership attendance at Sunday School determined the size or phase of the building: a stake center with a minimum 2500 members was 25,000 square feet, a three ward meetinghouse was 19,000 square feet, a two ward meetinghouse would be 18,000 square feet, and a single ward meetinghouse would be 14,000 square feet.

To build a 44' x 68' cultural hall a group had to have a minimum of five hundred members with sixty percent attendance over a minimum period of six months. Chapels were required to have towers and could include a library if there were at least two auxiliary rooms in the plan. Pipe organs could be purchased if the stake was willing to pay the extra above that of an electric organ. The building division could not deviate from these guidelines.
except for special problems or exceptions that had been approved by the Committee of Expenditures.

The conclusions reached by the development committee were used to prepare a proposed building program designed to meet local needs. A project proposal packet was sent to the local leaders which included drawings of suggested plans, estimates of projected costs, ratio of financial assistance and funding schedules. This information was presented to meetings of the Priesthood and possibly the general membership where the plan was approved and supported by those groups before the building division was informed to proceed. This last step was designed to insure that the local unit was able and willing to meet the financial obligations involved in the project.

It was required that local officials recommend three architects from the area who were qualified for the work, one of whom was selected, put under contract with the Church, and commissioned to proceed. The architect was hired by the division not by local leaders. The project was put under the control of an area architectural coordinator who would be the official representative of the Building Division staff who would work with the contract architect.

The architect was given a signed agreement which delineated his instructions for the project, which included the following:
1. Adapting a plan to the site.
2. Adapting standard plans to comply with the local building codes.
3. Adapting plans to local climatic conditions, local material peculiarities, and to other needs and conditions peculiar to the area.
4. Preparation of working drawings and specifications.
5. Providing the services of mechanical and electrical engineers.

The architect of a standard plan project was considered by the standard plan office to be of central importance in the eventual success or failure of a project in terms of visual appearance, costs and future maintenance of the building. It was felt that the architect should study the standard plan and specifications and do all his homework regarding specific site conditions: utilities, surveys, soils tests, drainage, etc. Ideally, the architect would study the makeup of the local ward or branch and also take into account the various neighborhoods that it would service and the social environment in which it would be built. The standard plans were to be closely reviewed and adjusted by the local architect to fit local conditions and requirements. The standard plan was considered to be an aid to the architect and:

a guide for the local architect to the set forth as clearly as possible the church meetinghouse policy,

42"Instructions and Policies Department of Physical Facilities Building Division," publication of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, p. 13.
quality standards and function patterns. The standard plans are to help establish a degree of conformity for our universal custodial service program, to save time and money during plan preparation and construction with our buildings through ongoing experience and feedback.  

This accumulated expertise saved the church thousands of tithing dollars each year.

The standard plan program was the result of the cumulative experience of the Church Building Department through thousands of building projects. Members of the department worked with plans that were not appropriate, flexible or attractive and many of these were dropped from use. The program had the advantage that department personnel had the chance to look at the same basic design again and again with an eye to improvement.

While the designs were planned to satisfy as many conditions as possible it was recognized by the standard plan division that they could not fit all local requirements, methods of construction or local codes. The contract architect's commission was to review the plans in detail and make recommendations to Project Development or the Architectural Coordinator.

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There were approximately sixty different standard plans available in 1980. Furthermore, for each plan there were at least two types for warm and cold climates which increased the basic number to 120. Each of these basic plans could be built in earthquake zones one through four, or one of 480 variations of standard plans available. Considering soil conditions, humidity, water tables, energy sources, etc. it was logistically impossible to have available one specific plan for each unique situation. It was the architect's responsibility to customize each Church building to fit local requirements. Each plan had a pedigree that determined variations of the plan that the department had on file. (See figure # 22). Each standard plan had twenty-three complete sets of working drawings and specifications.

Modifications to the standard plans were often changes in surface materials. Architects could use basically four different types of wall surfaces: brick, stucco, wood or stone. The attempt to adjust to different climates forced the modification of ventilation systems, window glazing, air conditioning and heating units, roof loads and insulation. For instance, in Anchorage, Alaska, it was necessary to build a chapel with an R factor of

\[ R = 44 \]

\( R \) Factor is a numerical figure which describes the density and quality of an insulation material.
Figure #22 Standard Plan Pedigree

- WOOD
  - WARM CLIMATE
    - STUCCO
      - BLOCK WITH
        - WOOD VENEER
        - STUDS WITH
          - WOOD VENEER
          - BLOCK WITH
            - WOOD VENEER
            - STUDS WITH
              - WOOD VENEER

- FREEMONT
  - COLD CLIMATE
    - ROCK OR STONE
      - BRICK
forty-five while in building the same winghouse in Salt Lake City, the R factor would be around twenty.\textsuperscript{44}

Any department approved modifications of the basic standard plan were usually one of three kinds: basic massing, facade decoration, and steeple forms. Often a common decorative theme would be repeated in several elements of the chapel in an attempt to unify the design. The Federal Heights Chapel in Salt Lake City, Utah exhibited throughout the structure a unity in design supported by the repetition of similar angles in all diagonal lines. The lines of the roof, windows, and paneling echoed the same rhythms and, consequently, the chapel created a feeling of repose and reverence in which no discordant elements contradict the basic unity of design. (See figure #23).

The steeple of a Mormon meetinghouse was usually freestanding and often repeated some decorative element of the building itself. Steeple design was often capriciously unique but nevertheless they were more truly individual than any other element of church buildings.

Hundreds of chapels were built with only minor variations. On the facade of several of those buildings a central rectangular panel of cast stone or natural rock was elaborated to conform to local settings.

After the job was contracted out, the plans adapted to the site and modified to satisfy local building codes and climates, the project went under the direction
Figure #23 Federal Heights Wardhouse, Salt Lake City
of the area architectural coordinator who worked closely with bishops, branch presidents, local architects and contractors and who served as the liason between them and the building division. The local architect was responsible for the inspection and supervision program outlined in his contract and had to verify construction compliance with plans and specifications. Any changes in the procedure had to be approved by the local authority, the architects, the contractor, the Building Division and the Committee on Expenditures.

The standard plan program thrived because of its apparent suitability to a variety of concerns. Standard planning was above all else an economic expediency. Most division architects and Church leaders took seriously the responsibility of sheparding the funds of the Saints and this prompted a prodigiously conservative attitude in the program. Stimulated by the dramatic need for continuous building of new churches the program was a multi-million dollar a year concern.

Particularly, in the building missionary program the admonition to be economical was in the forefront of all other considerations. Harold Dunn, a building missionary, described the priorities in the program as follows:

So you can see with the average prices of buildings as they were at the time and the heavy participation from Church general funds in the construction of these buildings it required every economic possible in
planning these buildings to see that the monies available gave the maximum advantage and the maximum facilities to the local wards and branches and stakes. So many times we had to perhaps subordinate our own desires for architectural and engineering innovation in order to make sure that the economies were there.45

On an ordinary building project outside of the auspices of the Church Building Department, the required services were: 1) preliminary work which represented 25% of the fee, 2) working drawings, 50% of the fee and 3) inspection or observation services, 25%. The basic architects fee was approximately 6% of the total building cost. The preliminary work would be 1 1/2% of the total, the working drawings 3% and the inspection services would be 1 1/2% of the total.

On a standard plan project most of the preliminary work was already done by department experts. They had projected a site, located the building on it and made basic site adjustments. The architect's further adjustments would bring him 1/2% less of the total cost. If the project would be located in Utah, Idaho, Colorado or Nevada the required changes would be minimal, perhaps another 1/2%. The inspection figure would remain the same, approximately 1 1/2%. The total instead of 6% would be closer to 2 1/2% which would have reduced the cost of

45J. Harold Dunn, Oral Interview by Paul Anderson, p. 7.
the architect's service by over half. With modification of a plan the fee could fluctuate from 2 1/2% - 6%. The fees varied according to dollar volume on a descending scale. (See figure #24).

In 1973 there was a push in the division to lower costs. With finances governing most decisions as to style, function and construction, a cost efficient mentality dominated department activities. Flexible attitudes towards the use of traditional materials and symbols coupled with a strain to maximize uses and the potential of the basic standard plan tended to obliterate other considerations (style, technique, regionalism, etc.) or at least temporarily shelve them if necessary. Considering that 85% of the church funds were spent on building in the 1970's the admonition to house the members required special circumstances for the successful fulfillment of that goal. It cannot be denied that economic determinism was one reason for the acceptance and rejection of one architectural ideal after another in the period from 1950-80.

Although a solution appeared to be appropriate in one situation, problems were magnified when repeated 100 or 1,000 times and involved thousands of dollars. For example, an electronic organ could be purchased for approximately $5,000.00. A comparable pipe organ, which would substantially improve the appearance of the chapel interior would cost three to four times that amount. When
SERVICES | DIVISION | FEE
---|---|---
(Non standard plan procedure) | | |
Preliminaries | 25% | 1 1/2%
Working Drawings | 50% | 3%
Observation | 25% | 1%
---|---|---
100% | | 6%
(under the standard plan program) | | |
Preliminaries | 8% | 1 1/2%
Working Drawings | 8% | 1 1/2%
Observation | 25% | 1 1/2%
---|---|---
41% | | 2 1/2%

Figure #24  Architects Fees Chart
one special organ was purchased it wasn't a problem, but when organs were needed for four hundred buildings, as the church built each year throughout the 1960's and 70's, a considerable amount of money would be involved, perhaps $6,000,000. Conversely, one small change in the design of the library in the late 70's was done by the department that picked up $150,000 a year in savings when incorporated into a number of buildings.

An evaluation of the different kinds of steeples that could be used to maintain the symbolic identity with the Church but reduce the cost was done by the Feedback Committee in 1979. A steeple was designed that used standard pre-made light poles out of cast gravel in an arrangement that was both aesthetically pleasing and inexpensive. The type of steeple commonly used in chapels cost approximately $40,000 in the late 1970's to build. With the cost of the new design at approximately $5,000, in one year in the 70's in which over 600 chapels were constructed, a savings of $21,000,000 could have been effected.46

In the late 1970's the Building Division began to explore and experiment with the use of prefabrication techniques. Previously some specific interior units of

46 Robert Little, Personal Interview with Martha Bradley, October 2, 1979.
construction materials were available in prefab forms. Again an unusual situation prompted the use of new techniques. Departing from the policy of the late 1960's and 70's of building according to present need, a stake president in Alaska presented an idea to the brethren of the need for the Church to present a positive image in Alaska to further missionary work. He suggested that a chapel be built before it was needed and that this in turn would make the missionary program surge forward. The C.O.E. approved the plan and built a prefab house to be used as a small wardhouse. The prefab church and the remodeled shed behind which was used by the missionaries were the finest buildings in the town. According to the stake president in nine months the missionaries had 45 baptisms because of the new chapel.47

Because of the unusual conditions in Alaska it was necessary to respond differently with radical innovative ideas. Building costs in Alaska in 1979 were $125 a square foot compared to $37 in Utah. The church alleviated this in part when it found a firm in Washington State that would precut wood. The cost of constructing chapels in Alaska was lowered from $125 to $72 a square foot,

47Robert Little, Personal Interview with Martha Bradley, October 2, 1979.
despite the cost of transportation, to Alaska that was involved.

Improvements in building technology of the program saved the church millions of dollars. In the late 1970's, for example, a new structural member was used, the Gangnail Truss, (See figure #25) which was built totally by computer run machines. Previously, buildings had been built using wood trusses and brick interior and exterior structural walls to sustain the great height of the building dictated by the recreation hall and chapel spaces. In a two ward building, of 18,000 square feet, it would have been possible to save, in 1979, as much as $200,000 a building by using the gangnail truss. Therefore, less brick in the structural form of the building would have given rise to a multi-million dollar a year savings.\textsuperscript{48}

Modifications in the standard plan were costly in terms of time as well. Changes would force the plan to go before the Committee on Expenditures for review and could have caused weeks of delay. One architect estimated that with inflation at one percent a month, or twelve percent annually, each day that a project was delayed cost the Church over $500 per unit of construction.

\textsuperscript{48}Robert Little, Personal Interview with Martha Bradley, October 2, 1979.
earlier method—brick supporting walls

gangnail truss system—less brick in structural form
which results in a savings of $200,000 a building in 1980.

Figure #25 Gangnail Truss
Figure #26 Olympus Stake Center
Many of these economically efficient technologies stimulated a sterile architecture style reflective of the machine age. While earlier the craftsmanship of the builder was evident through moldings, detailing, and shapes related to human proportions, the mass of modern day chapels was often determined by the methods of construction rather than the symbolic or cultural significances of a shape. One labor missionary complained that, "With component parts you can't design in any shape you want. They have to take a special shape." It is evident then, that technology dictated standard plan styles as well as finances and that it would continue to have an influence as it provided savings in time, dollars, and space.

There was a school of thought among church architects that stressed the central importance of function in a building, rather than economics. The justification of the standard plan program in their philosophy was repeated ad infinitum and had become part of department propaganda. One architect described not only his feelings but also the scope of the problem as follows:

Let me give you the program. You have twelve months from right now to start. One year, to build six hundred buildings. All of them with a specific function, all having a specific service, a worship service, a short worship service that divides in smaller rooms for a teaching service and another worship service that lasts an hour and a half later on
in the day. During the week this building should provide a recreational facility for basketball for the young men and young women a place for the scouting program, a place for education pursuits not necessarily related to religion. These buildings are to be such that they can function because the programs are the same here as it was there. And how would you go about proposing to do about six hundred of those in the next twelve months? You must have some prototypes that you would follow, and these are standard plans.51

Department designers attempted to make the plans simple in design and plain in furnishing while retaining the dignity and beauty necessary for the character of the building. Plans were designed to create a maximum facility with the smallest square footage with a shape that was aesthetically pleasing and that was easily constructed. The plans were the result of hundreds of ideas from different architects. There was, however, a self-destructive element inherent in the save-and-build-fast philosophy. Many times in the department's exhuberant perusual of the objective, a feeling for the value of the building as more than structure was lost. Particularly in the mission field the emphasis was on function although it was obvious that church meetings could proceed in buildings of varying quality. Therefore, quality was a secondary concern in that it was not vital to the procedure of Mormon worship.

50J. Harold Dunn, Oral Interview by Paul Anderson, p. 11.

51Richard Jackson, Personal Interview with Martha Bradley, February 15, 1980.
services. In one South American Mission one building missionary experienced this concern:

Most of them were phase buildings. Some of them weren't like the district centers. At first we started out with too heavy a building—all reinforced concrete—and it was just too much Lima tambo in Lima, for instance, was a very fancy building. It had sloped walls everywhere that were difficult to build, and this is what I wanted to change. 'Let's get this thing down to just four walls and a roof and let's get them housed.'

Richard Jackson was an area coordinator in Europe in the early 1960's when the Dutch Government gave the Church a fine old cathedral that would have cost $15,000,000 to replace. "A gorgeous old early gothic church. We could do anything that we wanted to with it but change it." The Church could not use a cathedral that would seat one thousand people for a worship service that meets for twenty minutes and then divided for individual classes. Auxiliary organization meetings and recreational activities could not be held in the building. The building, though beautiful, historical and elegant, could be used by the Church for large conferences and little else. This example augments and clearly points to the necessity of functional appropriateness in the

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52D. Ross McClellan, Oral Interview with Bruce Blumell, p. 27.
standard plan program. The church still owns the building and uses it for large conferences.

Neither the 19th Century small, simple, and casual wardhouse, nor the formal, high style, large tabernacle would have been suitable for modern day worship service. While such buildings could have been added to or remodeled, the spatial arrangement of these buildings did not allow for the congregation to break up into small class units, nor were they suitable for auxiliary functions. The result was in a more disjointed, fortuitous arrangement of rooms making them functionally obsolete in comparison to the standard plan which offered concentrated, streamlined and well analyzed floor plans.

One of the most successful standard plan chapels was built in 1979 for the Heber Stake. (See figure #27). A natural relationship between the lines of the chapel and the surrounding countryside exhibited the indigenous nature of the design. The dramatic build up of successive projecting masses created a powerful form that echoed the mountains around it. Located on the foothills of the surrounding mountains, the Heber Stake Center seemed a part of its environment and blended pleasantly with the warm hues of the hillside. Unlike some chapels that blatantly

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53 Richard Jackson, Personal Interview with Martha Bradley, February 15, 1980.
claimed dominion over the earth, this chapel reflected a quiet respect for the mountains, the valley and the hard working people who used the building. The chapel itself was relatively unadorned beyond the suggestions of the basic standard plan. Furthermore, the materials were similar to those used in hundreds of other chapels. The architect, however, assembled those common standard materials with an incredibly sensitive harmony of members and with a feeling for the integrity of the site as an influence in the concept of the building. The reds of the brick and the stone of the facade, the warm browns and greys of the detailing blended naturally with the earth colors of the terrain. This particular standard plan appeared to be indigenous to Utah and the center of the Church. Its sweeping forms and colors reflected the mountains that were a symbol of strength and fortitude to the Saints. The Heber Stake Center was clearly at home with its site.

Members in Kona, Hawaii built a chapel from the same basic plan as that of the Heber Stake Center in Utah and were equally as successful in adapting the plan to their own local cultural traditions. In both examples the main chapel mass was connected to the cultural hall space at the short ends of the rectangle. The classrooms were connected to this elongated central space at the sides which resulted in a basically rectangular space not the cross of some basic plans. The Kona chapel roof height
Figure #27 Heber Stake Center
Kimball's Junction, Utah
was extended by adding an additional twenty feet to the building for better ventilation of the chapel and cultural hall spaces which were not divided by a wall or doors. The result was an incredible expanse of interior space that was enriched by wood paneling across the entire ceiling and chapel front. Large horizontal bands of windows along the ceiling line and above the classroom level brought a panoramic view of the vegetation of the surrounding countryside into full view and integrated nature into the worship service. The exterior of the chapel was articulated through starkly brilliant contrasting shades of white stucco and the black lava rock of the island. Almost every element of the Kona Stakehouse was intimately related to the needs and tastes of the membership. Though it was a standard plan structure it exhibited the great potential of a sensitive chapel adaptation to a radically different environment from the Salt Lake Valley.

The Kona, Olympus and Summit Stake Centers were each unique adaptations of some of the most basic standard plans. Through the combined efforts of creative architects and visionary local leaders working with particularly suitable sites, chapels were built that reflected more than the need for function and economy with respect for beauty and style. The Olympus Stake Center exhibited the dramatic potential of architectural symbols used in contemporary church building. The Kona and Summit Stake Centers reflected sensitivity and integrity in
design and concept that created buildings with a close identity with the earth as well as the heavens.

In January of 1962, architects Isben A. Nelson and Russel B. Sabin were awarded the Seattle Chapter of the AIA's award for excellence for their adaptation of a standard plan. The Alderwood Manor Ward, Seattle, Washington was described by the jury as being:

A church, rare in these days of architectural exhibitionism, having qualities of dignity and simplicity: Fine massing of church and school volumes, with generous, graceful roofs. A completely thought through, with pleasant color and sensitive incorporation of outdoor spaces.54

Clearly these two talented architects were successful in modifying the standards, adding their own creative vision, and then satisfying both themselves and their client (the Church) that the integrity of the building was intact. The dramatic cantilevered lines of the Chapel roof, the interesting recesses and projections, and the sensitive combination of materials gave the structure a warm and sprawling repose.

The Church itself was equally responsible for the success of the project. In this case, as in all new Church construction, decisions about design and cost

Figure 28 Kona Stake Center, Kona, Hawaii, 1980
Figure #29 Jacob standard plan used at Heber and Kona
Figure #30 Alderwood Manor, Seattle, Washington, 1962
rested ultimately in the hands of Church leaders. The AIA's competition jury further praised the working relationship between the Church and Nelson and Sabin. They praised the:

Intelligent cooperation shown by the client in demanding and recognizing the highest of architectural standards.55

Clearly, these four examples, and others like them, showed the potential for excellence that was possible even within the strict confines and limitations of the standard plan program and revealed that though the program was a system that defined and delineated the scope of church building it did not have to necessarily be prohibitive of the design of unusually outstanding buildings.

Chapter 5

REPETITION AND STANDARDIZATION IN MODERN DAY TEMPLES

The construction of three new temples in the 1970's dramatized the architectural problems that arise when the principles of standardization were applied to temple projects. These temples portended future Church temple building in the late 20th Century when the emphasis was put on massive worldwide temple building and the availability of temple worship to each member. Function and economics became the focal point of temple design and theory and all other considerations, style, texture, and materials were subordinate to them.

Church architect, Emil Fetzer, enthusiastically accepted the challenge of designing the two temples for Provo and Ogden, Utah. (See figure #31). The Ensign described the very special limits of the project:

To Latter-day Saint architects this assignment offered the greatest of opportunities and was approached with prayerful contemplation. It was a challenging task for he was told by the First Presidency that even though temples must accommodate large numbers of people, the costs must be kept at approximately reasonable amounts. The temples were not to be as large or expensive as those in Oakland and Los Angeles, but they were to be full-size temples and not to be confused with the smaller temples of limited
capacity, such as those built in New Zealand, Switzerland, and England.⁵⁶

Mr. Fetzer gave the design prayerful consideration and felt the design was divinely inspired. He said:

I think this is the only building that I have designed in words before I started to put marks on paper. Soon after we were given the responsibility for the buildings, Brother Fred Baker and I had assignments in Europe, and we left New York about 11:00 o'clock one night. He and I sat together and talked all night about the new concepts to be used in the design for the temples. By the time we reached London, I had a basic outline in my mind for a building that I was going to start putting on paper when I got home.⁵⁷

The design for the temples, while not unique, was inspired at least in form by an article Mr. Fetzer read about a park that had been built in Copenhagen. The park was completely surrounded by a roadway in the form of an elongated ellipse. The "Danish Ellipse" seemed to Mr. Fetzer, to be an ideal functional model for his temple plan. He modified the idea to accommodate rooms and corridors for the four floors. Corridors ran around the outside wall, like the roadway, producing an efficient flow of traffic.

Function and economy were primary concerns. The appearance of the buildings was secondary to how

⁵⁶Doyle L. Green, "Two Temples to be Dedicated," Ensign, II, Jan., 1972, p. 9.
⁵⁷Green, p. 9.
Figure #31 Provo, Utah Temple, 1971
efficiently the temple could function for the convenience of the temple patrons and workers. The First Presidency was quite impressed by the idea which appeared to be particularly well suited to the presentation of the endowment with motion pictures. When completed the plans were presented and approved by the Committee on Expenditures. It was decided that both proposed temples could be built with the same plans and that by using identical construction times both temples could be finished in less than a year and a half.

Each temple was built with four different floors. The basement or foundation level, as in all previously built temples, housed the baptismal font and utilities. The main floor, which was 200 x 184 feet, contained the lobby and foyer area, offices, dressing and instruction rooms while the second level had a large chapel and sealing rooms. The top floor had a central celestial room that was surrounded, like the spokes of a wheel by six ordinance rooms. Each ordinance room opened out onto the surrounding vestibule which with elevators and escalators insured the rapid smooth flow of traffic.

The immediate result of the efficient floor plan of the temple was that it could accommodate in one day the same number of patrons as the larger temples. Both temples were built at just over $4 million which was about the same cost as the Salt Lake Temple that was built over 100 years ago. It was estimated that to build the Los
Angeles Temple in 1975 it would have cost $12 million. The Provo and Ogden Temples were obviously, cost efficient, functional adaptations of temple design to contemporary programs and needs.

Variations in the two temples were primarily in exterior articulation. The grillwork for doors and windows and the facade cast stone work exhibited different configurations. The bas relief cast stone work at Provo and the other decorative elements were a floral design which was repeated throughout the design of the temple. The Ogden Temple decoration, by contrast, had a fluted appearance. The central towers of both temples were elaborate manifestations of the floral and fluted designs and pointed 180 feet into the sky. The windows of the temples were made of directional glass that from the dark to light sides reflected gold. This use of gold coupled with the gold of the central tower shaft produced a startling contrast with the white of the temples.

The Provo and Ogden Temples were built on radically different sites. The Provo Temple sat on the sloping foothills of the canyon. The Temple in Ogden was built close to the downtown center and its horizontal and vertical lines related to the office buildings in the immediate vicinity. The use of the same building plan for two incongruous sites accentuates one of the problems in the use of the standard plans for different locations. The strident white and gold scheme of the temple was more
similar to its environs in Ogden as were the horizontal vertical elements of the design. In Provo, the Temple squatted uncomfortably on the undulating countryside. Its lines rejected the natural environment as the brilliant gold and white colors contradicted the warm earhtones of the hillside. The landscaping and surrounding walls accentuated and further enhanced the exclusiveness or separateness of the temple from the world, rendering it basically unapproachable. At night the particular lighting of the temple tower and base made it appear to be floating above the hill entirely.

Consider also the appropriateness of the Danish ellipse for a temple form. While it was functionally effective the rounded form of the temple appeared to be discordant with the architectural tradition of the Mormons. The central tower and squat flat design of the temple arouse impressions of a "Big Birthday Cake" or a "Space Needle" and other inappropriate illusions for a temple structure. No connection with the divine or the heavens was projected from the temple but rather an unconvincing feeling of material grandeur.

The same plan of the Provo Temple's ordinance room and the central celestial rooms was adapted for an entirely different shaped temple, the Washington D. C. Temple, built by the Church in 1974. The ordinance rooms were ordered like at Provo, around a central celestial room. The exterior design of the temple was a
reminiscence concept of the Salt Lake Temple. Many elements of temple design were resurrected for use on the Washington, D.C. Temple and were assembled into a futuristic design faced with brilliant grayish white marble.

The Washington Temple like the four 19th Century Utah Temples was essentially double ended although it was not a rectangular but modified diamond shape. On each end, and for the first time on a 20th Century Temple, the idea of the Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthoods was visualized. The different heights of the spires gave the upper lines of the temple continuous sweep in a dynamic motion to the heavens. Height seems to have been an important symbol utilized on the Temple. The Temple was seven stories high with the tallest spire rising to 288 feet which was 30 feet higher than the Washington Monument. Clearly the Church was conscious of the importance of identifying this temple with the work of the Lord. The simple dignified vertical lines of the temple left little doubt as to the importance of the religious work that went on inside.

Much attention was given to the location and exact placement of the temple for the maximum visibility from the approaching road. Because of its position in Washington, D.C., the nation's capitol, it was felt that it should be built as a proud monument to the world. Designers felt that height was essential to create a
building of beauty, significance, and distinction, fully recognizing the public relations potential in the visibility of this luxurious temple.

The temple was not only the largest to have been built by the Church but the most expensive. While $4.5 million was contributed for the temple by Eastern States' Mormons, $15 million came from the general Church tithing fund. Compared to the $4 million spent on each of the Provo and Ogden Temples this was a costly and extravagant endeavor. It was felt that the unique location and chance for attracting the attention of the world the Church justified the expensive materials and details envisioned for the Temple.

The Washington Temple was the first modern day temple to have extensive use of symbolism in exterior articulation, much of which was blatantly obvious but much of the symbolism was subtly tied into the design itself. For instance, the verticality of the temple formed a strong identification with heavenly concerns. This was accentuated not only by the spindley spires but also by the sweep of window that moved continuously from the ground to the top of the temple. The colors of the window glass changed from reds and oranges to the cool colors of blue and violet and finally white that is identified with the heavens. The pale gray of the marble of the temple exterior was symbolic as well and reminds one of the purity and clarity that enters a person's life as he
leaves earthly concerns and contemplates spiritual matters. A motif of intersecting pointed arches unified the building and was repeated throughout the building on windows, doors, altars and the pillars in the celestial room. The doors of the temple were richly adorned with bronze bas relief panels sculptured by B.Y.U. Professor Franz Johanson. The panels contained much of the visual symbolism used by the early temple designers. Many of the symbols had not been publicly used since the 19th Century on Mormon buildings.

A group of active Mormon architects: Fred L. Markham, Harold K. Beecher, Henry P. Petzer and Keith M. Wilcox, associated together at the request of the Church for the purpose of designing the Washington Temple. Each member of the Committee sketched his own design and ideas out and presented them at a committee planning session. At this meeting, which always began with prayer, these plans were presented, reviewed, criticized and new ideas and plans were synthesized.

Some architects felt that the collaboration of several different artistic minds and mentalities produced a design that was less unified than those designed by single architects. This group collaboration could account for the unprecedented collection of historical elements that were included in the project design. The Washington Temple was the most eclectic structure in Latter-day Saint
Emil Fetzer, as church architect, returned to the plan of the London Temple in his designs for the Seattle, Washington, Tokyo, Japan, and Mexico City, Mexico Temples. (See figure #31). These rectangular structures had single facades with central towers. In his design for the West Jordan Temple, Fetzer again returned to the influence of the Danish ellipse as exemplified in the Provo and Ogden Temples. Apparently, historical temple styles, plans, and symbols were considered appropriate material for use in new "original" temple design.

The architect's renderings of the three proposed standard plan temple designs, announced in April, 1980, exhibited a radical break from previous temple forms and launched the Church's program of future mass temple building. (See figure #33, 34). While traditionally temples were unique in design or as in the Washington Temple revisions of historical themes the design of the three new temples was directly related to the rather innocuous style of the basic standard plan chapel.

The temples formed a radical departure from the traditional single massed structures that previously housed Latter-day Saint temple worship. The new temple concept was the same as that of wardhouses: a two storied central nave flanked by two single storied wings. Although the functional demands of worship services had
prescribed the use of this form for warehouse buildings, the derivative use of this same shape for a temple was without apparent justification in terms of function and formed instead a visual link with other aspects of Mormon architectural tradition. The local meetinghouse required a central large assembly hall and classroom wings for church meetings. The same form, when used for a temple, had no apparent raison d'être, the shape had no relationship to the function of the temple. The flanking wings of the temples could house offices as easily as classrooms and could function efficiently for a variety of custodial and maintenance facilities.

The two story central nave was divided into a number of different rooms that varied greatly in importance. The entrance to the temple and the recommend desk were at the front of this section. Passing through this section patrons were directed to dressing rooms, sealing rooms or the necessary ordinance room. Sacred rooms were at the rear of the floor plan and while they were isolated from the temporal rooms of the temple by distance and consecutive preparatory rooms the secular rooms were in the same volumetric block and were in no way differentiated on the exterior. Viewing the temple from the entrance one would expect a large central assembly nave that had been suggested by the exterior. Instead the patron moves through the entire endowment procedure before
Figure #33 Washington D.C. Temple
Figure #34a Standard Plan Temple Rendering
Figure #35 Floorplan Standard Plan Temple
he comes to the two storied space of the celestial room which is much smaller than anticipated.

It is apparent that in the design of these three standard plan temples that the model was the typical Mormon Church building with a central nave and flanking aisles rather than historical temple types. The functions of the two types of buildings, while both are of a religious nature, were distinct and clearly separated. This difference would continue in function despite the similarity in design. The gap was narrowed between temple and meetinghouse building types when the requirements of temple services were adapted to fit the basic meetinghouse floor plans. Unlike the ward meetinghouse these three temples have no towers or other visual designation of the sacred functions of the temple.

Three different temples were designed for different size areas: 8,500 square feet, 12,500 square feet and 26,500 square feet. Each temple would have basically the same rooms except for the largest plan, which would be the size of a large stake center with four ordinance rooms rather than two and that would have five sealing rooms. These temples have one main level and in most locations the baptismal font would be built on the main floor which was a departure from the traditional placement of the font in the basement level.

The idea of building smaller standard plan temples reflected the contemporary attitude of Church
leaders that temple worship should be made available to a
greater number of members. Of the 37 temples either built
or in construction in April, 1981, 21 had been initiated
under the direction of Spencer W. Kimball.

Traditionally, temples represented the epitome of
contemporary Mormon art and architecture. These conserva-
tive, economical "mini" temples represented not the best
in Mormon art, but rather a compromise forged by the
strains of the internationalization of the Church, the
rapidly increasing membership, and the attempt to give
continuity and unity to Church programs across the world.
These clearly are important concerns and support a compel-
ling rationale for the policy of standard planning. But
one of the basic flaws inherent in the complex network of
rules and patterns of the program was the de-emphasization
of design and artistic concerns which was augmented in the
creation of "standards" for temple design. The Church
needs excellence in art for the creative mind to flourish
in the Church. A vigorous promotion of excellence in tem-
ple building would give modern day Mormons a much needed
sense of continuity with their past and a sense that while
everything else is becoming modified, standardized and
streamlined the temple is still something uniquely above
the world, with a sense of wonder and mystique, and not
just another church.
Chapter 6

INTERPRETATION AND CRITICISM

Standard plan buildings were generally economical, flexible, expandable, spacious, and established a basic architectural standard for the Church. But what were the costs of the program in terms of aesthetics and the future development of church architecture? One basic feature of the program was that standard planning saved tithing funds by economizing on architect's fees. This was paralleled by an assumption that radical or unique designs were unacceptable within the confines of the standard plan program. These two elements seemed to have largely eliminated the chances that outstanding individual pieces of architecture could be built by the Church.

Though control, and in many cases initiative for individual expression, was taken away from the architect, the modern chapels that were particularly successful in terms of style and appearance were those that expressed a talented architect's unique vision. When an architect was given a standard plan the basic design and form of the building already had been developed. The architect was asked use this as a "guide" and make changes or adjustments to fit local specifications. Any changes in style or exterior materials and details were left up to the
initiative of the architect. The potential of the building was, therefore, entirely fortuitous and more often than not was left undeveloped. If, for instance, an architect had been commissioned to adapt ten standard plans, in a short period of time, he might feel prompted to do a minimum amount of adjusting perhaps only changing brick colors, facade detailing or steeple forms. These ten buildings, if built to plan, would be essentially the same, they would represent the minimal creative effort of the artist and would make virtually no contribution to the development of the artistic life of the Church. The success or failure of the design depended on the talent, initiative and ambition of the individual architect.

Many architects preferred not to work for the Church because of this lack of freedom in individual projects. Criticism about the standard plan program often centered on the need for autonomy in design. One architect, Georgius Cannon, who worked for the Church on several projects, including the Church Office Building, was particularly conscious of the need for the Church to recognize the integrity of the architect. He said:

I think they've been mistaken about how they've handled their architecture from the building. I think they should let the architects do the work, and if they want to have it supervised, which I think they should, they ought to appoint a board of four or five men--the finest in the architectural profession--to review all our plans and say to the fellows, 'This needs to be
corrected,' or 'you will be better off if you do so and so in your design' and so on.58

Mr. Cannon anticipated positive results from the allowance of greater freedoms in the design process.

It gives the men freedom. All of the other churches—they are doing some wild things, but they are doing some awfully good things, because they are free. Our church just sticks to this—you can go anywhere in Nevada or anywhere else and you know a Mormon chapel the minute you see it because they are all alike. And they are alike in a way which is, I think very unprogressive. I think it is too bad.59

The decision making process was gradually taken out of the hands of the architects and incorporated into the structure of the Building Department organization. Economic and functional considerations, as well as decisions about design and style, were most often made by businessmen or individuals with no training or appreciation of the arts. The bureaucratic approach to building was reflected in the objectives of the building program in that statistics rather than the aesthetics of the program were of prime importance. The attitude that the main business of the Church was building, was


contrasted by the opinion of many architects that architecture was first of all an art. Georgius Cannon's attitude was typical: "Architecture to me was a great art--it was not a business--it was a great art." 60

Many architects who worked under the auspices of the Church Building Department had been literally "called" to the program. In the words of one church architect, "generally most architects don't like bureau work. And this is a bureau. It does not leave much room for original design work. The projects, of a necessity, have to be somewhat stereotype." 61 Many architects hired by the department in the 1960's and 70's hesitated upon receiving the invitation to join the department and received subtle persuasion by Church leaders before they accepted positions in the Church. One architect said he was "railroaded into it," and after three offers for working for the Church he finally consented, staying for fifteen years. Another said that he had received his "draft notice" by way of letters from Church leaders. These letters from General Authorities encouraged the feeling in prospective employees that this was no ordinary job to be

60 Georgius Cannon, Oral Interview by Paul Anderson, p. 4.

61 Richard Jackson, personal Interview by Martha Bradley.
considered but one that had accompanying sacred responsibilities. It was felt that great blessings, other than money, would result from the work. Architects would take a substantial drop in pay in moving from private practice to Church bureau work. Working for the department on the same projects as contract architects Church architects would earn much less. As a result, many architects were forced to moon-light and maintain private practices outside the confines of the Department.

Virtually without exception, Church architects, engineers, and others enthusiastically supported the standard plan program and its principles and saw it as the only answer to the problem. This incredible uniformity of opinion among Department personnel could have been due in part to the fact that dissenters left the department for private practice and were unable or unwilling to work within the strict controls of the program. Those critics of the program within the ranks of the department chose to keep their comments private and while criticizing elements of the program loyally supported the Church.

Many saw in the use of worldwide standardization an alarming insensitivity to local cultures and styles. The cry of regionalism was common among those who recognized the incongruity of an American Chapel in Western Samoa or some other foreign setting. Mormonism was an American religion and reflected its heritage in its choice of architectural styles. The period from the early 1950's
through the 1970's was one of intense internationalization of the Church. Though the Church had extended its boundaries and embraced a variety of peoples, and acknowledged the universal scope of Church doctrine, each new member became involved in the same Church programs. Japanese Saints and Texan Saints worshipped in the same ways, and attended the same meetings for approximately the same length of time. The Church building department chose to focus on similarities between cultures rather than differences in local architectural styles and building techniques.

But you look at the plans that we have over there and you look at the folks in the building and what do they have? They have the same worship program and go to classrooms. What do they do with the floor over there? They put in a stone floor or a tile floor. They also build buildings out of brick in Japan. They build them with cornices and that is what we put in them. Really it has not been violated that far.\textsuperscript{62}

With the emphasis on function it was natural for the department to consider regionalism a less important priority and, as in the case of a chapel in Japan, to completely miss the significance of local design elements. One building missionary exhibited an endemic attitude among members that American was better.

\textsuperscript{62}Richard Jackson, Personal Interview by Martha Bradley, Feb. 15, 1980.
I've seen on occasion something that's very near one of our standard plans as western as Kansas, right in Tokyo, or the Far East. However, the Japanese don't mind because they like everything American over there.63

He later conceded that, "I think that maybe we ought to do a little more towards adapting to the local surroundings."64

One architect who preferred to remain anonymous described how he had drawn a quick sketch over the architectural rendering for the Tokyo Temple. He didn't change anything in terms of mass or the relationship of the major elements one to another but simply drew a change in the parts of the roof. This subtle change, in his opinion, made the temple Japanese. Again, the function of a building doesn't entirely limit the possibilities in exterior articulation. Japanese Mormons lived and worked in different types of buildings from those that were familiar to members in the Salt Lake Valley and were accustomed to different textures, materials and colors on their church buildings or temples.

Reflecting the missionary fervor that stimulated the Standard Plan Program in the 1950's and 60's anti-
regionalism was also justified by some on the grounds that this western American Mormon Church building had become the traditional trademark of the Church. While that idea was presumptuous at best, in many cases it was the truth. One member said, "I can go anywhere in the Church and feel at home in a wardhouse. I can even find my classroom." Another said, "Coming upon a Mormon meetinghouse in a strange town is like finding your favorite food franchise when you are traveling. Once you've located the church and Colonel Saunders it's as if you never left home." This common viewpoint reflected the group consciousness promulgated by the standardization of church buildings.

The bond between the 19th century Saint and his chapel was intimate and complete. He helped build it, his wife helped furnish it and they both contributed to its upkeep. The modern day Mormon chapel was not built by the congregation but by a building contractor and the chapel itself would probably in ten or twenty years be used by a different group altogether. The membership of a ward unit was extremely mobile and fluctuated continuously. It was thought that this mobility prompted an attitude in the building department about the expendibility

\footnote{Quoted by Mark Leone, "Why The Coalville Tabernacle Had to be Razed: Principles Governing Mormon Architecture," \textit{Dialogue} VII. Summer, 1973.}
of a wardhouse; after all, the religion is the same, the activities are the same, the attitudes are the same, so why not have the same buildings?

This uniformity in design and concept helped unify a number of diverse cultures and peoples. The uniformity protected the ever mobile population from an uncomfortable discontinuity in spaces and activities. It was easy for the member to leave the plain and neutral decor of the chapel and when he moved be assimilated into a new ward. Even though surrounded by new faces, he would be in a familiar, non-threatening place. Paradoxically, by depersonalizing the ward meetinghouse the Church robbed the member of a feeling of roots or continuity with his cultural religious community. Standard plan buildings were adaptable to a variety of different functions and new groups of members, as well, but expressed little that was intimately reflective of the local group. The building was as easily disposed of as remodeled which in turn affected the Church's attitude towards the preservation of existing structures.

The Church's attitude towards older buildings again reflected the emphasis of the department on function in building. One critic of contemporary building policies and programs said that older meetinghouses were considered and were in fact functionally obsolete. He said, "Aesthetically and functionally it stood for a form of Mormon religion and society which was gone and which should be
forgotten, if the present is to be adjusted to adequately."

Ward chapels that had been built before 1900 were used interchangeably for a variety of different purposes: as schools, social centers and for worship services. The secular uses of the building it was thought, did not defile the space or render it unfit for sacred functions. The period 1920-1950 was marked by a new attitude towards the chapel space. This sacred enclosure, though also used for auxiliary meetings, was used primarily for worship services. Certain behaviors like hand clapping were considered inappropriate within its perimeters. After 1950, the trend reversed and the juxtaposition of the cultural hall and chapel space accelerated the secularization of wardhouse space. The main part of church activities, even in the consolidated meeting schedule, initiated in 1980, took place outside of the chapel itself. The plan of wardhouses in this period varied in the number of rooms, arrangement of rooms, and their decoration. Many wards opened doors between the cultural hall and the chapel, joining them together and creating an easy flow from formal sacred space to informal secular space and in this way inevitably changed the relationship of each member to the space in which he worshipped.

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66Mark Leone, p. 32.
In the late 1970's the proposal was being evaluated of building a half basketball court adjacent to a chapel of the same proportions. When the partition door was opened it would be possible to have a space that would have increased seating capacity for worship services and could be used as a full basketball court. This use of the space was thought to be functionally efficient by the building committee. It was apparent, at least in this example, that those involved in the project dissected the problem into the smallest possible units for analysis and focused on the optimal usage of space in terms of efficiency, economics and function. A blatant disregard of other considerations such as tradition, the sacred nature of certain spaces and finally aesthetics allowed the committee to make a sterile and insensitive design proposal that would have a profound effect on the quality of church programs and buildings but that was as a business consideration not only appropriate but also ingenious.

This paradox in terms of assumption and attitude illustrates the opposing poles that were forced together in the standard plan program. The architect who by nature is expressive and schooled in aesthetic principles had to compromise with the economists and other leaders who were convinced that economy must prevail. The greatest problems of the building program were not those approached by the Feedback Committee but were qualitative ones that had to invariably be considered by both opposing groups.
They included: When is material cheap rather than inexpensive? When is a chapel interior no longer simple but sterile? When has a design been emasculated not just streamlined? Unfortunately for Church architecture many of these decisions in the past were made by individuals who were not sensitive to design considerations along with economic ones. The developers of the program were anxious not to make mistakes, a fact which prompted a conservative, carefully evaluated approach to building and which took much of the potential spontaneity out of the design process, stifling the movement of new creative artistic ideas. While new technological ideas were given efficient analysis and review, styles were more conservative and slow to change.

The procedure of different activities so close to the area where formal worship occurred had an incidental effect of making every activity that took place in the warehouse have spiritual overtones. Through building techniques, many designers promoted a feeling of spirituality in the attempt to make activities that were ordinarily secular more sacred.

The argument was made that it didn't matter where one was the worship experience was the communion between the spirit and the member. While this is true it is also possible to have a religious experience or at least enrich a religious experience through a fine building. Both the religious and aesthetic experiences are intensely personal
and emotive. Religious worship involved the same senses as the communication of a fine piece of art.

The structure itself demands that you lift yourself up to the space in which your reside... This church, architecturally gives you a feeling of eternity and a feeling of oneness with the universe. It is a religious experience itself merely to be in that place.67

One church architect felt that standard plan chapels failed to promote reverence:

You go into a building that has been emasculated to the point of sterility and you try to encourage the idea of being reverent. Reverence has the need for certain physical requirements to be captured.68

Many felt one element that produced a sterility or lack of warmth or sterility was the choice of materials. The industrial grade carpets, hard wooden benches, plywood facades and decor and cinderblock walls contradicted the illusions of elegance that are traditionally associated with church architecture. The feeling that resulted in a standard plan chapels was more commonly economy, efficiency, order and impersonality. Georgius Cannon objected to this lack of reverential feeling that was


68 James McRae, Church Architect, Personal Interview, with Martha Bradley March, 1980.
produced by modern chapels.

I think most of our meetinghouses—I guess I shouldn't say this—but I think most of our meetinghouses have no feeling, of church—no feeling of reverence. They're simply big rooms. This bothers me. I think we should have done more.69

The financial and functional defenses of standard plan chapels were compelling arguments and illustrate the strengths of the program. Why then did so many members feel dissatisfied with the products of the program, the chapels themselves? Why weren't more of the buildings exciting and powerful architectural statements? One architect described the lack of excellence in design stressing that they were meant to be a standard or average expression. He further said, "They do not have anything that is beautiful about them inside or out. And they don't have any romance. They are totally devoid of romance."70 Another thought that it was the loss of sophistication in design that was problematic and that "our society has lost the aristocratic touch. I think in my youth the young people were more thoughtful, much


70Georgius Y. Cannon, Oral History.
better bred than they are today. I think this has affected our architecture too—it can't help but affect the architecture. 19th Century tabernacles, temples, and some wardhouses generated attitudes of exclusiveness, hierarchy and distance between the congregation and its leaders. While the church became increasingly equalitarian, emphasizing conformity rather than hierarchy, the more vernacular styles were used as a leveler to maintain unity through the Church.

A major criticism of the program and one that warrants careful consideration was that it fostered mediocrity in Church design and construction. The underlying ideals of the program, that is, uniformity, repetition, and standardization, are anathema to unique architectural expression. They contradict the basic act of aesthetic creation, the unique expression of the artist's personal vision. By taking control away from the architect the church denied him the choice to think diversely. The emphasis in the program was not on the ideas of the individual but on collective judgments formed with little contact with artists. The lack of willingness to entertain new ideas, respect the artistic integrity of others and experiment with new formal relationships.

71James McRae, Personal Interview with Martha Bradley, March, 1980.
appeared to have created an atmosphere of artistic malaise in department work that not only allowed but prompted mediocrity.

In the analysis of historical examples of architecture a distinction is often made between the vernacular and high style types of structures. Vernacular buildings are those that have become almost commonplace or at least a habitual part of the environment. Out buildings, farm structures, most houses and industrial enclosures are examples of vernacular architecture. Ecclesiastical architecture in contrast, has traditionally represented the best in high style art. The bascilicas and cathedrals of Europe are visually familiar and inspiring images of the symbolic import of volume and space as elaborated in the high style.

A cycle is evident in the history of L.D.S. buildings in which Church styles have evolved to the point where they reflect attitudes and function. Early Latter-day Saint adobe meetinghouses were clearly vernacular and simply decorated. They exhibited a flexible informality towards the use of this occasionally sacred space. In the 1800's a clear and conscientious effort was made to express the significance of Mormonism through Church buildings. Many structures were built as proud monuments to the glory of God. The tabernacles constructed across the Great Basin were even more aggressive manifestations of high style architecture.
In the 20th Century missionary work spurred incredible growth in the building program of the Church. A change, albeit a gradual one, occurred in the next fifty years which altered attitudes and programs dealing with building for the membership. Two world wars, the depression and unprecedented growth in membership fostered change in basic assumptions about building for the Church out of which a contemporary philosophy that function and economy were primary concerns was born.

In the 1960's the institutionalization of rapid mass building under the standard plan program of the Church gave structure to the effort by Church authorities to "house" its members. It is the contention of this study that an incidental result of this effort has been to create hundreds of chapels that were more of the vernacular than of an unusual or special style.

By striping chapels of murals, stained glass, elegant wood moldings, textures and colors, by eliminating the use of unusual lighting or seating facilities and by allowing only a minimal amount of indigenous expression Mormon Church buildings lost much of their identity with high art forms and were as regular and predictable an element of our community as the local supermarket. When painted concrete, industrial weight carpet, tile walls, etc., made the chapels remarkably similar to schools and offices, what was it that separated Mormom meetinghouses from purely vernacular structures? It appeared that it
was a fine line indeed. The wardhouse could easily become sacred solely in terms of function and not in terms of materials, style or vision.

One thing that distinguished "high style" from vernacular architecture is the intent of the builder. High style structures are, more often than not, monuments to ideas, programs or philosophies. They represent a conscious effort to produce a new unique piece of art for the world. High style structures represent as well a movement above or beyond the vernacular and often an effort to change standards or taste.

One architect expressed the concern that through its acceptance of standard materials and often austerity in facades and interiors the Mormon Church has exhibited a loss of faith in the power of architecture as artistic expression and has often reduced it to technological and functional equations which border on the vernacular.  

While looking at a historical piece of Church architecture it is possible to determine who made the artistic decisions about it. It is much more difficult to look at what is being built today and see who is dictating those decisions. The question of taste is one of architectural ambitions. Within the architectural determinism

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72 Paul Bowen, Personal Interview by Martha Bradley, October 21, 1979.
of the standard plan program, decisions of taste have been arbitrarily made and delegated throughout the Church. This has been done at the same time that taste and style were minor considerations in the program. Clearly maintaining and promoting good taste in architecture was not a major consideration of the program. Much of the philosophy of the building department centered on the sense of continuity standard planning gave to the church buildings throughout the world. This was backed by the philosophy that truth in architecture was judged by its conformity to that which already existed. This idea did not allow for the mobility of styles and taste that fluctuated so violently from decade to decade. Many felt in contrast, that taste was not a matter of morals and that the right or wrong of architectural trends must always be open to debate.

The architectural record illustrates the ambitions and tastes of a certain time. "Taste," in the opinion of one architectural historian, "is the record of the ambition which leads the architect to spend more time and energy than is reasonable, and the client, often would dictate." If taste were a more prominent consideration in the standard plan program more time,

energy and money would be invested to insure the production of more outstanding church buildings.

Perhaps Thomas Jefferson's attitude about the importance of teaching the appreciation of great art could be instructive:

How is taste for this beautiful art to be formed in our countrymen unless we avail ourselves of every occasion when public buildings are erected, of presenting to them models for their study and imitation? 74

Taste in church architecture can only be improved by raising the quality of buildings that are built. Beautiful, elegant chapels will help to raise the artistic sensibilities and expectations of members and their leaders.

74Wayne Andrews, quoting Thomas Jefferson, p. 60.
Chapter 7

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN RHETORIC

Temples and other church buildings have always been ample material for discussion and debate among Mormons. Temples as a focal point in church doctrine inspired an incredible amount of rhetoric about everything from design and structure to purpose. Through those speeches, articles and dedicatory prayers in which church leaders spoke of their buildings it is possible to determine perceptions about temples in each dispensation and reveal continuity or changing relationships and attitudes to temples as structures and places of worship.

The raising of temples has always been a time of rejoicing for Latter-day Saints. In the 19th Century tremendous sacrifice accompanied the building of a temple and the structure was truly an intimate expression of the lifeblood of the people. Brigham Young emphasized the importance of raising a temple as a monument to the Lord.

I want this temple that we are now building to the name of our God, to stand for all time to come as a
monument of the industry, faithfulness, faith, integrity of the Latter-day Saints who were driven into the mountains.\textsuperscript{75}

It is evident that the Salt Lake Temple was not intended to be a temporary structure despite the tenuous relationship that existed between the Church and the United States. It was known from the outset that the building could not be finished for a long time and furthermore, it was anticipated that the temple would possibly have to be defended. It was vital that the temple express stability, permanency and durability against intrusion. As nearly as any other work of L.D.S. architecture, the Salt Lake Temple does suggest duration. Brigham Young foresaw the importance of the Salt Lake Temple as a monument to the Church to future generations as well as his contemporaries.

I want to see the temple built in a manner that it will endure through the Millennium. This is not the only temple we shall build; there will be hundreds of them built and dedicated to the Lord. This temple will be known as the first temple built in the mountains by Latter-day Saints. who come in and when the Millennium is over, and all of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, down to the last of their posterity, the reach of the clemency of the Gospel, have been redeemed in hundreds of temples....I want that temple still to stand as a proud monument of that faith, perserverance

and industry to the Saints of God in the mountains, in the 19th Century.76

President John Taylor described the importance of the Salt Lake Temple as a center of the political power of the Church:

In establishing the kingdom of God, it was necessary that there should be a strong place somewhere between the land South and the land North. It was necessary that there should be a foothold here all through these valleys of the mountains between Salt Lake City and North of Salt Lake clear away, as you have heard President Young say, on the backbone of the American Continent... furthermore, President Young expected that these railroads that are now coming would come along... And if there had not been some pretty strong places... we would never have been able to carry out the will of God assigns to temples function other than spiritual--outposts of kingdom-defense post physical manifestation of kingdom.77

In this way John Taylor and others assigned functions other than spiritual to temple structures. Temples were considered outposts of the kingdom and defense posts for the movement.

Furthermore, temples were physical manifestations of the beliefs and faith of the people. Nineteenth Century leaders were conscious that they were building the

kingdom of God on earth. This image of kingdom building extended to the 1960's as well and was expressed when President Hugh B. Brown challenged the Church at the Los Angeles Temple dedication: There is a "great unfinished work of creation which is God's unfinished work. It is a good thing that the Lord in his wisdom did not give us a finished and completed world to live in and that he called upon us to make our contribution." 78

Modern day temples were built as monuments to the Lord as well, but they did not express the personal sacrifice of the Saints who donated money to them. 20th Century temples were often described as testimony of the progress of the Church and its success in the world, while emphasizing "all magnificance and glory of the sacred edifice." Stephen L. Richards at the dedication of the Los Angeles Temple said further:

There is the wholesome pride of accomplishment--the building of a beautiful structure that gladdens the eyes and the hearts of all who behold a lasting credit to our people and the community in which they live, a noble monument to the progress of the cause we espouse. Not infrequently I designate our meeting houses as markers on the highway of our progress and our temples as monuments in the establishment of the kingdom.79

78Hugh B. Brown, Church News Section, Deseret News, April 22, p. 3.

The monumentality of the Los Angeles Temple was not described in terms of strength. Likewise, the modern geometric lines of the temple were clearly not a visual attempt to shut out the gentile world like the powerful castellated forms of the four Utah Temples had been. The magnificence was expressed and understood by contemporary Mormons out from under the restrictive frugality of the depression and war years in different terms. Having a new frame of social and political reference modern saints would not have understood the temple as a monument representing an isolated aggressive symbol of power. David O. McKay praised the L.D.S. Temple in the language of the 50's:

> When we speak of the building in gratitude and admiration we find that only superlatives will serve to express our feelings. For example it is the largest temple...the greatest number in attendance at the dedicatory services...largest number that were even permitted to make a pre-dedication visit...the largest contribution ever given by members in a temple area.80

Contemporary emphasis on the statistics of the Church's growth; numbers of members, temples and baptisms validated the efforts in temple building and gave it concrete reality. David O. McKay ushered in an age when the emphasis on the numbers of temple dollars spent on the

project and the subsequent growth of temple work would establish not only the monumentality of specific temples but the power of the work itself.

The Prophet Joseph Smith and other Church leaders are also rejoicing this morning. I am sure he is rejoicing to see this, the 12th temple built in a little over a century, a house of prayer, a house of inspiration, a place of spiritual communion, a house of faith, a house of glory, truly a house of God.\textsuperscript{81}

The numbers of buildings owned by the Church even in the early years was somehow equated with success and power. President Young in another conference address said, about the Salt Lake Temple, "But we are not satisfied with this one, we must hurry the building of another one, and thus another one and so on, and perform the great work therein that is required at our hands."\textsuperscript{82}

At the Logan Temple dedication, President John Taylor spoke of Temple work during the Millenium:

It is a time when this work will be going on, and Temples, thousands of them, will be reared for the accomplishment of the objects designed, in which communications from the heavens will be received in


regard to our labors, how we may perform them, and for whom.83

This reminder that 1000's of temples would be built continued to be used in temple dedications and conferences taken in the modern church. On April 5, 1975 at the rededication of the Mesa Temple, President Spencer W. Kimball reminded the Saints that "prophets have said the day will come when hundred of temples will be found throughout the world."84

Money appeared to be of central importance in giving legitimacy to the monumentality of the building effort. "It has been a multi-million-dollar investment. The members of the Church have built in good times and bad, in the depths of poverty and affliction, always doing so in a spirit of worship and gratitude."85 The millions of dollars spent or church building projects seemed to establish the strength and power of the Gospel.

Previously precious materials of construction and decoration gave meaning and significance to the temple structure. Repeatedly Church leaders propounded the glories of materials for temple building. Brigham Young

particularly felt the necessity for the use of the best materials in the construction of the temple. At the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple President Young said: "and the temple...will arise in beauty and grandeur in a manner and time which you have not hitherto known or contemplated."\textsuperscript{86}

This assumption about the quality of materials to be used had been established earlier in the building of the Nauvoo Temple and expressed by Joseph Smith Jr.:

It is expected to be considerably larger than the one in Kirtland, and on a more magnificent scale, and which will undoubtedly attract the attention of the great men of the earth.\textsuperscript{87}

Though pretentious, the extravagant materials and details of the temple were intended to project feelings of permanence, success and stability, though in fact that was not the case. An intriguing relationship between the religious and secular aspects of life was expressed in the assumption that the riches of the world attract individuals to the spiritual life of the Temple. Joseph Smith said: "that for size, proportions and style shall

\textsuperscript{86}Brigham Young, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, Vol. 2 pp. 29-33.

\textsuperscript{87}Joseph Smith Jr., \textit{History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints}, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1978 rpt.); p. 229.
attract, surprise and dazzle all beholders...unique externally, and on the interior peculiar, imposing and grand."\(^8^8\)

Church leaders decided that the Salt Lake Temple should be built with the best materials available. The question of what materials the Church should use for the temple was presented to the General conference of the Church of October 9, 1852, President Heber C. Kimball suggested, "that we build a temple of the best materials that can be obtained in the mountains of North America, and that the Presidency dictate where the stone and other materials shall be obtained."\(^8^9\) The temple they were about to erect should be in every particular the best the people could produce.

Most temples in the 20th Century were built with a more careful consideration of finances guided by the concern that temples should be built throughout the world. The design of the Washington Temple, however, was an exception and reflected the Salt Lake Temple in terms of materials and style. Emil Petzer, church architect in the 1970's, was moved by the efforts of the early church that were expressed in the Salt Lake Temple.

\(^8^8\)Joseph Smith, *Times and Seasons*, Jan 9, 1841.

As I have sat in the Salt Lake Temple and enjoyed the wealth of decoration there and marveled that the pioneers were able to construct that amazing building, I've thought it appropriate to give our very best to the temple. Into this building we are inviting not only living people, but also the glorious spirits of the departed to witness the work done on their behalf, the angels of the Lord, and the Lord himself.

The Washington Temple was a conscious attempt to make a truly beautiful house of the Lord.

The image of the temple as the "House of the Lord" has been, throughout the history of the Church, another justification for the embellishment of the temple. The symbolic import of the creation of a suitable vessel for the Lord on the earth was repeatedly stressed. Brigham Young on numerous occasions alluded to the necessity of preparing a place for the Lord to visit and reveal his will to the Prophets. For example:

He requires his servant to build him a house that he can come to and where he can make known his will...We would like to build a substantial house, suitably arranged to be embellished—a permanent house—that shall be renowned for its beauty and excellence to present to the Lord our God.

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Temples were labeled as the "House of the Lord" and blatantly attested to their function as an earthly vessel for the Lord's work.

I have determined, by the help of the Lord and his people, to build him a house. You may ask, 'Will he dwell in it?' He may do just as he pleases; it is not my prerogative to dictate to the Lord. But we will build him a house that if he pleases to pay us a visit, he may have a place to dwell in, or if he should send any of his servants, we may have suitable accommodations for them.92

The "House of the Lord" was literally considered a place he could visit.

At the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple, President Wilford Woodruff made this challenge:

...many more temples would be built in North and South America. This will be the work of the Millennium. We will find most glorious temples in the heavens, and the Lord wishes us to imitate them as far as we can. It is our duty to build good temples and to make them glorious and beautiful that God himself and the Son of God with his angels may visit us there.93

This image of the temple as a house of the Lord was expressed in the 1970's as well. Each prophet used it


upon numerous occasions to establish the sacred nature of the temple. For instance, President Spencer W. Kimball said: "The temple is a house or home of the Lord, a place of instruction, peace, covenants, blessings." President David O. McKay often expressed the same conviction that the temple was the literal house of the Lord. In one instance he encouraged the Saints in London to be mindful of this sacred relationship that existed between the temple structure and the Lord at the ground breaking ceremony for the London Temple on August 27, 1955. "We have in our hearts the prayer that it will be built solidly, sacredly, that those who participate...may all feel that they are creating a house to the glory of God and to the salvation and happiness of his children." 

It was recognized by President Brigham Young and other leaders of the early Church that variation in the design and plan of temples and other church buildings was inevitable and that building design would adapt to the changing needs of the Church.

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Orson Pratt as well, recognized the relationship between changing church design and the evolution of Church programs and doctrine.

By and by we will have Temples, with a great many things contained in them which we now have not; for with them, as with all other things, the Lord begins little by little; he does not reveal everything all at once. He gave the pattern of these things in Kirtland, Ohio, as the beginning; but there were not rooms for the washings, no rooms such as we have now, and such as were prepared in the Nauvoo Temple; and in other respects, there was something added to the Nauvoo Temple. Why; Because we had greater experience, and were prepared for greater things.\(^{96}\)

Furthermore, in 1887 Apostle Erastus Snow made a similar observation about variation in design:

By the time the Nauvoo Temple was being built the doctrine of the baptism for the dead was revealed and one of the first things attended to there was the preparation of the font for the Baptism of the Dead. It was revealed here in St. George to the Prophet Brigham Young that there should be variations made in the temples to be built. This was given unto the Prophet Brigham in answer to his question, 'Oh Lord show unto thy servants if we shall build all temples after the same pattern?' Do you after increasing your families build after the pattern used when your family is small? So shall the growth of the knowledge of the principles of the Gospel among my people cause diversity in the pattern of the temples.\(^{97}\)

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\(^{97}\)Erastus Snow, St. George Stake, Historical Record, Nov. 21, 1881, Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
In the 1960's and 70's the flexibility and adaptability of church and temple design were considered more important than the monumentality of the effort. Furthermore, it no longer seemed necessary to illustrate the illusion of stability and permanence because the Church had already proved that it was a powerful force, and had maintained this position for almost 150 years. The attitudes about building had shifted in not only programs but also in attitudes and rhetoric.

In a publication sponsored by the Presiding Bishopric, *Mormon Architecture*, the author Joseph H. Weston comments about the nature of Mormon architecture and the flexible, adaptable and pragmatic approach that supported it:

For bold new ideas in ecclesiastical architecture, the world might well look to the Mormon Church where there are no narrowly prescribed conceptions nor pre-determined structural plans, where the only limitations placed upon the architect are the canons of beauty, good taste, usefulness and the boundaries of his own mind as guided and directed by revelations to fulfill the job to which he is assigned by proper authority.\(^98\)

Even Brigham Young anticipated the change in the modern day church from monumental building projects to simple, economical, functional centers in which the work

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of the Lord could proceed. The first Presidency wrote in 1876:

In the days of our poverty, and while we had no Temple in which to administer ordinances for the dead and to give endowments and to perform sealings and other ordinances for the living, the Lord permitted us to erect an Endowment House in this city. This we have used for many years, and many ordinances have been administered therein; but there are other important ordinances which have not been, and cannot be, administered, except in a Temple built and dedicated to the Most High for that purpose....We feel led to say to the Latter-day Saints throughout these mountains; Let us arise and build a Temple unto our God at such places as He shall designate, into which we and our children can enter and receive those blessings that He has in store for us....These Temples which we now propose to build will not be costly structures. They will be for Endowment purposes, and can be easily and quickly erected by the people from whom the labor is required.99

There were special circumstances that prompted the building of less elaborate structures to permit the procedures of the endowment. "In consequence of our having been driven from our homes, and because of our destitute circumstances, the Lord has permitted us to do what we have done, namely, to use this Endowment House for Temple purposes. But since,...we are able to build

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temples, it is the will and commandment of God that we do so."¹⁰⁰

Modern day temples were designed primarily as vessels for the Lord's work.

The modern design of the Ogden and Provo Temples was thought to have expanded our mental associations of 'temple.' Centrally located in downtown Ogden amidst the businesses and institutions, the Ogden Temple effectively symbolized the power of the gospel to reach down and out to the daily life of each of us, to bless, guide and protect us as we walk and work and live in the real work-a-day world. The temple's modern design and materials focus our attention on the covenants made rather than a monumentality or pioneer origins many think of in 19th Century Temples. It testifies, architecturally, that a temple is more than a style or collection of symbols. It is a house—of many shapes— for power and knowledge.¹⁰¹

This statement illustrated an incredible shift in importance of the temple as a monument to a place for sacred ordinations. This was clearly a radical change in attitude from the exclusive, monumentality of earlier temples to an equalitarian reaching to the individual member. Moreover, this language was an attempt to legitimize the more common standard materials used in the construction of the temple.


The building of a temple regardless of size was a memorable event, "an experience of deep spirituality and solemnity. It was a time of thanksgiving and rejoicing. This completion and consecration of the Lord's House."\textsuperscript{102} This experience of spirituality and of dedication to the Lord was not a variable in the changing emphasis of the rhetoric of the building program. New focus was centered, however, on the importance of different aspects or functions of the temple and this was repeated ad infinitum in contemporary church meetings and periodicals.

During the accompanying acceleration of missionary work of the 1940's-70's church buildings were recognized as particularly effective and powerful missionary tools. Church leaders asked: "Is your ward chapel or stake a 'silent missionary. What gospel does it declare to you?' Does it inspire within you an appreciation of the good, the clean and the beautiful?"\textsuperscript{103} Particularly in foreign areas the power of architecture as a reflection of the Church was emphasized: "Our European members have a great opportunity to show the Church in action by use of

\textsuperscript{102}William B. Smart," All Church Rejoices in Dedications of the Los Angeles Temple," Church News Section, Deseret News, March 17, 1954.

\textsuperscript{103}Church News Section, Deseret News, July 7, 1963, p. 13.
new buildings they construct." At the same time the Church was striving to unify international programs and provide uniformity in building throughout the world. This was evident when David O. McKay said: "We must build chapels that they might have every blessing we have at home. There should be no differentiation." Temple building in 1980 entered a new era marked above all else by a feeling of urgency. President Spencer W. Kimball supported the new move towards mass temple building, "My dear brothers and sisters, we are sure all of you have been thrilled with the announcement of the construction of several new temples. There now begins the most intensive period of temple building in the history of the Church." At the press conference announcing the new standard plan temples he described the Church's objective of "preaching the Gospel to every creature'. The church also plans broadening the mission field to cover all parts of the world and plans to call 30,000 additional missionaries.\[107\]

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\[105\] Scott, p. 11.


This mass building program was based on the objective of making available convenient temple worship to every worthy member of the Church. Again, President Spencer W. Kimball said: "We look to the day when the sacred ordinances of the Church, performed in the temple, will be available to all members of the church in convenient locations around the globe." The new temples, like standard plan chapels, "which will be smaller than previous temples are designed for efficiency. However, even the midsize 12,500 square foot design temple will comfortably allow for 94,000 endowments to be performed each year." Convenience, efficiency and function would become the new issues in discussion of temple building.

Even in the 1950's a shift in attitude as to the importance of the functional design of buildings was evident. Elder Stephen L. Richards at the dedication of the Los Angeles Temple praised the flexible functionality of the temple:

We rejoice in the functional value of this great establishment. I believe that the spirit of the Lord

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has been manifested in the planning and construction of this beautiful temple. I think there is abundant evidence that this is true. The inspiring magnificence of the entire structure, the adaptability of its rooms and facilities to the ceremonies and ordinances to be performed, and the artistic representation which lends itself to the understanding of the great principles were to be unfolded, ..."110

Money was always crucial to the success of the building program and much of the rhetoric centered on the vital connection between tithing and building. Brigham Young, in 1851, challenged his Saints and encouraged generous donations to the temple saying, "nothing more of gold and silver could rise in Salt Lake City without more tithing than 'old half-dead stinking cows, and old broken kneed horses."111 On April 27, 1963, Henry D. Moyle connected tithing to building for modern day Saints. "There are two things happening in the church today, a tremendous upsurge in tithes of the church and a tremendous opportunity to build one chapel more economically than ever before."112

There is extensive continuity in the rhetoric surrounding the issue of temple and church building

110Richards, p. 7.


112Henry D. Moyle, Church News Section, Deseret News, April 27, 1963, p. 3.
throughout the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The imagery of the temple as the house of the Lord retained its significance into the 1980's. It is significant that there was ample variation in attitudes and programs, not only in language but in the resulting structures. Temples hold a different importance for contemporary church leaders and members. The new emphasis was overwhelmingly in support of the pragmatic nature of new temple design and church building programs; monuments were rarely built by the modern day church. Furthermore, the individual member was elevated to an unprecedented position of importance in the shift from and emphasis on monumentality to the availability of temple worship, albeit in any form, to every member. Change was recognized by Church leaders, throughout the process as a response to the immediate needs of the people in each age.
Chapter 8

CONTEMPORARY STYLISTIC INFLUENCE

The outward forms of Mormon architecture were not the result of a capricious whim of a few architects preaching for innovation, but were the inevitable consequence of the intellectual, social and technical conditions of their age. It took a half a century to bring these forms into being, forms which evolved in the cultural milieu of the country at large. A breach was made with the past that enabled architects to envision new aspects of architecture that corresponded with the new technical age they lived in.

Architecture is intimately responsive to its environment and cannot be considered out of context if one is to truly understand its meaning. Neither can the philosophies and ideals of the standard plan approach to architecture be considered apart from the intellectual milieu in which many of its ideals were initiated.

In the 1920's and 30's a revolution of sorts toppled the assumptions and careful rules of architectural thought. At first considered radical, the new ideas had, by the 1950's and 60's, become basic to the philosophy of the conservative practicing architect. In many revolutions of ideas or politics, a breathing period of ten to
twenty years enables the innovative ideas to become part and parcel of every day thought. Hence, the Mormon Church architecture department, perhaps unknowingly, accepted many of the philosophies of Gropius, Frank Lloyd Wright, LeCorbusier, and others who in the early 20th century dared to dramatically alter architecture and change forever its future direction.

Much of the change in architecture of the 20's and 30's was reactionary against the devalued motifs of architectural historicism. The new approach to design was far removed from the climate of the nineteenth century when architecture was considered to be the decoration of structure. The liberation of architecture from the mass of ornament, and the eclectic choice and appreciation of style was replaced by an emphasis on structural function.

Modern architecture was developed in a deliberate effort to marry architecture and modern technology. It represented an attempt to extricate architecture from the grasp of the past and thrust it into the machine age. This was coupled with a desire to establish a unity of form and function which departed from the traditional relationship between mass, ornament and idea. It was a search for a new formal language by developing new space defining elements. It was felt that it was better to express physical functions with the newest technical means rather than by borrowing historical motifs.
The term "functionalism", that is often used to describe the new approach to architecture design, is indicative of the aims and attitudes of the architects. Functionalism was based on a new creed for beauty as described by LeCorbusier "When a thing responds to a need it is beautiful."\textsuperscript{113} For many, the search for beauty as a conscious architectural aim was considered a by-product.

During the 19th Century no new symbols were created. Those that were used were historical cliches of past forms. An integral part of the functionalist philosophy was the concern for the creation of an accurate symbolism. Symbolism that means something specific and definite is part of an "honest" building, or a building that speaks truth in the relation of its form and function. Each building then is an individual characterization of the particular demands of the project. Modern architecture was "first of all concerned with giving man an existential foothold."\textsuperscript{114} Likewise, symbols were considered to be a device to give human dimension to the building. "In perceiving an articulate symbol, a man experiences an act of identification which


gives his individual existence meaning by relating it to a complex of natural and human dimensions. Without the identification with character and symbol architectural forms would be only volumetric combinations.

Modern architecture cannot be bound by classifications of style. Rather, much of the division into groups is facilitated by concepts or directions in designs. It is also true that modern buildings in the period are distinguished by a few characteristic properties. For instance, often the simple stereometric shapes of a building would cause it to appear as a single unitary volume. The exterior skin of the structure would often be continuous and run around the entire building. They were marked as well by a puritanical lack of material, texture and articulating detail. This all was prompted by an effort to maintain spatial continuity. Furthermore, this particular ordering of an art form reflected the machine age that was departmentalizing much of contemporary experience.

The modern school of architecture created what was called at the time, the "International Style". This name was a general label of an overall philosophy of architecture, not a style as the Mormon standard plan

115Norberg-Schultz, p. 388.
international style. The tendency was actually not international in scope, but was often an indigenous expression of the environment which reflected not only the architect's vision but the climate, the landscape and the habits of the people.

It was felt that tradition rather than style should dictate the form of a structure. True tradition was, however, considered to be the result of constant growth which was dynamic not static, and which would serve as a stimulus to future development and growth. Gropius said, "There is no finality in architecture--only continuous change." A respect for tradition didn't necessarily imply an aesthetic preoccupation with by-gone forms but was by modern architects used to illustrate the fusion of cultural practices that are continually fluctuating.

Gropius focused as well on the importance of functionalism on factors other than efficient truthful form. One premium of the new modern attitude about architecture was the freedom of the creative mind that the philosophy facilitated. He said "What is far more important than this structural economy and its functional emphasis is the intellectual achievement which has made

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possible a new spatial vision—for whereas the practical side of building is a matter of construction and materials, the very nature of architecture makes it dependent on the mastery of space."\textsuperscript{117}

Though function determined form and articulated most architectural concerns, the creation of philosophy of beauty was considered equally important in the design of a building. "The satisfaction of the human psyche resulted from beauty is just as important for a full, civilized life, or even more so, than the fulfillment of one material comfort requirement."\textsuperscript{118}

Gropius described a phenomenon that was typical of the effort architects made in the design of new buildings to identify the structure with the common individual and not to elevate the building to an elusive position above the inhabitants, in the "Search for Common Denomination Versus Ego Cult...." he said:

It is melling in the first of our conviction that the architect should conceive of buildings not as monuments but as receptacles for the flow of life which they have to serve, and that his conception must be flexible enough to create a background fit to absorb the dynamic features of one modern life.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{117}Gropius, p. 62.
\textsuperscript{118}Gropius, p. 75.
\textsuperscript{119}Gropius, p. 39.
The consideration of honesty and integrity in architecture continued to be based on the tradition of principles of architecture that had been established in the renaissance, those of: unity, balance, proportion, scale, rhythm, character and style.

Clearly, the philosophy of the Mormon standard plan was based on basic functionalist doctrine. The close identification of form and function as exhibited in the standard plan chapel exhibited the precision simplicity of the machine parts. There was a clear effort in the program to part with the apparent confusion and variety of the early 20th Century and maintain an official, uniform and easily recognizable approach to design. In the process the Church Building Committee reflected attitudes and trends that had been moving in architectural circles for over ten years and that were by the 1950's and 60's the basic doctrine and approach to contemporary architectural projects.
Chapter 9

MODERN RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE: COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS

The standard plan program was influenced by national trends in style and technology, indigenous functional needs and economic expediency. Modern meetinghouses were enthusiastically described by Church leaders as positive proof of the Church's success in the mission field and were considered an assertive trademark of Mormon congregations across the world. The program was saluted as a unique solution to a massive building need. But was use of standard plans indeed unique to the Latter-day Saint Church? Was there a universal need in churches with a large geographical scope and membership to evoke uniformity in programs and design?

This study does not attempt to be definitive in describing the church building programs of other churches. But interesting comparisons and contrasts can be made between the Mormon Church's program for new church construction and that of other churches. For the purposes of this study information has been obtained from the architectural offices of two church bodies, namely the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States or
America. Both churches have a similar central controlling agency and organization system to the Mormon church's which either directs or works with local units.

The United Presbyterian Church is a connectional church. Its pyramidal heirarchy was comprised of different sessions which were the governing units of the congregation, specifically, presbyteries which were comprised of congregations within a given area: synods, which are comprised of various presbyteries, and the General Assembly, which met in session on an annual basis with its voting delegates who represent the different presbyteries within the denomination. Although the presbytery was the primary administrative unit in the connectional system, each judicatory session, presbytery, synod, or general assembly, acted in relationship to one another.

Decisions regarding the initiation of new church projects were made by the presbytery and it was the presbytery's responsibility to develop the budget of the program. Further, the property could not be mortgaged without the permission of the presbytery. Financial decisions involved in building projects ultimately rested in the presbytery.

Immediately following World War II the Presbyterian Church and others in the United States felt a great surge of religious interest and enthusiasm. The result was an accelerated demand for new church facilities. It
was the first time since before World War I that they had felt growth significant enough to warrant building new buildings. Church developers and architects in the 40's and 50's needed to design for a new larger congregation with members who were driving automobiles to church. It became the official policy of the Church to buy large plots of land for church buildings. A concept of an "adequate" site evolved and was established as a five acre standard. By 1965, however, with the inflated value of land, a two and one-half acre plot became not only typical, but the accepted policy of the Church. This was prompted by the need for maximum efficiency in planning. Feasibility studies and conservative building techniques appeared in the effort to best utilize the restricted space.

In the late 1970's a number of issues about church building demanded consideration by the Church. One of these was the need to provide for the physically handicapped in barrier free design for church construction.

It shall be the policy of The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. General Assembly that all planning for new church buildings and/or major renovations to existing church buildings shall take into consideration the needs of the handicapped members of our society in order that all may enter into our fellowship.120

120 "The United Presbyterian Church in the States of America Confronts the Problems of the DISABLED," p. 3.
General policies about building practices and codes were established within the general assembly and were issued as "overtures" or standards.

The demands of the Presbyterian worship services and associated activities placed specific demands on the building program. Each congregation needed basically the same four buildings on each site. The sanctuary was usually 4,000 square feet to seat approximately 350 individuals. This was determined by the estimate that 90% of the congregation could be seated at one time. With an average attendance of 50-80 percent this was considered more than adequate.

The church school was a much larger structure, approximately 13,000 square feet to accommodate 600 students per session or 1,200 in duplicate sessions. The Fellowship Hall was also larger than the Sanctuary with 5,500 square feet including the main hall, kitchen, rest rooms, and storage facilities. The Administration offices were built separate from the ecclesiastical rooms and were approximately 1,000 square feet. Building varied according to size in relation to membership totals.

The congregation made the primary decisions about building projects. There was no attempt by the national agency to maintain regularity in plans, style, or quality. While there were no standard plans, persay, suggestions for congregations and presbyteries were made to aid the local units in the process. It was first
suggested that they consider building a multi-purpose facility for a first unit, with the consideration that it be expandable. Buildings should be convertible to other than religious purposes in the case that the building would be sold, the building needed to be barrier free, energy efficient, and conform to local codes.

Local congregations financed capital building projects through a variety of different sources: cash from the congregation itself raised through fund raising drives, grants, from the presbyteries and/or synods, loans from presbyteries, synods, General Assembly or commercial financial institutions. A careful effort was made to insure the congregation's ability to repay any loans by careful analysis of the incomes of the individual members.

Many churches have made serious mistakes by plunging into building projects before giving careful study to the program they have or ought to have, the kind of building facilities and equipment needed to enable them to carry on their programs effectively, and the possibilities of multi-sessions for church services and church school as well as multi-purpose use of every area. It is essential to outline at the beginning of a building project the important steps in sound planning for present needs as well as projecting the long range growth and needs of the church. Stating problems is basically the job of the church, while proposing solutions and translating them into practical, workable drawings is the job of the Architect.\textsuperscript{121}

There was a clear demarcation between the part of the religious group and the professional architect in the process.

Obviously the objectives of the Presbyterian and Mormon building programs were basically the same. Both stressed efficient, attractive buildings. But their methods, though similar in some ways, were quite different in others. Both churches had a strict hierarchical structure of organizational divisions through which decisions were ultimately made. In the Presbyterian example, however, the burden of conception, financing and completion of projects was on the congregation rather than on the church. Mormon Church projects were financed on a 70%-30% ratio with the church funding the larger part through general church tithing funds. While grants were given to local congregations from the presbyteries as well as assistance in getting loans, there was always the possibility that no grant or loan would be offered and that the congregation would be forced to find total financing independently.

The delineations of building procedures and practices in the Mormon standard plan program were specific and all encompassing, including design as well as safety and energy considerations. While the Presbyterian Church formulated basic policies and guidelines, standards in design criteria were strictly avoided. Therefore, the
individual potential for radically different design in local units was tremendous. There was, concurrent with this phenomenon, potential for a lack of continuity or design unity between the several congregations. Many architects and designers had a feeling for what was "presbyterian" in design and incorporated it into the design of different churches and auxiliary buildings. But many times structures would be designed that had no visible connection with other presbyterian structures.

No attempt was made by the Presbyterian architectural board to combine the rooms for the various worship services and offices into one building as exemplified in the Mormon meetinghouse. Clearly separating the educational, social, spiritual and temporal concerns of the church into distinct packages these four types of buildings exhibited a clear demarcation between sacred and secular space.

While there was central control in some aspects of the building program within the Presbyterian Church in the United States, it is evident that building projects were primarily under the direction of the local units who had ultimate financial responsibility as well as responsibility for the success of the project. The Mormon Church's program of standard planning was distinguished above all else by the centralization of design, construction and economic concerns in the building department of the Church and it is this fact that
separated it in essence from the program of the Presbyterian Church.

The Southern Baptist Convention aimed at building churches that were exemplary as well. "The Church Architecture Department of the Sunday School Board wants to help make church activities a satisfying home for members, and a warm, inviting haven for visitors." Baptist churches were built to house the members and to attract new ones. The Baptist churches, like Mormon wardhouses, were an acknowledged part of the missionary program.

Each local Southern Baptist congregation was completely autonomous. The churches working together created denominational agencies to provide for them research, materials and various other services, one of which was architectural counsel. The agencies were subordinates of the local churches, not the reverse.

The architectural counsel provided services, made recommendations and functioned as an advisory board making suggestions that were in no way binding upon the local congregations. The board felt a responsibility to keep current in research about new technologies and maintain a state of readiness and awareness with respect to programs and techniques that should be available to the various

congregations. The board would sponsor seminars, workshops and in-house educational sessions to instruct local ecclesiastical leaders about the rudiments of building projects.

Extensive literature and plan books were developed for use that could be purchased from the department bookstore by the local groups. The plan booklets were developed to aid building program committees studying space needs, not in choosing specific plans. For example, the pamphlets *Designing for the Southern Baptist Churches*, *Before you Build Your Church* and *Church Beautiful Emphasis Bulletin*, used in 1979, each discussed different steps in the building process. The Architecture Department provided these services for Southern Baptist Churches on a cost recovery basis. These services could be tailored to give precisely the amount of help a church needed or wanted, which could include on-site consultation and detailed plans, or simply preliminary presentation drawings. An experienced, professionally trained consultant from the Church Architect Department would work with the local church unit. Even cost estimates could be received upon request. But ultimately, all decisions as to style, size and design were made by the local congregation and the individual member had a say about the building in which he worshipped.

The local church organized its committee work into different phases of concern such as the organization
of a finance committee. The church made its own arrangements for this aspect of the work by following the guidelines suggested by the Architectural Department, first to maintain a savings account designated for building funds which were used when the church was finally ready to build. The second phase of the program was to raise additional funds through sacrificial donations and pledges, some of which were paid over a three-year period. This was usually the most significant sum of money used for the building project. The third phase was the procedure of borrowing any surplus funds from a financial establishment, again within the specific guidelines of the safe debt limits for different size congregations as suggested by the Architectural Department.

Projects were initiated by the local congregation who could best see the specific needs. Aware of the services available for a nominal fee from the Architectural Department most local units contacted the department for assistance and advice. The local unit was advised on ways to organize the local congregation into committees, guidelines on finances, procedures and duties for the various committees of church members and personal consultation for the congregation during the study of their property, their present buildings and their projected programs. The emphasis in the program was on the planning phase. It was felt that this stage was crucial in the determination of amounts of land, resources and construction materials that
would eventually be expended in the project. Careful consideration was given to the growth potential of the group and expandability of structures to accommodate that growth.

Although there was the use of repetitive plans there was no attempt at any kind of uniformity of design through the Architectural department. The department attempted to make suggestions, through careful study and analysis backing the information, without any means to coerce or insist on the use of the ideas by the congregation. Certain standards were suggested by the department that were simply practical applications of research to the design process. For instance, the department formulated a ratio that indicated the need for auditorium space of from 12 square feet to 17 square feet per person depending upon the total number to be accommodated. In all of the non-auditorium space, which would include the fellowship hall and educational areas, 45 square feet was allocated for each person. This again was a suggested minimum that could be altered if various congregations had more or less money to spend on the building project. It was particularly through such methods, that the church structure reflected the unique nature of the group that used it, their relative financial position, their community life and the social strata in which they lived. Quality of church buildings was a variable.
The Southern Baptist Church's building policies were very different from those of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The autonomy of local units, which was inherent in the organizational structure of the church, was the basic determining factor. This autonomy permeated into not only worship services and auxiliary functions but into all activities of the Church, particularly building. Given ultimate freedom and responsibility in initiating, designing, funding and raising a building local church units built churches that reflected the indigenous nature of the group. There was no attempt to standardize or centralize either control or the decision making process as exemplified in the programs of the other two churches. Although both methods of church building have similar objectives they were in variance from one another in substance and scope. Fundamentally dissimilar, they reflected instead the peculiar demands of the church they represented. Particularly in the case of Mormon standard planning, policies were systematic approaches to building that appeared to be both functionally and economically feasible and appropriate. Apparently, uniformity in plan and design was not the only solution to massive church building.
Chapter 10

CONCLUSION

Architectural forms preserve information about the cultural traditions of another time. It is through careful investigation of these forms that we can determine technological skills, styles and materials and receive ideological insights into the lives of the Mormons who used the buildings.

In the susquecentennial year of Mormonism a tremendous effort was made to seek the roots of the Church in an effort to maintain continuity with the history of the Church. Identity as Saints was strengthened by the association with Latter-day Saint progenitors. Much was found that was continuous and binding between the two groups. Has Mormonism, in a similar way, been able to meet the building needs of the contemporary church and at the same time retain the basic values exemplified throughout Mormon architectural history?

The power of Mormon theology in the early Church was not dependent on awesome visual symbols. The people were practical, humble and loved God. The Kirtland Temple was a beautiful statement of the pragmatic approach to religion. It was moderate in size and elaboration and functioned as a tribute to God in the measure of the
meetinghouses built by the Mormon Church were functional, economical, streamlined and efficient and in this respect they were a highly successful manifestation of the objectives of the Latter-day Saint building department's approach to building.

Standard plan policy was basically a committee approach to building. The design for the Rockefeller Center, built in New York City in 1928-40, was also developed by a committee which centered on commercial and functional concerns. Although the standard plan program and the Rockefeller Center project were similar in scope and scale the results differed in several important ways.

The exterior designs of the buildings in the Rockefeller complex have enduring value as elegant examples of skyscraper architecture. One might ask, "What was it about this particular committee that made it such a successful vehicle for design?"

One architect suggests that the members of the group shared a common realization that economics, function, and structure directed design. The final unity of concept of the project was achieved through a balance of these concerns coupled with the apparent "civic

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One architect suggests that the members of the group shared a common realization that economics, function, and structure directed design.\textsuperscript{123} The final unity of concept of the project was achieved through a balance of these concerns coupled with the apparent "civic

conciousness" of the client who wanted a building that would eminate "prestige".

A second feature of the Center team was what has been described as the "eclectic background" of the individual members. The Rockefeller Center resulted from a successful mesh of the ideas and experiences of the design team.

Of critical important was the high level of talent and expertise of the individual members of the committee who were many of the best architects and engineers of the day. The group was well disciplined in the economic and functional demands of the project as well as aesthetical ones. Their work illustrates that the potential for designing a great building is not eliminated by stringent economic and functional restrictions.

Financial and functional premises dictated the designs of the standard plan program as well, but the sense of the aesthetic was submerged. The Mormon standard plan chapel, in the words of Henry-Russell Hitchcock, resulted in an "architecture of bureaucracy" rather than an "architecture of genius."^{124}

Many talented architects chose not to work under the limits of the program because of lack of freedom in

design decisions. Those who did work for the Church adapted and worked with the "team" or left the department. Ultimately, the quality of standard play design was affected.

Finally, the role of the client appears to be pivotal in determining the quality of design. The essence of the Rockefeller Center, though corporate not religious in nature, was grandeur, power and wealth forcefully presented in architectural terms. The individual standard plan chapel represented a lukewarm reflection of the power of both the Gospel and the organizational Church itself.

The standard plan chapel or temple of the 1960's, 70's or 80's expressed much about the direction of the Church in the period. While not a personal, ultimate expression of a local congregation each meetinghouse erected under the program reflected the cohesiveness of standardization in Latter-day Saint programs and practice. Throughout the years of the 20th century the multitude of programs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were homogenized to create unity in the worldwide church to render church services the same in any locale throughout. In the singular effort at uniformity in Church programs the power of the central church was diffused throughout the stakes of Zion creating a complicated network of rules, assumptions and expectations that extended as well to the arts. Standard planning was developed to enable building officials to rapidly,
efficiently and economically build. The potential of the program in the future is however, the greatest source for concern. Although standard planning serves the needs of the Church today, what of the future? It is possible that the department will become too invariably fixed in the same institutions, programs and methods so that growth in terms of artistic architectural expression, will be hampered. A pendulum effect could be fruit of the policy where ideas swing backwards and forwards forever, never forging fresh innovations and images. Old techniques outlive their usefulness just as old forms lose their relevancy. While preserving the past the future can as well be dealt with and become a part of today.

The Mormon Church has always cultivated those arts that render life easier in preference to the more superfluous arts that adorn it. Church leaders will habitually prefer the pragmatic and support those arts that are didactic or functional rather than art for art’s sake. By the nature of the Church as a teaching body these objectives are certainly inevitable as well as justifiable.

It is important as well, to consider that the modern day church was composed primarily of middle class Saints many of whom had never been in an elaborate bascicalia or cathedral or had studied them at all. Therefore, their experience and expectations about church buildings had been formed with the typical ward meetinghouse. This type of structure represented to them
security, respectability, and above all else, spirituality. Whether or not the spaces themselves evoked the feelings visually does not change the reality of the attitudes of the individual member.

For the thousands of members in countries outside of the nucleus of the Mormon Church, the standard plan chapel formed a tangible link, albeit an Americanized and repetitive one, with the great brotherhood of Saints. It was visual evidence of the sameness that marked the Mormons as a distinct group with common goals, rules and convictions. While it might be argued that the multiple programs, complex organization and paternalistic attitude towards foreign members created an atmosphere of conformity and a modicum of quality in church programs, it may also be true that these things served to strengthen the worldwide church and bound its many heterogeneous parts into a united whole. If not homogeneous in cultural nature and practice at least it was one in direction.

The fruits of the standard plan program were many. Its buildings were generally economical, flexible, expandable, spacious and established a basic continuity in architectural types and materials through the worldwide church. But how did it affect architectural design? The departmental approach to architecture does not prevent unique and original design in the Church, but rather it compresses, enervates, and extinguishes it and renders it obsolete until the role of the aesthetic in the creation
of a Mormon Church building has become incidental rather than basic to the design process. The successes and failures of the program illuminate the importance of freedom and autonomy in Church design.

The more we understand the nature of our history, the history we are making today, the closer we shall come to understanding that the continuous repetition and elaboration of forms, the creation and invention of new ones, is the very material for which Mormons will be known. Whatever may be the judgment of succeeding generations on the architects, planners and builders of our age, and obviously the judgment will vary from generation to generation, the standard plan chapel and temple as they are built will be studied and interpreted. They will be used as ready evidence of Mormon culture, attitudes and assumptions in the 1920's-80's.

Meddling in the creative process and forcing out diversity and character is a formidable consideration. We are accustomed to the exhilaration of uniqueness between individuals. The vision of a world in the future filled with thousands of identical ward meetinghouse buildings is a startling one. Ideally the standard plan program will go in an alternative direction, looking for ways to get changes, new varieties and different themes and create standards as bases, not to encourage conformity, but to allow the more efficient celebration of the unique, the ambitious and the divine.
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MORMON STANDARD PLAN ARCHITECTURE

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ABSTRACT

In the years 1920-80 the Mormon Church developed, expanded and refined an architectural program based on the concept of the standard plan. Standard plan buildings were selected, individualized and built for local ward units under the direction of the Church Building Department which created uniform standards of quality and appearance across the worldwide Church and created a tangible link between foreign members and the central Church.

Although functional and financial considerations directed virtually all design decisions and formed the operative basis of the program other elements also determined the nature of the Mormon approach to building. Growth, in the membership, more than any other single factor, affected the nature of building in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The mid-century emphasis on the accelerated missionary program, internationalization of the Church, and the emphasis on global uniformity of Church programs led to the use of the standard plan as the exclusive method of new construction in 1980.

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