

# Correlated Praise: The Development of the Spanish Hymnal

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STATISTICIANS PREDICT THAT BY 2012 native Spanish speakers will surpass native English speakers as the LDS church's largest language group.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, the church is about to reach a dramatic turning point in its international growth. Yet with Spanish-speaking saints on the verge of becoming the church's majority language group, relatively little has been done to examine the history and culture of Spanish-speaking saints or their place in church administration.<sup>2</sup>

The textual history of the Spanish hymnal may seem a rather trivial contribution to Hispanic Mormon studies. However, the story of the hymnal's development casts light not only on the relationship of Spanish-speaking saints to the current church administration, but also on the relationship between English-speaking saints and every other language group in the church. The details of the Spanish hymnal's development may be tedious to readers who do not know Spanish, but they will be of considerable interest to those familiar with either the 1942 *Himnos de Sión*

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1. "News of the Church," *Ensign* 26 (Mar. 1996): 77.

2. Existing studies include: Rodolfo Acevedo, *Los mormones en Chile* (Santiago: Impresos Cumorah, 1990); David Clark Knowlton, "Missionaries and Terror: Background and Implications of the Assassination of Two Missionaries in Bolivia," *Sunstone* 13 (Apr. 1989): 10-15; David Clark Knowlton, "Thoughts on Mormonism in Latin America," *Dialogue* 25, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 41-53; David Clark Knowlton, "Mormonism in Latin America: Toward the Twenty-first Century," *Dialogue* 29, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 159-176; Lamond Tullis, "The Church Moves outside the United States: Some Observations from Latin America," *Dialogue* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 63-73; F. Lamond Tullis, *Mormons in Mexico* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1987); Frederick S. Williams and Frederick G. Williams, *From Acorn to Oak Tree* (Fullerton, Calif.: Etcetera Graphics, 1987).

or the 1992 *Himnos*. Of broader interest will be the paper's conclusion, which explores the impact of correlation on the international church.

The development of the Spanish hymnal occurred in three stages.<sup>3</sup>

(1) *The Amateur Stage*. Four Spanish hymnals were produced in the early years of the twentieth century. These were primarily the work of Anglos for whom Spanish was a second language, and the quality of the Spanish was poor to fair. The Mexican Mission produced the first of these hymnals in 1907 with expanded editions in 1912 and 1927. An independent Spanish hymnal was published in 1911, the work of Samantha Brimhall-Foley.

(2) *The Professional Stage*. In 1942 the church produced a hymnal incorporating most of the Mexican Mission's 1927 hymnal. Eduardo Balderas, a native Spanish speaker working for the church as a translator, revised some of the amateur hymn texts and added many new, quality translations of his own.

(3) *The Committee Stage*. In 1992, the church published a new Spanish hymnal, heavily revised and correlated to the 1985 English hymnal. This hymnal was produced by a committee which included native Spanish speakers working under the auspices of the Church Music Committee.

#### THE AMATEUR STAGE: THE MEXICAN MISSION'S HYMNALS

The early Mexican Mission produced three hymnals.<sup>4</sup> The first of these (1907) was titled *Himnario mormón* [Mormon Hymnal]. The second two (1912, 1927) were titled *Himnos de Sión* [Hymns of Zion],<sup>5</sup> and were

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3. The production of other Spanish materials—most notably, translations of LDS scripture—began in the nineteenth century and has experienced the same three stages.

4. At the time the first Spanish hymnal was produced, Mexico was the only part of the Spanish-speaking world where the church had a presence. The church would not be established in South America until the 1920s, in Central America until the 1940s, or in Spain until the 1960s. Missionary work among Spanish speakers living in the United States was officially launched in 1915 (*Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow [New York: Macmillan, 1992], 897-902, 1392-1400; *Deseret News Church Almanac 2001-2002* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 2000], 398; Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985], 55). Of the church's various missions in the Spanish-speaking world, only the Mexican Mission ever produced its own hymnals. The 1927 hymnal circulated beyond Mexico and was used as far away as Argentina.

5. The full bibliographic references for these hymnals are: *Himnario mormón* (Mexico: Müller Hnos., 1907); *Himnos de Sión de la Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Últimos Días* (Mexico: Müller Hnos., 1912); *Himnos de Sión de la Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Últimos Días* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing, 1912); *Himnos de Sión de la Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Últimos Días* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing, 1927). Note that there were two editions of the 1912 hymnal, one printed in Mexico and one in Independence. The Mexican edition appears to have been created first (judging, for example, by the fact that it contains fewer hymns). The title for the 1907 hymnal may have been chosen for its similarity to the title of the *Himnario evangélico*, from

essentially expanded editions of the 1907 hymnal. Each reproduced the contents of the previous hymnal, with some omissions and changes, and then added a new set of hymn texts where the previous hymnal left off. These early hymnals contained text only with no music. Cross-references to the saints' English hymnals and songbooks indicated which tunes should be used with which Spanish texts. Obviously, one had to be familiar with the English hymnals of the time to make use of these cross-references.

Rey L. Pratt, president of the Mexican Mission from 1907 until his death in 1931,<sup>6</sup> was the chief contributor to Spanish LDS hymnody during this period; half the hymn texts in the 1927 hymnal were credited to him. Other hymn texts were produced by American missionaries, Anglo saints living in the church's Mexican colonies, and native Mexican saints.<sup>7</sup> Since they were produced largely by people for whom Spanish was a second language, these hymnals contained many errors, both typographical and grammatical. Crude syntax, bizarre expressions, and accents forced onto the wrong syllables made some of the lyrics un-singable and incomprehensible. The 1912 edition corrected some of these problems, but many stayed in place until 1942 and some were not corrected until 1992.

In compiling their first hymnal for the use of Spanish-speaking saints in 1907, the missionaries adopted four strategies. As one would expect, they: 1) translated hymns in use among the English-speaking saints; 2) included original Spanish hymns authored by Latter-day Saints; 3) borrowed Spanish hymns from other denominations; and 4) reprinted English hymns without translation.<sup>8</sup> The original Spanish hymns are especially interesting because they represent the blossoming of a distinctive Spanish LDS hymnody. The 1907 hymnal contained twelve original Spanish hymn texts; eleven more appeared in the 1912

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which some hymns were reprinted by permission. The title of the 1912 and 1927 hymnals seems to have been inspired by the title of the 1908 English hymnal, *Songs of Zion*. This might manifest an early impulse toward correlation.

6. Dale F. Beecher, "Rey L. Pratt and the Mexican Mission," *BYU Studies* 15 (Spring 1975): 293-307.

7. Two of the translations in the 1907 hymnal were attributed to Estrella de Belén, which means "Star of Bethlehem" and seems to be a pseudonym. We may surmise this person was LDS since one of her translated hymns, "Our God, We Raise to Thee," is a distinctively LDS hymn. "Estrella" could serve as a feminine name in Spanish, which might indicate that this translator is a woman. If so, then Estrella de Belén would be the only female contributor to any Spanish hymnal produced by the church or its missions before 1992. (See footnote 18 for a possible qualification to this assertion.) In any case, Estrella de Belén's translations were omitted from every subsequent hymnal.

8. Presumably the texts in English were included for the use of Anglo missionaries rather than the Mexican saints. Only the 1907 hymnal contained untranslated English text.

hymnal. About half these original texts were authored by native Spanish-speaking saints and were written to accompany existing hymn tunes.<sup>9</sup>

Many of the original texts were about the Restoration, missionary work, or the last days. One in particular, “La obra ya empieza” [The Work Now Begins],<sup>10</sup> was meant to have special local appeal, describing missionary work in Latin America as fulfillment of the Book of Mormon prophecy that the gospel would again be taken to the Lamanites. The first verse of this hymn begins:

La obra ya empieza  
Que prometió Jesús;

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9. The twenty-three original texts are listed below, with their authors and their English tunes (where known).

Original Spanish Text	Author	Tune
<i>Despedida</i>	Andrés C. González	In the Sweet By and By
<i>Digno es de todo loor</i>	Edmund Richardson	[Tune unknown]
<i>Dios, bendícenos</i>	Edmund Richardson	Guide Us, O Thou Great Jehovah
<i>Dios te loamos</i>	Edmund Richardson	Adieu to the City
<i>Doxologías</i>	Edmund Richardson	Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
<i>El tiempo ha llegado</i>	Ramón García	[Tune unknown]
<i>Final</i>	Joel Morales	Ye Who Are Called to Labor
<i>Hermanos, venid</i>	José V. Estrada G.	We'll Sing the Songs of Zion
<i>Humildad</i>	W. Ernest Young	Beautiful Isle
<i>La obra ya empieza</i>	Edmund Richardson	[Tune appears in the 1942 hymnal without any identifying information]
<i>La ofrenda</i>	José V. Estrada G.	Jesus, Mighty King in Zion
<i>La proclamación</i>	José V. Estrada G.	Improve the Shining Moments
<i>La voz de Jesucristo</i>	Edmund Richardson	O Stop and Tell Me, Red Man
<i>Mensaje de paz</i>	Joel Morales	Lo! The Gentile Chain Is Broken
<i>Oh gente afligida</i>	Edmund Richardson	Arise, O Glorious Zion
<i>Padre nuestro en el cielo</i>	Manrique González	We Are Sowing
<i>¿Por qué somos?</i>	Edmund W. Richardson	Lord, Accept Our True Devotion
<i>Promesa cumplida</i>	Joel Morales	[Tune unknown]
<i>Santos, dad loor a Dios</i>	Edmund Richardson	O Jesus, the Giver
<i>Te glorificamos, oh Dios</i>	Marion B. Naegle	The Red, White, and Blue
<i>Tened en Dios confianza</i>	José V. Estrada G.	Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken
<i>Venid, hermanos</i>	José V. Estrada G.	How Firm a Foundation
<i>Venid hermanos en la fe</i>	Edmund Richardson	Again We Meet Around the Board

10. Throughout the amateur and even into the professional stage, titles in the Spanish hymnals were capitalized according to the conventions of English. We have applied the capitalization conventions of Spanish (as did the 1992 hymnal). Also, in our citations from the Spanish hymnals, we have corrected obvious typographical or usage errors (except when commenting on them) so as not to distract readers; for the same reason, we have modernized accentuation and punctuation. Throughout this paper, the literal translations from Spanish appearing in square brackets are our own.

Al pueblo lamanita,  
Va la divina luz.

[Now begins the work  
which Jesus promised:  
to the Lamanite people  
goes the divine light.]

The hymn then speaks of the “millares que viven en el Sud” [thousands who live in the South] who are of Lamanite blood, and it names Mexicans, specifically, as being among those whom God wills to teach the gospel and save from their afflictions.<sup>11</sup>

The borrowing of hymns from other denominations<sup>12</sup> represented another move toward a distinctive Spanish LDS hymnody, independent of developments in English LDS hymnody. The 1907 hymnal contained nine texts reprinted by permission of the American Tract Society from the *Himnario evangélico* [Evangelical Hymnal]. These included Spanish translations of the hymns “In the Sweet By and By,” “Rock of Ages,” “God Be with You Till We Meet Again,” and “I Need Thee Every Hour.” The 1907 hymnal also contained translations of two gospel songs, “Shall We Gather at the River?” and “When the Roll Is Called up Yonder.” For the 1927 hymnal, Rey L. Pratt translated an Anglican hymn entitled “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart.”

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11. Another hymn of particular interest to Mexican saints is “Adelante para siempre” [Onward Forever], a patriotic hymn about Mexico which attempted to provide comfort in the face of the on-going Mexican Revolution. The chorus reads:

México, México, gloria eterna  
Es para ti, y futuro de paz;  
Nunca serás destruido por guerra:  
¡Manda justicia, oh Dios de solaz!

[Mexico, Mexico, eternal glory  
is for you, and a future of peace.  
Never will you be destroyed by war.  
Send justice, O God of solace!]

This hymn appeared in the 1912 and 1927 hymnals but was omitted from the 1942 hymnal, no doubt because it was regarded as too provincial to be used by the Spanish-speaking membership worldwide. However, “La obra ya empieza,” with its specific reference to Mexicans, survived in the 1942 hymnal.

12. By “hymns borrowed from other denominations,” we mean: 1) original or translated texts produced in Spanish by members of other denominations; or 2) Spanish translations by Latter-day Saints of hymns not found in an English LDS hymnal of the time. Obviously, many of the hymns sung by the saints, both in English and Spanish, have been borrowed from other denominations; but when we speak here of “hymns borrowed from other denominations,” we have a much narrower category in mind.

This blossoming of a distinctive Spanish LDS hymnody was short-lived. The number of original Spanish texts peaked in 1912 at twenty-three; the 1927 hymnal omitted seven of these hymns, and the number continued to decline in the 1942 and 1992 hymnals. Hymns borrowed from other denominations likewise dwindled away. None of the selections from *Himnario evangélico* were carried into the 1912 or 1927 hymnals, and no hymn borrowed from another denomination survived in the church's 1942 hymnal.<sup>13</sup>

By contrast, the number of hymns translated from English rose steadily until, by 1927, translations accounted for nearly 90 percent of the hymnal's contents. Hymn translation was clearly a high priority for the compilers of the Mexican Mission's hymnals, especially for Rey L. Pratt (who contributed the largest number of translations without authoring a single original Spanish hymn). Together, the rise in the number of translations and the trimming of distinctive Spanish hymns represented an effort to correlate the hymnody of the Spanish-speaking saints to that of the English-speaking saints. This effort continued in subsequent Spanish hymnals.

#### THE BRIMHALL HYMNAL

In 1911, a Spanish hymnal entitled *Canciones de Sión* [Songs of Zion] was published in Salt Lake City.<sup>14</sup> According to the title page, this hymnal was produced "con el permiso y aprobación de las autoridades de la Iglesia" [with the permission and approval of the authorities of the Church]. However, none of the texts contained in *Canciones de Sión* ever appeared in any hymnal published by the Mexican Mission or the church, and none have survived in present-day usage. We do not know whether *Canciones de Sión* was ever actually used among Spanish-speaking saints.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, this hymnal is a fascinating and ambitious contribution to Spanish LDS hymnody. *Canciones de Sión* was entirely the work of women and one woman in particular: Samantha T. Brimhall-Foley.<sup>16</sup>

Brimhall was a Utah Mormon who lived in Mexico for the last

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13. Some of the selections from the *Himnario evangélico* reappeared in the 1942 hymnal, but as new translations by Latter-day Saints: e.g., "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" and "I Need Thee Every Hour."

14. The full reference for this collection is: Samona/Samantha T. Brimhall de Foley, *Canciones de Sión o del culto mormón* (Salt Lake City: Skelton Publishing, 1911). Note that the title, *Canciones de Sión*, is a direct translation of the 1908 English hymnal's title, *Songs of Zion*. Like the Mexican Mission's hymnals, *Canciones de Sión* contains text only (no music).

15. However, Brimhall's translation of "Praise to the Man" was sung during the October 1913 General Conference (*Conference Report* [Oct. 1913]: 24). The "canonical" translation of this hymn (i.e., the one incorporated into the church's hymnals) was made by Andrés C. González and appeared for the first time in the Mexican Mission's 1912 hymnal.

16. In her hymnal, Brimhall acknowledged the assistance or contributions of two

decade of the nineteenth century, teaching in the church's academy in Colonia Juarez. Directed by a "still small voice" to learn Spanish, Brimhall spent much of her life working as a Spanish teacher and translator and was instrumental in persuading church leaders in Los Angeles (where she spent the last years of her life) to reach out to the Spanish-speaking population there. She produced her hymnal sometime between 1904 and 1911 while living in Salt Lake City.<sup>17</sup> The hymnal was a labor of love, containing 174 hymn or song texts in Spanish, all of them authored or translated by Brimhall. The Brimhall hymnal not only has the distinction of being the only Spanish LDS hymnal created entirely by women, it is also the only Spanish LDS hymnal before 1992 to which a woman is known, with certainty, to have contributed.<sup>18</sup>

Brimhall's hymnal is the largest of the amateur hymnals, containing over 100 selections more than the Mexican Mission's 1907 hymnal and almost eighty more than the 1912 hymnal. Only the church's 1942 and 1992 Spanish hymnals were larger. With 174 hymns to her name, Brimhall holds the record for the most Spanish hymn texts produced by a Latter-day Saint.<sup>19</sup> Brimhall's Spanish, however, left much to be desired (although it was not much worse than that seen in some of the Mexican Mission's 1907 hymns).<sup>20</sup> Original Spanish hymns accounted for 40 percent of the Brimhall hymnal. No other LDS Spanish hymnal has had such a high proportion of original material. Where the 1912 hymnal contained twenty-three original Spanish hymns (the most in any hymnal by the Mexican Mission or the church), the Brimhall hymnal contained sixty-seven original Spanish texts.<sup>21</sup> Highlights of Brimhall's original texts include:

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other women: Bessie Brooks-Jensen, a pianist who helped Brimhall make sure the accentuation of the texts matched the music, and Louisa L. Greene-Richards, who composed an English text specifically for inclusion, in translated form, in Brimhall's hymnal.

17. Samantha Tryphena Brimhall Foley, "Why I Studied Spanish," typescript, Manuscripts Division, Historical Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah; copy also available at Manuscripts Division, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

18. As noted earlier, Estrella de Belén—who contributed two translations to the 1907 hymnal—might have been a woman. The 1942 hymnal contains a translation ("Ya crece Sión") credited to Lynn R. Hansen, but we have been unable to determine if this is a man or a woman.

19. Eduardo Balderas, who is normally recognized as holding that distinction, has only 121 hymns to his name. In fairness, however, it should be noted that Balderas's translations are superior in quality to Brimhall's.

20. In addition to making the same kinds of grammatical errors seen in the Mexican Mission's hymnals, Brimhall idiosyncratically treated diphthongs as if they were two different syllables. Hence, the word "Dios" [God], which is a single syllable in Spanish, was sung in Brimhall's hymns as two syllables: Di-os.

21. Regrettably, Brimhall rarely indicated which tunes were meant to accompany her original Spanish texts.

- Songs of special interest to Mexican saints, including two anti-war hymns in response to the Mexican Revolution, a hymn titled "Colonia Juarez," and several texts about Lamanites.
- Songs teaching distinctive LDS doctrines and practices such as the pre-existence and baptism for the dead, or teaching against practices such as infant baptism and the worship of images, issues which would have been especially relevant in a Catholic environment.
- Restoration-themed hymns, including two original compositions about Joseph Smith's first vision as well as Book of Mormon-themed compositions, including three songs about Christ's visit to the Americas.
- Hymns of praise to Christ as savior and creator of the worlds and songs based on events from the life of Jesus.

Despite its many linguistic shortcomings and the likelihood that it was never actually used among the Spanish-speaking saints, *Canciones de Sión* is noteworthy. For thirty years after its publication, it remained the largest collection of LDS hymn translations into Spanish; it contains more contributions by women than any other LDS Spanish hymnal; and it remains to this day the most ambitious attempt ever made to create an original LDS hymnodic in Spanish.

#### THE PROFESSIONAL STAGE: THE 1942 HYMNAL

The 1942 edition of *Himnos de Sión* was the first Spanish hymnal published by the church proper (rather than by the Mexican Mission). It was also the first Spanish hymnal in which music appeared. Thus, it was the first Spanish hymnal to be "self-sufficient"—i.e., it did not need cross-referencing nor require knowledge of the saints' English hymnals. Used for half a century, the 1942 hymnal had by far the longest life span of any of the Spanish hymnals.<sup>22</sup> It incorporated nearly all the material from the 1927 hymnal,<sup>23</sup> but was double its size, thanks to the addition of new ma-

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22. The full bibliographic reference for this hymnal is: *Himnos de Sión: Una colección de himnos y canciones espirituales con letra y música, para el uso de los coros y las congregaciones de la Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Últimos Días* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1942). Originally, this hymnal contained 252 hymns. Four hymns were added to the back of the hymnal during the 1980s.

23. Nine selections from the 1927 hymnal were omitted in the 1942 hymnal, all of which were texts with no equivalent in the English hymnals or songbooks. Again, this might indicate an early trend toward correlation—a desire to make the Spanish hymnal more closely resemble, in content, the English hymnals. This trend can also be seen in the way the 1942 hymnal handled the problem of two hymn texts using the same tune. As more hymns were translated over the years, some tunes appeared in the Spanish hymnal twice. For example, the tune for "How Firm a Foundation" accompanied both the Spanish translation of "How Firm a Foundation" and the original Spanish text "Venid, hermanos." In

terial. Almost all the new selections were translations from English, and nearly all were the work of Eduardo Balderas, a Mexican saint who in 1939 became the first full-time translator hired by the church.<sup>24</sup> Translator of 117 hymn texts and author of four original Spanish hymns, Balderas became known as the greatest contributor to Spanish LDS hymnody.

The 1942 hymnal was meant to serve the same purpose as several different songbooks used by English-speaking saints. It was a hymnbook, children's songbook, M.I.A. songbook, Sunday School songbook, and a collection of anthems for choirs all rolled into one. (The first LDS children's songbook in Spanish would not appear until 1960; M.I.A. songbooks in Spanish would likewise not appear until the late 1950s and 1960s.)

Translations from English made up nearly 95 percent of the 1942 hymnal's contents. Of the twenty-three original Spanish hymn texts which appeared in the Mexican Mission's 1912 hymnal, only eleven survived in the 1942 hymnal. The loss of older original Spanish hymns was offset somewhat by the appearance of four new original texts, all M.I.A. songs authored by Eduardo Balderas.<sup>25</sup> Still, original Spanish hymns accounted for little over 5 percent of the 1942 hymnal's contents (down from nearly 25 percent in 1912). The 1942 hymnal also contained corrections of grammatical and usage errors from the Mexican Mission's hymnals. However, a thorough revision of this material would have to wait for the 1992 hymnal.

#### THE COMMITTEE STAGE: THE 1992 HYMNAL

In 1992, half a century after the publication of the 1942 *Himnos de Sión*, the church published a revised and updated Spanish hymnal.<sup>26</sup>

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some cases, the 1942 hymnal avoided repetition by giving an original Spanish text a different tune; in other cases, the competing Spanish text was simply eliminated. Both scenarios demonstrate a tendency to give English translations preference over original Spanish texts.

24. Richard O. Cowan, *The Church in the Twentieth Century*, 270; Joseph E. Stringham, "The Church and Translation," *BYU Studies* 21 (Winter 1981): 70; see also John E. Carr, "Eduardo Balderas: Translating Faith into Service," *Ensign* 15 (June 1985): 42-46. In addition to the 1942 hymnal, Balderas's translating credits include the Pearl of Great Price, the first complete translation of the Doctrine and Covenants, a thoroughly revised translation of the Book of Mormon, and popular LDS works such as *The Articles of Faith*, *Jesus the Christ*, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, and *The Miracle of Forgiveness*.

25. The eleven original Spanish hymns which survived in the 1942 hymnal were: "Despedida," "Dios, bendícenos," "Final," "Hermanos, venid," "La obra ya empieza," "La proclamación," "Mensaje de paz," "Oh gente afligida," "¿Por qué somos?" "Promesa cumplida," and "Tened en Dios confianza." The four new M.I.A. songs by Balderas were: "Haces falta en nuestra Mutual" (tune: "The Caissons Go Rolling Along"), "Hay gozo en la Mutual" (tune: "Santa Lucia"), "La juventud sigue a Cristo" (tune: "Auld Lang Syne") and "Luchemos por la Asociación" (tune: "Jingle Bells").

26. The full bibliographic reference for this hymnal is: *Himnos de la Iglesia de Jesucristo*

This hymnal was produced over a period of three years by a committee that included native Spanish-speaking men and women,<sup>27</sup> and it was closely patterned after the 1985 English hymnal in its physical appearance, contents, and organization.<sup>28</sup> However, the 1992 Spanish hymnal was less than two-thirds the size of the English hymnal on which it was modeled.

The 1992 hymnal was produced under a set of guidelines for foreign language hymnals established by the Church Music Committee. According to those guidelines, "each hymnbook in every language would share a common core of one hundred standard hymns, fifty additional hymns from a longer recommended list, and then each language group would be allowed to select an additional fifty hymns dear to their culture, so long as the content of each hymn was compatible with the restored gospel."<sup>29</sup> These guidelines represented an unprecedented step toward correlating LDS hymnody worldwide, requiring that translations from English account for at least 75 percent of the contents of each foreign-language hymnal. The 1992 Spanish hymnal went the second mile in this regard: Translations from English made up 98 percent of that hymnal's contents. Unlike every previous Spanish hymnal, the 1992 hymnal did not print translator credits (a reflection of the fact that this hymnal was the work of a committee), and translations retained from earlier hymnals were thoroughly revised.

We have identified four categories of revisions in the 1992 Spanish hymnal: 1) correction of grammatical errors or ambiguity; 2) cutting back on the use of archaic language; 3) making the hymns doctrinally or historically correct; and 4) making Spanish translations more closely resemble the English originals.

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*de los Santos de los Ultimos Días* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day saints, 1992). This title is an exact translation of the 1985 English hymnal's title.

27. Personal communication with Lincoln R. Peters, June 1993.

28. The cover of the 1992 Spanish hymnal resembles the cover of the 1985 English hymnal. The title pages also resemble each other, the tables of contents are nearly identical, both hymnals contain the same First Presidency preface and an appendix entitled "Using the Hymnbook," and hymn translations appear in the 1992 hymnal close to the order in which their English equivalents appear in the 1985 hymnal. On the other hand, it is interesting to note some differences: The Spanish hymnal contains no hymns arranged for choirs, greatly reducing the number of hymns in the sections "For Women" and "For Men" (women have a single hymn especially appointed for their use). The Spanish hymnal also contains no patriotic hymns, and where the English hymnal has seven indices, the Spanish hymnal omits indices designed for the specialized use of musicians.

29. Spencer J. Condie, *Your Agency, Handle with Care* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 55-56. The 1992 hymnal contained 209 hymns, slightly more than the 200 allotted by the Committee's guidelines, possibly because a few short hymns were added to fill the white space left when a longer hymn filled only part of a second page.

## GRAMMATICAL ERRORS AND AMBIGUITY

While the translations provided by early Anglo missionaries filled an important need, these translations were not always graceful or even grammatically correct. A typical example is the first verse of the 1942 translation of "Now Let Us Rejoice":

Ya regocijemos en día bendito  
Ya como errantes jamás caminar;  
El gran evangelio están proclamando,  
La hora traer de la gran redención.

[Now let us rejoice in blessed day  
now as wanderers never to walk;  
the great gospel they are preaching,  
the hour to bring of the great redemption.]

This translation was actually a revised version of an even more problematic translation made by Rey L. Pratt in 1912. Despite efforts by Eduardo Balderas to tweak Pratt's earlier work, the 1942 translation contained several grammatical problems, most notably a tendency to handle infinitives in Spanish the same way they would be handled in English, resulting in a syntax that sounds tortured to the native Spanish speaker's ear. Here's how the 1992 translation finally corrected these problems:

Ya regocijemos; es día bendito;  
ya no sufriremos pesar y aflicción.  
El gran evangelio se está proclamando  
y viene la hora de la redención. . . .

[Now let us rejoice; it is blessed day;  
no longer will we suffer sorrow and affliction.  
The great gospel is being preached  
and comes the hour of redemption. . . .]

The new translation may sound awkward to an English speaker's ear (we have tried to preserve that awkwardness in the literal re-translation into English), but the new translation does satisfy the norms of Spanish grammar. While some of the revisions are relatively unobtrusive—the changing of the word *en* to *es* in the first line, for example—the second line of the hymn has been completely rewritten. Note, too, that the revised translation, unlike its predecessor, rhymes in the second and fourth lines as does the original English.

An important feature of the revision is the use of *synalephas*. In Spanish, when a syllable ending in a vowel is followed by a syllable beginning with a vowel sound, the two syllables are often pronounced as a single syllable. (An English equivalent appears in the opening line of the hymn,

“O God, the Eternal Father,” where two syllables are slurred together so they can be sung on the same note: “O God, th’Eternal Father.”) This blending of syllables, called a *synalepha*, is commonly used in Spanish poetry and song to squeeze more syllables into one line. The synalepha is indicated to the singer by the u-shaped mark seen in the new translation between the words *se* and *está*, or *y* and *aflicción*. Synalephas were not used in earlier Spanish hymnals, with rare exceptions, perhaps because the convention was unfamiliar to the Anglos who oversaw the production of those hymnals or perhaps to avoid typographical complications. By contrast, synalephas were used frequently in the 1992 hymnal.

Despite its problems, the 1912 translation of “Now Let Us Rejoice” was not as bad as it might have been. The grammar in some early translations was extremely crude. Consider these excerpts from the 1912 translation of “What was witnessed in the heavens?”:

Oh, ¿qué vieron en el cielo? Pues, un ángel que voló.  
 ¿Trajo él algún mensaje? Sí, del evangelio, son. . . .  
 ¿Evangelio no tuvimos? Los de hombres, otro no.  
 Dínos, ¿qué es este nuevo? El primero que volvió.

[Oh, what saw in the sky? Why, an angel that flew.  
 Brought he some message? Yes, of the gospel, sound. . . .  
 Gospel had we not? Those of men, other no.  
 Tell us, what is this new? The first that returned.]

In order to squeeze in enough syllables to correct the grammatical problems here, the revisers had to alter the way this hymn is sung. In the English version of this hymn, there are several places where a single syllable is extended over two notes: “Wha-at was witnessed i-in the heavens.” The revisers of the Spanish hymnal had to dispense with this luxury: In the 1992 translation of this hymn, every note carries a different syllable (giving the translators ten syllables per phrase instead of eight). As a result of this change, Spanish-speaking saints have had to learn to sing this hymn in a new way, but what they now sing is more intelligible Spanish:

¿Qué es lo que vieron en las alturas? Vimos un ángel que voló.  
 ¿Trajo algún mensaje al mundo? El evangelio de salvación. . . .  
 ¿No se tenía el evangelio? Sí existía en la antigüedad.  
 ¿Qué es, entonces, este prodigio? El regreso de la verdad. . . .

[What was it that you saw in the heights? We saw an angel that flew.  
 Did he bring some message to the world? The gospel of salvation. . . .  
 Was the gospel not already had? Yes, it existed in ancient times.  
 What is, then, this wonder? The return of the truth. . . .]

Furthermore, some of the earlier translations were ambiguous, with unintentionally humorous or scandalous results. The 1942 translation of "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet" contained these lines:

Tenemos en Dios gran confianza,  
Vencido será Satanás.  
De él no dudamos en nada. . . .

[We have in God great confidence,  
Satan will be defeated.  
In him we trust. . . .]

Obviously, the pronoun *él* (him) is meant to refer to God, but singers sound as if they are placing their trust in Satan. In the 1992 hymnal, that last line has been changed to read: "De Dios no dudamos en nada . . ." [In God we trust . . . .]

#### ARCHAIC LANGUAGE

Since some translations from earlier hymnals are nearly a century old, they contain certain archaic features, some of which were retained in the 1992 hymnal—most notably the use of *vosotros*, a plural "you" comparable to the English "ye." *Vosotros* survives in contemporary Spanish only in Spain and sounds affected if used in Latin America, but *vosotros* is still used in the Reina-Valera translation of the Bible, the translation which the church has approved for Spanish-speaking members. *Vosotros* is also used in the Spanish translations of restoration scripture, just as "thee" and "ye" are retained in the church's English scriptures. It is therefore not surprising to see *vosotros* retained in the Spanish hymnal.

A few archaisms, however, have been eliminated from the hymnal. Earlier translations of "Master, the Tempest is Raging" and "Abide with Me; 'Tis Eventide" used the medieval *vos* form to address the Savior, which sounds as extraordinarily antiquated to Spanish speakers as the royal "we" would sound to an English-speaker.<sup>30</sup> The 1992 revision replaces all the *vos* forms with verbs conjugated in the *tú* form, which is what contemporary Spanish speakers would use to address the Lord.

Another archaism seen in earlier hymn translations was the practice of moving pronouns from their customary positions in order to make the text fit the rhythm of the music. The 1992 hymnal discontinued this practice. For instance, the translated chorus of "I Stand All Amazed" used to

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30. This medieval, honorific form of "vos" should not be confused with the familiar form of "vos" which survives today in some countries of Central and South America. The pronouns and the conjugations used in the pre-1992 hymnals clearly correspond to the medieval, not the contemporary, form.

begin: “Cuán asombroso es que él amárame y rescatárame” [How wonderful it is that he would me love and me rescue]. In Spanish, as in our English re-translation, the pronoun “me” strikes the contemporary ear as being in the wrong place, although this would have been permissible in archaic Spanish. The 1992 revision took an entirely different approach: “Cuán asombroso es que por amarme así muriera El por mí” [How wonderful it is that he loved me so much he would die for me]. In Spanish, as in English, this is quite a mouthful and rather more difficult to sing than the old version—but no longer sounds archaic.

#### DOCTRINAL AND HISTORICAL INACCURACIES

The 1992 hymnal brought earlier translations in line with the “doctrinal correctness” promoted in subsequent years by the Correlation Committee. For instance, the 1927 translation of “How Firm a Foundation” made a reference to “el plan de Jesús” [the plan of Jesus]. This is now recognized as incorrect—we are supposed to speak of the Father’s plan, not Jesus’ plan. The 1992 revisers replaced the reference to “el plan de Jesús” with a reference to God’s “palabra de amor” [word of love]. Also the 1927 translation of “With Wondering Awe” committed the *faux pas* of referring to three wise men (*magos tres*), but in 1992, the hymn was rewritten in such a way as to leave the number of wise men unspecified, as it is in the New Testament. Likewise, since 1907, the translation of “What Was Witnessed in the Heavens” had contained a reference to San Pablo [Saint Paul]. In 1992, he became simply Pablo [Paul].

The 1942 translation of “In Our Lovely Deseret” contained the lines: “Si salud quieren guardar y sus vidas alargar, té, café, y el tabaco odiarán” [If they want to guard their health and prolong their lives, tea, coffee, and tobacco they will hate]. In the 1992 hymnal, that last line appears as: “té, café, también tabaco evitarán” [tea, coffee, and tobacco they will avoid]. The committee member who made this revision was uncomfortable with the idea of LDS children being taught to hate.<sup>31</sup> However, the English version of this hymn still reads “tea and coffee and tobacco they despise.”

Since 1927, the translation of “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” had begun:

A Dios, el Padre y Jesús,  
Y al Espíritu de luz,  
Alzad canciones de loor. . .

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31. Personal communication with Omar Canals, March 1990.

[To God the Father and Jesus,  
and to the Spirit of light,  
raise songs of praise. . . .]

Lest the hymn give the impression that God the Father and Jesus are the same personage, the 1992 revisers used a synalepha to insert the preposition "to" (Spanish *a*) before Jesus:

*A Dios el Padre y a Jesús*  
y al Espíritu de luz  
alzad canciones de loor. . . .

[To God the Father and to Jesus,  
and to the Spirit of light,  
raise songs of praise. . . .]

In 1942, the translation of "Joseph Smith's First Prayer" began:

Qué hermosa la mañana,  
Qué brillante fué el sol,  
Animales de verano,  
Daban voces de loor.

[How beautiful was the morning,  
how bright was the sun;  
animals of summer  
raised their voices in praise.]

However, this was not historically accurate—the First Vision occurred in the spring, not the summer. Accordingly, the 1992 revision reads: "Pajaritos y abejas daban voces de loor" [Little birds and bees raised their voices in praise]. Note that not only has the reference to summer been eliminated, but the reference to birds and bees also brings the hymn closer to the English text ("bees were humming, sweet birds singing").

#### DIVERGENCES FROM THE ENGLISH TEXTS

One of the goals of the 1992 hymnal compilers was to make the Spanish translations more closely resemble the original English texts.<sup>32</sup> As a result, the revisers altered texts that were adequate in terms of grammar and doctrine but were less literal translations of the English than they

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32. Spencer J. Condie reports that under the new guidelines for foreign-language hymnals, text had to be translated back into English to "see how the lyrics survived the round trip" (*Your Agency, Handle with Care*, 57).

could have been. Consider, for instance, the Hosanna shout as it appears in the 1907 translation of the chorus from "The Spirit of God."

Cantemos, gritemos, con huestes del cielo,  
 ¡Hosanna, hosanna al Dios de Belén!  
 A él sea gloria, poder y anhelo,  
 De hoy para siempre, ¡Amén y amén!

[Let us sing, let us shout, with the armies of heaven,  
 Hosanna, hosanna to the God of Bethlehem!  
 To him be given power and dominion,  
 henceforth and forever, Amen and amen!]

In the 1992 revision, the epithet "God of Bethlehem" disappears, and the chorus has been altered to refer to both the Father and the Son, as it does in English (and as it does in the Hosanna shout used during temple dedications).

Cantemos, gritemos, con huestes del cielo:  
 ¡Hosanna, hosanna a Dios y Jesús!  
 A ellos sea dado loor en lo alto,  
 de hoy para siempre, ¡amén y amén!

[Let us sing, let us shout, with the armies of heaven,  
 Hosanna, hosanna to God and Jesus!  
 To them be given glory in the highest,  
 henceforth and forever, Amen and amen!]

While the new translation is undeniably closer to the English original, it has also acquired a certain gracelessness. For one thing, the chorus no longer rhymes. Furthermore, "God and Jesus" sounds like something a Sunbeam teacher might say, not something one would sing at a solemn occasion such as a temple dedication. "The God of Bethlehem" was unusual but had a greater air of dignity.

Several of the altered hymns have the same problem. When a translator's priority is producing as literal a translation as possible, concerns such as gracefulness and dignity tend to fall by the wayside. Sometimes the change is innocuous. For example, the Spanish version of "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" used to be titled "En bella noche se oyó" [It came upon a beautiful night]. The hymn is now titled "A medianoche se oyó" [It came at midnight], which doesn't sound bad in Spanish and does better capture the meaning of the original. On the other hand, consider the Spanish version of "I Need Thee Every Hour." In 1912, this hymn was translated as "Te quiero sin cesar," which can mean either "I love thee without ceasing" or "I desire thee without ceasing." Now the hymn begins, "Te necesito, sí," meaning, "I need thee, yes." Certainly the

1992 version better captures the content of the original English, in that it focuses on needing the Lord, but the intensity of feeling in English—"I need thee *every hour*"—was better captured by the translation "I desire thee without ceasing."

A casualty which strikes us as particularly regrettable is "Sé tú mi luz," which was supposed to be a translation of "Abide with Me." We say "supposed to be," because the older translation differs so greatly from the original that it might be considered a new hymn in its own right. Instead of asking God to "Abide with me," the translation prays, "Be thou my light." The earlier Spanish text was quite beautiful:

Ven, tú, Señor, al ver la luz partir,  
La noche tiende sombras de temor;  
Sin otra luz o ser a quien pedir,  
En las tinieblas, sé mi luz, Señor.

[Come, Lord, as the light departs;  
the night extends fearful shadows.  
With no other light or being to whom I can turn,  
in the darkness, be thou my light, O Lord.]

The new translation of "Abide with Me" in the 1992 hymnal more closely resembles the original English, but lacks the poetry and the feeling of "Sé tú mi luz":

Ven, oh Señor; la noche viene ya.  
Todo es oscuro y temor me da.  
No hay amparo; gran maldad se ve.  
En las tinieblas acompáñame.

[Come, O Lord; the night is coming.  
Everything is dark and makes me afraid.  
There is no shelter; great evil is seen.  
In the darkness, accompany me.]

Not all translations have been subjected to this kind of revision. Consider "Venid a mí," the translation of "Come, Follow Me." From the very title, it is evident that the Spanish version is moving in a different direction than the English: Literally translated, the Spanish hymn is not "Come, *follow* me," but, "Come *to* me." The English version of this hymn focuses on the need to follow Christ through this mortal sphere into the eternities. By contrast, the Spanish hymn echoes the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that . . . are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28) and recounts the story of Jesus commanding the disciples to let the children come and be blessed. None of that appears in the English hymn. Again we have a case of a Spanish translation which might be considered

a new hymn in its own right. Unlike “*Sé tú mi luz,*” however, “*Venid a mí*” was allowed into the 1992 hymnal intact.

With notable exceptions like “*Venid a mí,*” the trend in the 1992 hymnal was to produce more literal translations of the English originals, even if this meant sacrificing feeling or gracefulness.

#### CORRELATION AND THE SPANISH HYMNAL

The physical resemblance of the 1992 Spanish hymnal to the 1985 English hymnal, the arranging of the Spanish hymnal’s contents to match as closely as possible the order of the English hymnal’s contents, the preference for literal translations—these are all expressions of an impulse to correlate Spanish hymnody to English hymnody. This impulse was also expressed in the near-total omission of original Spanish hymns from the 1992 hymnal. The guidelines set by the Church Music Committee allow a foreign-language hymnal to contain up to fifty hymns unique to that language group, but the 1992 hymnal contains only three original Spanish hymns, lone survivors of the twenty-three original texts appearing in the 1912 hymnal. The surviving original hymns are: 1) “*Despedida*” [Farewell], by Andrés C. González; 2) “*La proclamación*” [The proclamation], by José V. Estrada G.; 3) “*¿Por qué somos?*” [Why are we?], by Edmund W. Richardson. “*Despedida*” and “*La proclamación*” are the only two hymns in the Spanish hymnal authored by native Spanish-speaking Latter-day Saints.

We saw earlier that the first Spanish hymnals moved toward developing a distinctive Spanish LDS hymnody not only by incorporating original Spanish texts by Latter-day Saints, but also by borrowing Spanish hymn texts from other denominations. The latter practice made a very small comeback in the 1992 hymnal, which reprinted three hymn translations, either wholly or in part, by permission of non-LDS publishing houses.<sup>33</sup> Not since 1907—eighty-five years earlier—had a Spanish text produced by a member of another denomination been borrowed for an LDS hymnal.

We have noted that under the guidelines set by the Church Music

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33. The first and second verses of the Spanish translation of “*Children of Our Heavenly Father*” were reprinted by permission of a Baptist publishing house. The entire translation of “*Come, Ye Thankful People*” and the third verse of the translation of “*For the Beauty of the Earth*” were reprinted by permission of an Argentine publisher. While these borrowed texts were an exception to the correlation impulse in the sense they were produced outside the church, in every case the borrowed text was a translation of a hymn appearing in the 1985 English hymnal. In other words, these are *not* cases of hymns being incorporated into the Spanish hymnal independent of trends in English hymnody (such as we saw in the Mexican Mission’s hymnals, which contained Spanish songs with no equivalents in the English LDS hymnals of the time).

Committee, a maximum of 25 percent of a foreign-language hymnal's content can be unique to that language group, but the compilers of the 1992 hymnal took little advantage of that 25 percent allotment. As a general rule, the English hymnal set the standard for deciding which hymns to retain from the 1942 hymnal: A selection from the 1942 hymnal generally survived in the 1992 hymnal if it has an equivalent in the 1985 English hymnal. There are exceptions to this rule: Fourteen hymns were retained even though they had no equivalents in the English hymnal, and fifteen hymns were dropped although they had equivalents in the English hymnal.<sup>34</sup> Yet as a whole, the contents of the 1992 Spanish hymnal were correlated to those of the 1985 English hymnal even more closely than required by the Church Music Committee.

The impulse toward correlation can also be seen in the way some hymns from the 1942 hymnal had their tunes changed to match those which accompanied the same hymns in the English hymnal.<sup>35</sup> Here, too, are exceptions: The Spanish translations of "God of Our Fathers, Known of Old" and "Guide Us, O Thou Great Jehovah" retained in the 1992

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34. Most of the retained Spanish hymns with no equivalents in the 1985 English hymnal were translations of older hymns that had dropped out of use among the English-speaking saints although their translations continued to be popular among the Spanish-speaking saints. The fourteen hymns were: "Con gozosa canción" ("The Joy and the Song"), "Despedida" (original Spanish composition), "El día santo del Señor" ("Sweet Sabbath Day"), "Hay un hogar eterno" ("Beautiful Home"), "La proclamación" (original Spanish composition), "Mirad al Salvador" ("Behold the Lamb of God"), "No demayéis, oh santos" ("Take Courage, Saints"), "No hablemos con enojo" ("Angry Words! Oh, Let Them Never"), "Oíd el toque del clarín" ("Hark! Listen to the Trumpeters"), "Otro año ha pasado" ("One More Year Has Gone"), "¿Por qué somos?" (original Spanish composition), "Recoged la solana" ("Catch the Sunshine"), "Si la vía es penosa" ("If the Way Be Full of Trial, Weary Not"), and "¿Sin contestar?" ("Unanswered Yet? The Prayer). In the cases of "¿Por qué somos?" and "La proclamación," the tunes for these hymns appear in the English hymnal, but the Spanish texts are original compositions.

The omitted hymns with equivalents in the English hymnal were: "Brilla la aurora sacra" ("Softly Beams the Sacred Dawning"), "¡Cuán gloriosas cosas hablan!" ("Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"), "De cerros de Islanda" ("From Greenland's Icy Mountains"), "En nuestro caro hogar" ("Our Mountain Home So Dear"), "Gracias por la Escuela Dominical" ("Thanks for the Sabbath School"), "Gran Salvador, cerca a ti" ("Nearer, Dear Savior, to Thee"), "Himno bautismal" ("Father in Heaven, We Do Believe"), "Mirad a Sión hermosa" ("Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise"), "Oh Jesús, gran Rey del cielo" ("Jesus, Mighty King in Zion"), "¡Resplandecid, oh Sión!" ("Arise O Glorious Zion"), "Sabed que el hombre libre está" ("Know This, That Every Soul Is Free"), "Sé prudente, oh hermano" ("School Thy Feelings"), "Si tú al astro Sirio" ("If You Could Hie to Kolob"), "Ved volar potente ángel" ("See, the Mighty Angel Flying"), and "Venid de Sión los hijos" ("Come, All Ye Saints of Zion").

35. Four hymns had their tunes correlated in this way: "Ante ti, Señor, tu grey" ("Lord, We Come before Thee Now"), "Jesús en pesebre" ("Away in a Manger"), "Oh vos que sois llamados" ("Ye Who Are Called to Labor"), and "Venid, los que a Dios amáis" ("Come, We That Love the Lord").

hymnal the tunes they bore in the 1942 hymnal, even though these were not the tunes which accompany these hymns in the English hymnal.

If we count: 1) original Spanish texts retained in the 1992 hymnal, 2) translations borrowed wholly or in part from other denominations, 3) hymns no longer found in the English hymnal but whose translations survive into the 1992 hymnal, and 4) translations in the 1992 hymnal whose tunes do not match those found in the English hymnal, then material not correlated to the English hymnal makes up only 9 percent of the 1992 hymnal, far less than what was allowed by the Church Music Committee. Note, however, that this material consists mostly of hymn translations. Such material has come to be *distinctive* of the Spanish-speaking saints but is not *original* to them. If we ask how much material in the 1992 hymnal represented original contributions by native Spanish-speaking saints to LDS hymnody, the answer is: two hymn texts only; no LDS hymnal has ever contained music composed by a native Spanish-speaking saint.<sup>36</sup> Original contributions by native Spanish-speaking saints, thus, account for less than 1 percent of the 1992 hymnal.

#### WHITHER FROM HERE?

Our own observations indicate that Spanish-speaking saints were not altogether enthusiastic about the appearance of the 1992 hymnal. One of this paper's authors, John-Charles Duffy, was serving a mission in the Dominican Republic when the hymnal was released; the very first reaction to the hymnal from a Dominican saint was a disappointed, "It's so thin!"<sup>37</sup> The numerous revisions to the hymns put illiterate or semi-literate saints, who had learned to sing the hymns by rote, in the embarrassing position of no longer knowing how to sing the hymns correctly. In one ward where John-Charles worked, the members were so put off by the changes that they locked the new hymnbooks away and continued to use the 1942 hymnal. Ward members developed greater enthusiasm for the new hymnal when they were introduced during Sunday School opening exercises to newly translated hymns such as "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief" and "How Great Thou Art."

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36. There may be one qualification to this statement: Edmund Richardson's original Spanish text "La obra ya empieza" appeared in the 1942 hymnal with a tune which bore no identifying information. If someone could establish that this tune was composed by a native Spanish-speaking Latter-day Saint, then this would be the one original musical contribution by a Spanish-speaking saint to LDS hymnody. However, "La obra ya empieza" was omitted from the 1992 hymnal.

37. The 1992 hymnal contains fifty fewer hymns than the 1942 hymnal and 130 fewer hymns than the 1985 English hymnal.

The second author, Hugo Olaiz, was attending a Spanish-speaking ward in Oakland, California when the 1992 hymnal was released and witnessed a different problem. While new hymnbooks were shipped free of charge to Spanish-speaking units outside the United States, units within the States had to purchase the hymnbooks from their budgets. Reluctant to do so, Hugo's ward was still using the 1942 hymnal a year after the new hymnal had become available. Hugo also encountered a Latter-day Saint from Spain who complained that while the revision committee included church members from several Latin American countries, no one from Spain was asked to check the revision. As a result, one hymn titled "Oíd el toque del clarín" [Hear the call of the trumpet]—which Spaniards find either humorous or offensive—was left intact.<sup>38</sup>

It should not be difficult for English-speaking saints to understand why their Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters would react negatively to the new hymnal. When the 1985 English hymnal was released, it contained a minor revision to the hymn "How Firm A Foundation." For months, even years, afterwards, some members of the church could still be heard singing "you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled" instead of the revised lyrics, "who unto the Savior for refuge have fled." Perhaps anticipating resistance to such changes in the hymns or to the omission of beloved hymns from the past, the church carefully orchestrated the release of the 1985 hymnal. The hymnal was unveiled during a "celebration" in the Assembly Hall at Temple Square where Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, and Neal A. Maxwell gave talks hailing the new hymnal and encouraging its use.<sup>39</sup> That same month the *Ensign* ran two articles promoting the new hymnal.<sup>40</sup>

One can easily imagine how much more resistance the church would have encountered had the 1985 hymnal contained revisions, not just occasionally (as in "How Firm A Foundation"), but in every hymn, or if familiar hymns had been altogether rewritten. It's extremely unlikely, in fact, that the church would ever attempt such a sweeping revision to the English hymnody. Yet this was precisely the situation for Spanish-speak-

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38. In Spain the word "clarín" [trump or bugle] is used colloquially to refer to the penis. The 1942 version of this same hymn contained another humorous or offensive element which was eliminated in the 1992 revision: A line declared that at the Second Coming, Jesus "a los valientes premiará con dones de amor" [will reward the valiant with gifts of love]. The words "con dones" [with gifts] sound exactly like the word "condones" [condoms]. In the 1992 hymnal, this line has been altered to read "a los valientes El dará coronas de honor" [to the valiant He will give crowns of honor].

39. "News of the Church," *Ensign* 15 (Nov. 1985): 105.

40. Kathleen Lubeck, "The New Hymnbook: The Saints Are Singing!" *Ensign* 15 (Sept. 1985): 7-13; Michael F. Moody, "Latter-day Saint Hymnbooks, Then and Now," *Ensign* 15 (Sept. 1985): 10-13.

ing saints in 1992, with no explanation beyond a one-page insert in the *Liahona* (the church's international magazine in Spanish). Little wonder, then, that we observed such negative initial reactions to the 1992 hymnal.

Our own assessment of the 1992 hymnal is mixed. The grammatical revisions to the hymnal and the elimination of archaisms were certainly needed. The quality of the missionaries' early translations was embarrassing. At the same time, something has been lost. The language used in the early Spanish was imperfect and often unclear, but it was also picturesque and full of color. Whatever their failings, the early contributors strove to be poetic. By contrast, the language in the 1992 hymnal is grammatically correct and certainly easier to understand, but it has not retained the poetry and color. Like a glass of water, the revised texts are clear but odorless and tasteless.

Norberto Guinaldo, a talented Latter-day Saint musician, described in a 1975 issue of *Dialogue* the problems of the 1942 Spanish hymnal and proposed a solution. His would not have been a cheap way or an easy way, but it would have been the right way. He wrote:

We need a concerted effort to locate the poets and musicians within the Church in *all* countries of Central and South America who could spearhead the revision of the Spanish hymnal. In a world-wide church such as ours, exchange of ideas can be of great benefit. The task would be tremendous and the problems of communication and coordination even greater, but the challenge would be exciting.<sup>41</sup>

The committee responsible for the 1992 hymnal did not see its task in the terms set out in Guinaldo's challenge. Instead, its highest priority was correlation: weeding out most of the Spanish hymns with no equivalent in the English hymnal; creating new translations to update the Spanish hymnal with developments in English LDS hymnody; and revising existing texts, not just for grammatical or doctrinal correctness, but to make them more literal translations of their English originals.

The history of the Spanish hymnal began in a burst of creativity, which was eventually all but overwhelmed by correlation. The first two decades of the twentieth century saw the blossoming of a distinctive Spanish LDS hymnody, consisting of original Spanish hymn texts and hymns borrowed from other denominations. By the end of the century, however, the Spanish hymnal contained very little distinctive material and virtually no material authored by native Spanish-speaking saints. Despite claims that this is no longer an American church, the history of

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41. "The LDS Hymnal: Views on Foreign Editions, the Spanish Hymnal," *Dialogue* 10 (Spring 1975/76): 51; emphasis in original.

the Spanish hymnal suggests that the church's approach to becoming an international body is still to translate and export materials developed by, among, and for English-speaking saints. Correlation has created a dynamic where everything flows outward from the English-speaking saints. There seems to be no expectation for non-English-speaking saints to make any original contributions to LDS literature and programs. New hymns, new materials, new programs are all created first in English and then translated into other languages. English-speaking saints create; non-English-speaking saints imitate. This dynamic understandably prevailed in the church's early days, and likewise in parts of the world where the church is just beginning to be established. However, within a decade, Spanish will pass English as the predominant language in the church. When that happens, will the church continue allotting its largest language group a hymnal less than two-thirds the size of the English hymnal? Will the church perpetuate a dynamic in which the hymnody of its largest language group is largely restricted to the hymns current among a minority group? Should Spanish-speaking saints be expected to go on merely imitating their English-speaking brothers and sisters?

With third- and even fourth-generation Latter-day Saints in places like Mexico and Argentina, surely there are people in the church capable of developing a unique LDS hymnody in Spanish. Consider, for instance, the opening stanza of a poem written around 1940 by an Argentine convert, Máximo Corte.<sup>42</sup> This poem commemorated the dedication of South America for the preaching of the restored gospel, which occurred on Christmas Day 1925, in a park in Buenos Aires.

Mañana de Navidad,  
 aire puro, clara luz,  
 mañana llena de gloria  
 para las tierras del Sur.  
 El Parque Tres de Febrero  
 lleno está de santidad,  
 pues en él arrodillados  
 tres misioneros están;  
 mensajeros de doctrina,  
 de justicia and claridad;  
 mensajeros de Jesús,  
 el Señor de la verdad.

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42. "La Misión Argentina," *El Mensajero Deseret* (Dec. 1940): 241. *El Mensajero Deseret* was the official organ of the Argentine Mission. For more information about Máximo Corte and his poetry, see Hugo Olaiz, "Máximo Corte y los límites de la poesía," <<http://ice.prohosting.com/bellota/maximo.htm>> (27 Apr. 2002).

[Christmas morning,  
 the air is pure, the light is bright,  
 a morning full of glory  
 for the lands of the South.  
 The Tres de Febrero Park  
 has become holy ground,  
 for here, upon their knees,  
 are three missionaries,  
 messengers bearing a doctrine  
 of righteousness and clarity;  
 messengers of Jesus,  
 the Lord of truth.]

This is not great poetry, but neither are many of the hymns produced by English-speaking saints over the years. Could this poem be turned into a hymn celebrating the origins of the church in South America, just as saints worldwide currently sing hymns celebrating the church's pioneer era in North America? Could original texts by early missionaries or by Samantha Brimhall-Foley or by native Spanish-speaking saints such as Ramón García and Manrique González be revised and revived? What other sources of a unique Spanish hymnody might the Spanish-speaking saints find if they began to mine their own past? What unique Spanish hymns might yet be written by contemporary LDS poets and musicians if they were encouraged to do so?

English-speaking saints accept that their Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters will welcome translations of their beloved hymns, and our experience suggests that the Spanish-speaking saints are, in fact, happy to receive such translations. Yet we look forward to a day when it will work the other way as well, when the English-speaking saints will find their hymnody enriched by translations of hymns originally written by Spanish-speaking saints—or French-speaking, or Russian, or Japanese, or Zulu, or Maori, or Navajo.<sup>43</sup>

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43. The current English hymnal contains a single hymn originally written by a Latter-day Saint in a language other than English: "Hark, All Ye Nations!" based on a German text by Louis F. Mönch. Karen Lynn Davidson reports that one of the objectives of the 1985 hymnal was to "reflect the growth and scope of the worldwide Church" (*Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988], 12). How a hymnal containing one hymn written by a non-English-speaking saint can profess to "reflect the growth and scope of the worldwide church" is, frankly, beyond us. Michael Hicks has written about the suspicion, even hostility, which English-speaking church leaders have expressed toward musical styles from other cultures, specifically Native American, Polynesian, and African (*Mormonism and Music: A History* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989], 209-227; reprinted as "Noble Savages," *Mormons and Mormonism: An Introduction to an American World Religion*, ed. Eric A. Eliason [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001], 180-199).

When traveling general authorities find saints of different nationalities, cultures, and language groups singing the same hymns, this reassures them that the church is the same throughout the world.<sup>44</sup> In fact, James E. Faust has gone so far as to assert that the use of the same hymns worldwide is a demonstration of “spiritual and doctrinal unity” on a par with the use of prescribed forms for gospel ordinances: “Our real strength is not so much in our diversity but in our spiritual and doctrinal unity. For instance, the baptismal prayer and baptism by immersion in water are the same all over the world. The sacramental prayers are the same everywhere. We sing the same hymns in praise to God in every country.”<sup>45</sup> Certainly a shared hymnody is a powerful symbol of unity. But we do not see why shared hymns must constitute so high a proportion as three-fourths of a hymnal, and we are troubled by the fact that English-speaking saints are unilaterally determining the contents of that “shared” hymnody. As English-speaking saints become a minority in the church, it will become increasingly difficult to ignore the reality that correlation creates an inequitable relationship between English-speaking saints and every other language group.

The scriptures enjoin the saints to “be one.” Although this injunction is often taken to mean “be united,” or even “be uniform,” in context it actually means “be equal” (see D&C 38:24-27). If the various language groups in the church are to be equal, then the machinery of correlation will have to be significantly restructured. The development of the Spanish hymnal suggests that whatever the benefits of correlation, the price the church pays is the curtailing of creativity among non-English speakers. There’s no telling what we all may be missing as a result: new hymns that would speak powerfully to people’s hearts in different languages or new approaches to the work that might prove more effective in different cultural contexts. The church has reached a point in its international growth where different language and culture groups need to have greater autonomy to develop their own materials and programs, independent of reigning trends among English-speaking saints. Hymnals are perhaps a good place to start.

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44. For example, shortly after being called to the Second Quorum of Seventy, Lowell D. Wood remarked: “It may be a trite saying, but the Church really is the same in each place you go. . . . We’ve been to church in many, many countries, and you feel the same kinship, you sing the same hymns although they may be in a different language, you teach each other out of the same lesson books, and the people love you. There really is a community of saints that’s wonderful to be a part of” (“Alberta Farmer’s Son Now Leads and Serves ‘Community of Saints,’” *LDS Church News* [3 Oct. 1992]: 11).

45. “Heirs to the Kingdom of God,” *Ensign* 25 (May 1995): 62; reprinted in James E. Faust, *Finding Light in a Dark World* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 36; James E. Faust and James P. Bell, *In the Strength of the Lord: The Life and Teachings of James E. Faust* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1999), 293.