NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

GROWING AN IDEOLOGY: HOW THE MORMONS DO IT

by

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December 2011

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)*	**2. REPORT DATE** December 2011	**3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED** Master's Thesis

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Growing an Ideology: How the Mormons Do It

5. FUNDING NUMBERS

6. AUTHOR(S) Marshall F. Chalverus, Michael A. Thomas

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
Naval Postgraduate School
Monterey, CA 93943-5000

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
N/A

10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government. I.R.B. Protocol number N.A.

12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited

12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE

13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

A fundamental characteristic of human interaction is the manifestation of ideology, which, as we define it, transcends religious, political, cultural, and national realms. Differing ideologies among groups can create friction, and often incite violence. This study seeks to understand how groups adhering to particular ideologies grow, for understanding ideological promulgation is an imperative step in understanding conflicts arising from conflicting ideological principles. We accomplish this by exploring one of the fastest growing ideologically distinct organizations today, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). In doing so, we propose that the LDS's institutional framework enables not only efficient resource collection, but also frames and promotes a socialization structure that enables ideological growth. This supports empirical evidence which suggests that ideology plays a secondary role in an ideological organization's growth. Implicit in this argument is that to promote an ideology, one should focus on socialization rather than the ideology itself; likewise, effectively countering an ideology requires a focus on social bonds and not necessarily a counter-ideological message.

14. SUBJECT TERMS ideology, ideological, philosophy, belief, choice, behavior, doctrine, religion, religious, religiosity, church, Mormon, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, organizational structure, organization, bureaucratic, community, culture, demographics, relationships, social, socialization, commitment, consumption, growth, expansion, market, economies, plural, resources, secularization, theory, special operations, counterinsurgency, de-radicalization

15. NUMBER OF PAGES
75

16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	**18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE** Unclassified	**19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT** Unclassified	**20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT** UU

NSN 7540-01-280-5500
Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-89)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. 239-18

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ABSTRACT

A fundamental characteristic of human interaction is the manifestation of ideology, which, as we define it, transcends religious, political, cultural, and national realms. Differing ideologies among groups can create friction, and often incite violence. This study seeks to understand how groups adhering to particular ideologies grow, for understanding ideological promulgation is an imperative step in understanding conflicts arising from conflicting ideological principles. We accomplish this by exploring one of the fastest growing ideologically distinct organizations today, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). In doing so, we propose that the LDS's institutional framework enables not only efficient resource collection, but also frames and promotes a socialization structure that enables ideological growth. This supports empirical evidence which suggests that ideology plays a secondary role in an ideological organization's growth. Implicit in this argument is that to promote an ideology, one should focus on *socialization* rather than the ideology itself; likewise, effectively countering an ideology requires a focus on social bonds and not necessarily a counter-ideological message.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION........1
  A. BACKGROUND........1
  B. PURPOSE........2
  C. METHODOLOGY........3
  D. OVERVIEW........4

II. CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE........7
  A. INTRODUCTION........7
  B. LDS GROWTH........7
  C. THE CHURCH AS AN IDEOLOGICAL ORGANIZATION........8
  D. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES........9
    1. Senior Leadership........13
    2. Middle Management........16
    3. The Core........18
  E. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS........19
  F. STRUCTURAL EFFECTIVENESS........21
  G. CONCLUSION........22

III. DETERMINANTS OF CHURCH GROWTH........25
  A. INTRODUCTION........25
  B. THEORIES ON THE GROWTH AND DECLINE OF RELIGIONS........25
  C. MORMON GROWTH........27
  D. MODELING GROWTH........28
  E. A THEORETICAL MODEL OF CHURCH EXPANSION........31
  F. RELIGIOUS SOCIALIZATION........35
  G. SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CAPITAL........37
  H. IDEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS........38
  I. CONCLUSION........38

IV. GROWING AN INSURGENCY........41
  A. INTRODUCTION........41
  B. RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGY........41
  C. SOCIALIZING INSURGENCIES........43
  D. AN INEFFECTIVE APPROACH........46
  E. THE LDS TEMPLATE: AN INSURGENCY MODEL........48
    1. Promote Socialization First, Not the Ideology........48
    2. Curtail the Free-Rider Problem by Increasing Commitment........50
    3. It Is Not about Winning Hearts and Minds........51

V. CONCLUSION........53

LIST OF REFERENCES........55

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST........63

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. LDS Hierarchy 13
Figure 2. The General Authorities 15
Figure 3. The Presiding Bishopric 16
Figure 4. Typical Area Divisional Structure 18
Figure 5. Cornwall's Religious Involvement Model (After Cornwall, 1989). 30
Figure 6. Sherkat and Wilson's Religious Choice Model (After Sherkat & Wilson, 1995). 31
Figure 7. Religious Consumption Model 32
Figure 8. Church Growth 35
Figure 9. Political Consumption Model 45
Figure 10. Weak Bonds in Village Stability Operations 48

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

> Since the horror of 9/11, we've learned a great deal about the enemy. We have learned that they are evil and kill without mercy – but not without purpose. . . . The war against this enemy is more than a military conflict. It is the decisive ideological struggle of the 21st century, and the calling of our generation. (Bush, 2006)

The term “ideology” is powerful, with far-reaching applicability and implications. A fundamental characteristic of human interaction is the manifestation of ideology, which transcends religious, political, cultural, and nationalistic realms. Ideologies can drive people’s actions and create friction among groups. This tension often results in clashes, violence, and warfare. Manifest Destiny drove, in part, America’s expansion westward, and with it an instigation of the decades-long Indian Wars. More recently, the Cold War demonstrated the pervasiveness of an ideological struggle, whose toll was felt across political, economic, military, and cultural lines. Today’s counter-radical Islamist doctrines are rooted in the ideological premise that democratic governments are inherently more stable, peaceful, and humanitarian.

Ideology encompasses a wide range of ideas: cultural, political, philosophical, and religious. The very word is a conjunction of two parts: *idea* and *–logy*. An idea is a thought, a cerebral concept that exists in one’s mind. The suffix *–logy* is adopted from ancient Greek *–logía*, which refers to knowledge, or the study of an academic discipline. Among the first to use of the word “ideology” was Claude Destutt, who penned the *Eléments d'idéologie* shortly following the French Revolution (The New School for Social Research, 2011). This genesis has framed our understanding of ideology, giving the word a political flavor.

In contrast, a *philosophy* stands as a set of general conceptions. According to Charles Blattberg (2009), “political philosophers will have relatively little to say about specific political issues” (p. 2), whereas political ideologies imply a prescription. As Blattberg (2009) explains, political ideologies “are more interested in guiding us as regards how we should respond” (p. 2). Ideology goes beyond merely describing a political path. True to the word's syntax, it can be applied to describe a range of cultural understandings. As Willard Mullin (1972) complains:

> Ideology is so all-inclusive that other symbolic forms are encompassed by it; because ideology is too comprehensive, it lacks 'discriminating power'; and, lacking the power to discriminate among various, often similar, phenomena, the concept fails to achieve empirical relevance. (p. 498)

For the purposes of this thesis, we define ideology as quite literally a "study of ideas," encompassing not only the political realm, but also a wider cultural phenomenon. Using ideology to explain a generic construct of prescriptions based on a shared philosophy helps us understand human behavior and interaction.

B. PURPOSE

This thesis seeks to understand how ideology-based organizations grow, for understanding ideological promulgation is imperative to understanding conflicts arising from differing ideological principles. We assert that the philosophical framework that drives the ideology of an organization plays a secondary role in that group's expansion. Cultural socialization plays a much more dominant role in an ideology-based organization's growth or decline than the nature of the doctrine per se, or even adherence to the ideology. In other words, ideological organizations grow and contract based on this socialization framework, and not necessarily on the ideas they espouse. This stands in contrast to the notion that states can successfully wage "ideological" warfare–or fight for "hearts and minds" using a psychological, philosophical, or an idea-based approach alone. For missionaries of ideologies, it also means that churning out believers is difficult through preaching alone. A more effective approach is one that establishes an effective socialization program.

We approach this study by examining growth in one of the world's most rapidly expanding ideology-based organizations: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). While the LDS is, at its core, a religious organization, it also stands as an ideology-based organization, providing prescriptive counsel to its members. The result is not only a religious organization, but a group which doctrinally espouses or prescribes specific economic, political, and moral behavior. While not all religious movements are ideological in nature, the all-encompassing character of the LDS serves as a prime example of a modern and successful ideological organization.

To propose that ideology-based groups are strictly “political” ignores the influence of organizations that merge politics with religion. The Roman Catholic Church, with its historic and far-reaching political influence is an example of this phenomenon. Likewise, organizations motivated by Islamism demonstrate that religious beliefs can be intertwined with political prescription. In essence, these are ideology-based groups. As such, we believe the LDS is an ideological organization. Because of this, our conclusions can be applied to a wider context, such as ideological contests between Western democratic ideology and Islamism.

The insights into ideological promulgation provided by this thesis explain why people join ideological movements. The theories we formulate could be used as a fundamental starting block for driving national policies that seek to undermine ideological threats to strategic interests. In essence, we seek to provide the foundations for more effective diplomatic, military, and economic policies to effectively undermine threatening ideological movements, while at the same time proselytizing favorable sentiment toward the United States. We postulate that despite the inclination to explain the rise of a religious movement as ideologically or theologically driven, organizational structures of these movements play a far greater role in influencing membership growth. In other words, the theology espoused is less significant than an ideological movement’s ability to recruit and maintain participation due to its organization. The more effective a theological movement is in creating organizations that promote growth and active membership, the more expansionist it can be. Hence, ideological appeal takes a backseat to the organization.

C. METHODOLOGY

While a comparative study of religions or ideological organizations might be useful in determining the factors behind ideological growth, we focus on one organization. This single case study of the Latter-day Saints church avoids problems inherent in comparing different ideological organizations. In the case of religions, the influence of culture and nation-states plays a role in how religions develop. Restrictive government might create an environment that stifles religious competition, undermining the study of how religions would otherwise expand absent state restrictions. Likewise, other ideological movements, such as political organizations, may only manifest themselves in certain cultural or geographic areas.

A comparative analysis also becomes difficult when examining organizational growth. A hurdle in contrasting religions, for example, is determining what defines a church member. While official church records might provide insight, the differing methods for how these organizations determine membership makes a fair analysis difficult. By focusing on one organization, we avoid these pitfalls of comparative analysis.

We acknowledge that a single case study does pose certain limitations. Commonalities that could explain organizational growth cannot be compared and contrasted; hence, conclusions cannot be generalized across other ideological or even religious groups. Our insight into LDS growth focuses on just that–the success of Mormonism. Therefore, applicability into other ideological organizations is based on extrapolation.

D. OVERVIEW

We begin our study by explaining the organizational structure of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We devote specific attention to the well-defined and institutionalized organization of the church. In doing so, a unique attribute emerges that helps understanding of LDS growth: an institutional framework that enables not only efficient resource collection, but also frames and promotes a socialization structure. It is this organization that enables religious socialization, thus feeding growth.

We then provide a brief overview of existing theories about religious growth. From this, we establish the theoretical framework that explains Mormon church growth and propose that socialization drives religious choice, which in turn drives religious consumption. A well-founded base of religious consumers enables church growth, which furthers religious socialization. This pattern establishes a self-supporting mechanism, which explains LDS expansion. More importantly, it demonstrates how ideology and doctrine can take a backseat to organization and socialization when explaining why ideological organizations grow.

Lastly, we explain the practical implications of our findings. We do this by examining insurgencies, which fundamentally focus on the population. In this, we conclude that an effective insurgency or counter-insurgency must recognize that while influential, ideology plays a secondary role in organizational expansion. Likewise, a strategy that does not integrate socialization will be inefficient.

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II. CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A. INTRODUCTION

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints refers to the largest branch of the Latter-day Saints movement founded by Joseph Smith Jr. in 1830. It is commonly referred to as the Mormon church, and its followers as Mormons, a term derived from Joseph Smith's *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ*. Although the term Mormonism may also apply to any sect of the Latter-day Saints movement, this thesis will use "Mormon" and "Latter-day Saints" to refer to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS).[1] The Latter-day Saint movement espouses Christian restorationism beliefs, seeks to restore early or traditional Christian values and ideology, and revises Christian orthodoxy with unique theology (Abanes, 2003).

B. LDS GROWTH

Rodney Stark predicted in 1984 that, by 2080, Latter-day Saints' worldwide membership would grow from just under five million members to 70 to 280 million members. Stark (1984) used membership growth data to model future growth, anticipating membership to grow at a rate of 30–50 percent per decade (p. 22). In the period from 1940 through 1980, the Mormon church grew by an average rate of 53 percent per decade (Stark, 1996, p. 175). This rate continued through the early 1990s, so that ten years after Stark's initial Mormon growth predictions, church membership actually exceeded Stark's highest prediction by almost a million members (Stark, 1996, p. 175). By 2004, the LDS added an average of 931 new members each day, of which 71 percent were converts, while the rest were due to LDS children (Stewart, 2007). Recent data indicates this trend has continued, and in 2010, the LDS (2011b) reported its membership at just over 14 million. Since their initial membership of six in 1830, the

---

[1] We differentiate between "Latter-day Saints," (which we use interchangeably with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) and the Mormon church) and "Latter-day Saints movement(s)." The Latter-day Saints movement refers to the orthodoxy founded by Joseph Smith Jr. in 1830, and subsequently divided into several sects, among them "fundamentalist" movements, such as the Fundamental Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints (FLDS). The LDS is the largest of the Latter-day Saints movements and the focus of this research.

Mormons “have sustained the most rapid growth of any new religion in American history” and “stand on the threshold of becoming the first major faith to appear” since Islam (Stark, 1984, p. 19). Church membership has experienced large gains not only in the United States, but also throughout the world, with membership growth in Latin America and Asia exceeding that of North America (Stark, 1984, p. 24). Despite being labeled as the quintessential American religion, the Latter-day Saints church is a global phenomenon, whose theology and influence has easily crossed state, national, and cultural boundaries (Krakauer, 2004). The Latter-day Saints church also represents a unique opportunity to examine the rise of an ideologically based movement. As Stark (1984) points out, it is much too late to study the formative periods of the world’s largest religions, which forever will be “shrouded in the fog of unrecorded history” (p. 18).

This chapter serves two purposes. First, it examines the organizational structure of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Specifically, it seeks to explain how the church is organized. By exploring the structure of the Mormon church, this study seeks to illuminate how the church facilitates efficient resource collection, which, in turn, allows for expansion. Second, in examining the organizational construct of the LDS, this chapter should complement other work that seeks to explain the conditions under which a religion flourishes and grows despite secularization trends and competing theologies.

C. THE CHURCH AS AN IDEOLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints espouses an orthodoxy that roots itself in a Christian foundation. Religious scholars have argued that “Mormonism is part of the North American religious mainstream” (Johnson & Mullins, 1992, p. 51). Yet, the peculiarities between Christian sects and Latter-day Saints are profound enough for others to describe the LDS as a unique religion and to point to the contrast between Christianity and Islam as a comparison (Shipps, 1985). Despite their adaptation of Christian traditions and ideologies, the theology promoted by Latter-day Saints is sufficiently different for many to consider the movement a separate religious entity. Contention over LDS theology exists even within the Latter-day Saints movement, as its numerous schisms make clear. Among the most well known of these splinter movements is the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which has grown into a substantial church, particularly in the Southwest United States (Krakauer, 2004).

While followers of the Latter-day Saints movements may disagree on theological principles, the overwhelmingly predominant sect of this movement is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Distinctions over orthodoxy are far from trivial, as they have played a profound role in the history of the church. Yet, as Richley Crapo (1987) points out, LDS doctrine abstains from emphasis on creed as the defining factor in Mormonism (p. 468). Within the Mormon church, "a strong adherent . . . is not referred to as a "believer,' but rather as an 'active member'" whose participation within the church is "the primary evidence of a member's allegiance to Mormonism" (Crapo, 1987, p. 468). Studies into the growth of the Mormon church, such as Stark's works in the 1980s, therefore, focus on membership data derived from church records. While using Mormon church data to examine church growth might not seem objective, it is important to note that we are not conducting a comparative analysis across religions, where criteria for membership might differ. We likewise do not propose that church membership translates into ideological belief. We instead take the numbers to represent active church participation.

D. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a self-proclaimed hierarchical organization "with authority flowing from the President of the Church" (Hartley, 1992, p. 1035). The formal bureaucratic administration of the church was established early in its history as a method to structure and legitimize its concept of legalistic priesthood. This structure is unique compared to that of other Christian-based religions, particularly Protestant denominations such as the Christian Congregations and the Assemblies of God, which rely on more organic and informal organizational structures (Nelson, 1993). While these religions maintain traditional and charismatic authority structures, the LDS, through its functional chain of command, embodies relational-legal authority. The result is an organization which, through a systematic and well-organized standardization of outputs, can best be described as a hybrid organization that exhibits characteristics from both Mintzberg’s (1988) “divisional form” organization as well as a machine bureaucracy. An examination of the LDS organizational chart reveals a hierarchical structure that is functionally divided, but provides numerous coordination chains (see Figure 1). The result is a church in which a formalized techno-structure maintains a high degree of power through its influence in regulation, standardization, training, and education functions.

Despite the complexity of the Mormon church, its basic bureaucratic process is simple. Through a formalized system of coordination, the organization exhibits a high degree of automation. Unlike a pure machine bureaucracy, which focuses on the standardization of the work process, the Mormon church focuses on the standardization of outputs, providing religious functions to its members and the community. A profound and visible example of this is the standardized construction of its churches worldwide. A casual observer can easily identify an LDS church thanks to the building materials and architectural design used. A less obvious example of this for non-Mormons is the standardization and formalization of rituals across all LDS churches (Worthy, 2008).

In addition to the standardization of outputs, the Latter-day Saints church exhibits divisional distinctions in its middle-line management, with each division possessing identically structured organizational configurations. Many times, a high degree of autonomy is granted, allowing many of these divisions and auxiliary organizations the ability to work semi-independently from the church. An example of this is Deseret Industries, an interstate non-profit corporation that comprises 48 thrift stores and which provides vocational services (LDS, 2011a).

Church members are drawn to fill positions throughout the hierarchy, with key positions sustained by conference vote (Hartley, 1992). As such, church officers, administrators, and leaders are drawn from the laity, and the church does not maintain the professional clergy tradition as is found in many other religions (Perry, Bonus, & Wilkins, 1992). The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints instead draws its organizational system and official titles explicitly from early Christian tradition. The basic structural framework of church administration and authority was derived by Joseph Smith Jr. and codified in *Doctrine and Covenants*, a compilation of doctrine espoused by the church. While the *Doctrine and Covenants* serves to establish rules and normative standards within the church, it can also change. In describing this process, the LDS proclaims that the *Doctrine and Covenants* “is a standard work of the church and functions as its open, ever-expanding, ecclesiastical constitution” (Doxey, 1992, p. 405).

While the LDS organization has evolved since the church’s founding, six basic principles have shaped this process and continue to drive the church’s contemporary organization. The first principle is that the church “functions in the context of God’s eternal plan” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1044). As such, system structures are designed to accomplish “one or more dimensions of the Church mission” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1044). The second principle creates the organizing authority of the church through the concept of priesthood “keys,” which determine organizational manning. The president of the Church is the only person who has authority to exercise all priesthood keys, but this authority is delegated within the organization (Perry et al., 1992). The third principle establishes presidencies and councils. Presidents hold priesthood keys and, as such, possess decision-making authority over their scope of responsibility. A system of councils allows for a formalization of consultation and assistance to presidents. Church leaders are selected through “revelation by those in authority” and receive formal acceptance into key positions through a “formal sustaining vote from the members whom they will serve or over whom they will preside” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1044). This concept is formalized as the fourth principle and is known as “the law of common consent” (Perry et al., 1992). Prescribed policies and established procedures are provided in the *General Handbook of Instructions*, the *Melchizedek Priesthood Handbook*, and other official church literature. This formalization of rules, which establishes order, makes up the fifth principle of orderly administration. Finally, the sixth principle acknowledges the requirement for change, particularly in the face of rapid expansion. As such, the church *expects* organizational change, but nevertheless is bound by the guiding principles, which thereby provide “both consistency and change” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1045).

Today’s LDS organization is a result of evolutionary adaptation to growth as well as internal and external pressures. As the church expanded, increasing membership and a strained infrastructure forced its administrative structure to likewise grow in order to meet managerial challenges. By the 1960s, the church was composed of three organizations, which provided the LDS with an ecclesiastical system and priesthood authority, with regulated auxiliary groups, and with professional services. Between 1960 and 1990, the church quadrupled in membership size and, with this rapid expansion, came a concentrated effort to streamline, consolidate, and simplify church organizational structure. This included increasing centralization of finances, funding for church building, and standardization of training and communications (Hartley, 1992).

Consequently, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is divided into a system that provides for both ecclesiastical as well as administrative functions (see Figure 1). These functions are overseen at the strategic apex by the general authorities. On the ecclesiastical side, regional areas are presided over by area presidents who, in conjunction with the local-level bishops, provide the middle-line of managerial offices. A vast system of local churches, referred to as wards, composes the operating core. Each ward is led by a bishop and is composed of 200–800 members. The wards are where “the operation of substantially all the programs of the Church takes place” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1048). Thus, most church members belong somewhere in the ecclesiastical church hierarchy.

Church administration is likewise overseen by the general authorities and, through a functional unit grouping, is divided into administrative and operational departments. These departments provide the administrative and technocratic support to the church, providing everything from educational services to security. They also orchestrate the functions of auxiliary groups, which provide non-profit community services, as well as oversee financial investments and church property.

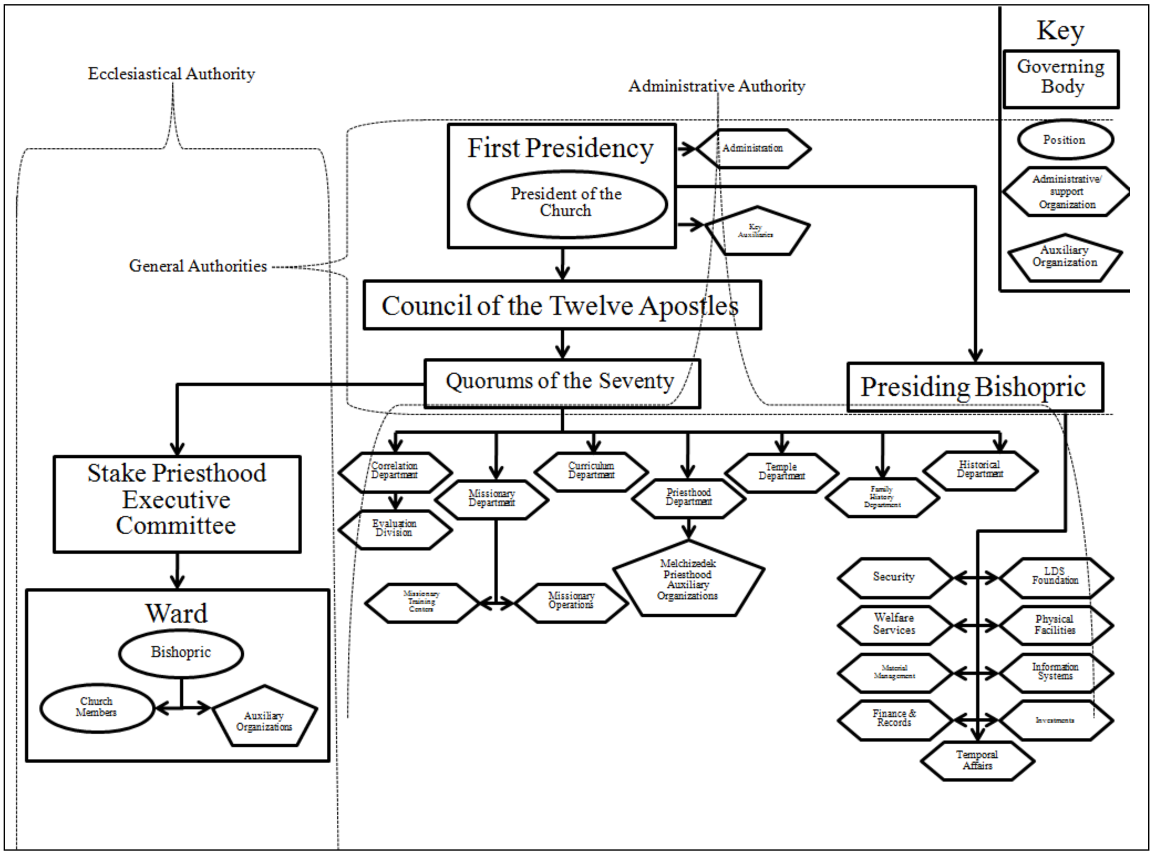
Ecclesiastical Authority
Administrative Authority
Key
Governing Body
Position
Administrative/ support Organization
Auxiliary Organization
First Presidency
President of the Church
Administration
Key Auxiliaries
General Authorities
Council of the Twelve Apostles
Quorums of the Seventy
Presiding Bishopric
Stake Priesthood Executive Committee
Ward
Bishopric
Church Members
Auxiliary Organizations
Correlation Department
Evaluation Division
Missionary Department
Missionary Training Centers
Missionary Operations
Curriculum Department
Priesthood Department
Melchizedek Priesthood Auxiliary Organizations
Temple Department
Family History Department
Historical Department
Security
LDS Foundation
Welfare Services
Physical Facilities
Material Management
Information Systems
Finance & Records
Investments
Temporal Affairs

Figure 1. LDS Hierarchy

1. Senior Leadership

The founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Joseph Smith Jr., had inherent public appeal, and was described as a natural speaker with "a sharp mind, an indomitable spirit, and a keen wit" (Abanes, 2003, p. 7). Even his most adamant critics characterized Smith as an "inventive and fertile genius" (Howe, 1834, p. 260) whose charisma allowed him to become "one of the most controversial and enigmatic figures ever to appear in American history" (Persuitte, 1991, p. 1). Joseph Smith's charismatic authority was replaced by rational-legal authority through what Max Weber would describe as the routinization of charisma. This was accomplished thanks to a well-defined organizational structure, led by the President of the Church (see Figure 2). The President of the Church is the most senior member of the Latter-day Saints church, and church doctrine describes his power as descending from God (Perry et al., 1992). The President of the Church is assisted and receives advice from two counselors. These three men form the First Presidency, which is “the highest council of the Church” and “performs the central and authoritative role of receiving revelation and establishing policies and procedures for the Church” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1046). This governing body provides strategic oversight for the church and serves as the senior-most policymaking organization. In typical bureaucratic fashion, few administrative support systems report directly to it, and most administrative, operational, and ecclesiastical functions are delegated to lower governing bodies (see Figure 2). Reporting directly to the First Presidency are the church auditing department, the budget office, and the personnel department. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Mormon Youth Symphony and Chorus, based in Salt Lake City, also report directly to the First Presidency (Perry et al., 1992).

The Council of the Twelve Apostles (also known as the Council of the Twelve), is described as “equal in authority and power to the First Presidency” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1046). While this suggests that the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve share power, in actuality, the First Presidency holds a distinctly higher organizational and authoritative position within the church. The Council of the Twelve does assume “all the power and authority . . . reserved to the First Presidency” (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1046) when the First Presidency is dissolved, but that only occurs upon the death of the President of the Church. When an LDS president dies, a new First Presidency is organized by the Council of the Twelve.

The Council of the Twelve is composed of twelve men, who are divided into four executive groups: the Correlation Executive Committee, which includes the council’s most senior members, the Missionary Executive Council; the Priesthood Executive Council; and the Temple and Family History Executive Council (Perry et al., 1992). Since the Correlation Executive Council is composed of the most senior apostles, it holds *de facto* oversight over the other councils. The four executive groups maintain oversight of key operational church functions, and provide senior oversight to functional departments when it comes to church operations and doctrine.

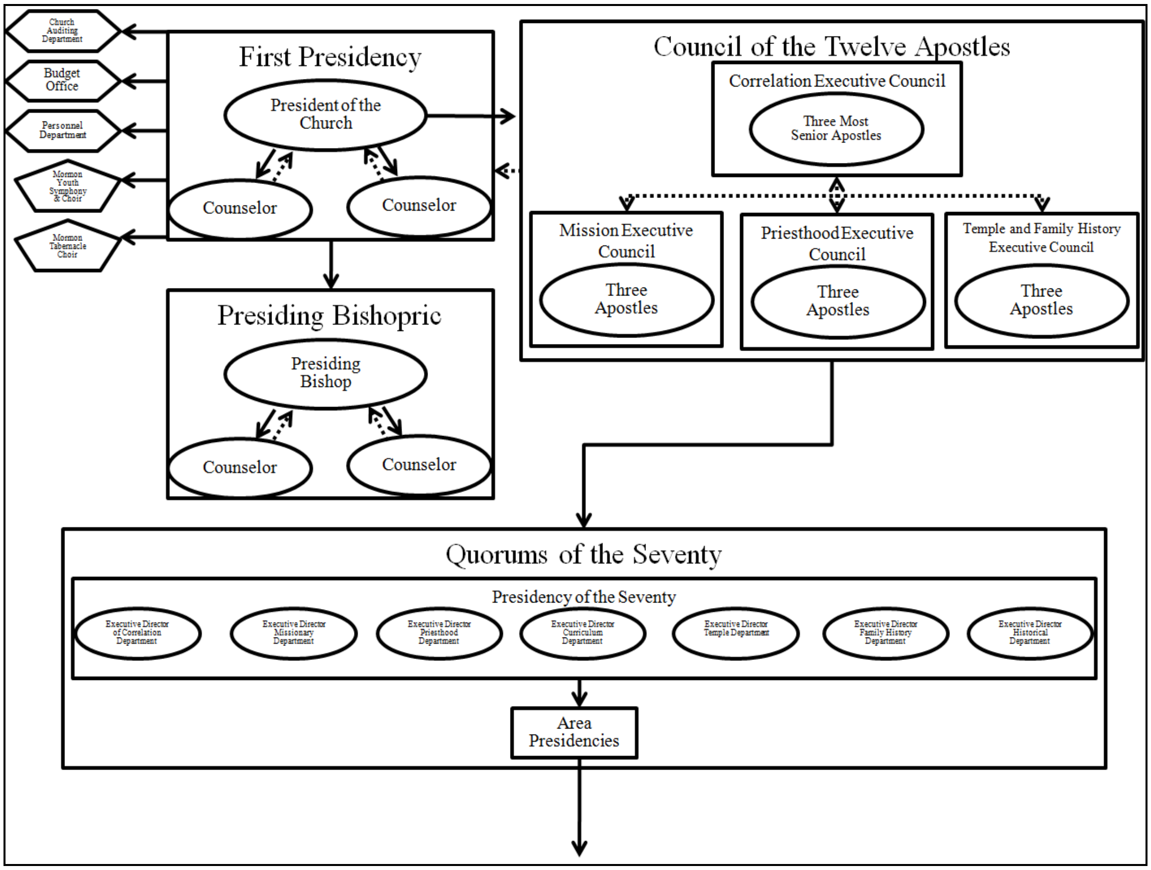
Church Auditing Department
Budget Office
Personnel Department
Mormon Youth Symphony & Choir
Mormon Tabernacle Choir
First Presidency
President of the Church
Counselor
Counselor
Council of the Twelve Apostles
Correlation Executive Council
Three Most Senior Apostles
Mission Executive Council
Three Apostles
Priesthood Executive Council
Three Apostles
Temple and Family History Executive Council
Three Apostles
Presiding Bishopric
Presiding Bishop
Counselor
Counselor
Quorums of the Seventy
Presidency of the Seventy
Executive Director of Correlation Department
Executive Director Missionary Department
Executive Director Priesthood Department
Executive Director Curriculum Department
Executive Director Temple Department
Executive Director Family History Department
Executive Director Historical Department
Area Presidencies

Figure 2. The General Authorities

While the Council of the Twelve oversees predominately operational and doctrinal functions, the Presiding Bishopric is the third body comprising the general authorities, and is responsible for the administrative functions or “temporal affairs” of the church (Perry et al., 1992). This governing body reports directly to the First Presidency, and is divided into functional areas in a pronounced hierarchical structure, with the Presiding Bishopric providing top leadership (see Figure 3). The Presiding Bishopric is comprised of a presiding bishop and two counselors, in a manner that emulates the First Presidency, and is mirrored throughout other governing bodies. As in the First Presidency, the presiding bishop is the Presiding Bishopric’s senior member, and the two counselors serve as his advisors.

The LDS church’s temporal concerns are immense. The church maintains an annual income of approximately $2 billion and maintains almost $8 billion in assets, easily ranking among Fortune 500 companies in fiscal terms (Nelson, 1993). Much of the church's income generation is derived from auxiliary organizations, which oversee a diverse range of interests, from thrift shops to real estate holdings and printing presses. The presiding bishop's scope of responsibility spans a level of control similar to that of a president or chief executive officer of a multinational corporation. Surprisingly, the presiding bishop, like are other leaders in the general authorities, is selected from the laity and receives only "modest living allowances" (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1045) from church investments as compensation for his full-time work.

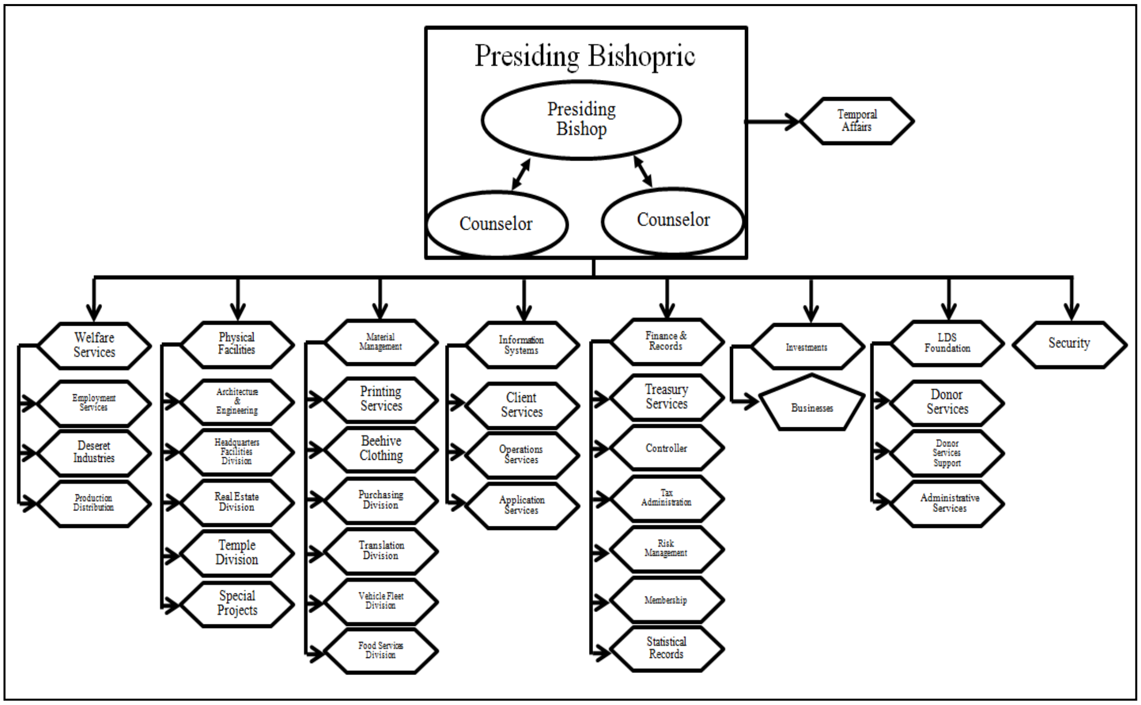
Presiding Bishopric
Presiding Bishop
Counselor
Counselor
Temporal Affairs
Welfare Services
Employment Services
Deseret Industries
Production Distribution
Physical Facilities
Architecture & Engineering
Headquarters Facilities Division
Real Estate Division
Temple Division
Special Projects
Material Management
Printing Services
Beehive Clothing
Purchasing Division
Translation Division
Vehicle Fleet Division
Food Services Division
Information Systems
Client Services
Operations Services
Application Services
Finance & Records
Treasury Services
Controller
Tax Administration
Risk Management
Membership
Statistical Records
Investments
Businesses
LDS Foundation
Donor Services
Donor Services Support
Administrative Services
Security

Figure 3. The Presiding Bishopric

2. Middle Management

Ecclesiastical authority in the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints flows from the Council of the Twelve to the Quorums of the Seventy. This governmental body serves mid-tier authoritative functions and comprises the most senior middle-line managerial organization in the LDS. The quorums are comprised of the First Quorum of the Seventy, whose members are called to serve usually until they reach seventy years of age. The members of the Second Quorum of the Seventy are selected to serve for five years. The presiding body of the Quorums of the Seventy is the Presidency of the Seventy, which oversees all presidencies of the seventy. Members of the Quorums of the Seventy are drawn to serve in area presidencies, which oversee regional and local units of the church. Oversight for church missions falls to mission presidents, who also are drawn from the Quorums of the Seventy (Perry et al., 1992). While area and mission presidencies provide ecclesiastical oversight of the church, the Quorums of the Seventy also provide operational oversight of non-ecclesiastical church functions. The executive directors of the correlation, missionary, priesthood, curriculum, and temple and family history departments are drawn from the Quorums of the Seventy. This provides a formal system of coordination that serves to integrate ecclesiastical with temporal operations and oversight. Essentially, this system also enables mutual adjustment between Mintzberg's (1988) middle-line and strategic apex. While the organizational diagram depicting this interdependency appears to present a complex web of hierarchical oversight, the premise is simple: provide a leadership structure within key departments that draws from two distinct governing bodies. This allows both ecclesiastical and administrative oversight to an organization with a high degree of vertical and horizontal differentiation, and allows informal processes, such as mutual adjustment, to be integrated in the governing scheme of the church (Nelson, 1993).

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints structures its ecclesiastical units geographically. The Quorums of the Seventy provide area presidencies, which provide regional oversight (see Figure 4). Areas are further divided into five to seven stakes. Beginning at the stake level, and continuing down to the lowest levels of hierarchy, leaders serve on a part-time basis and receive no financial compensation. As with other church leaders, they are selected from the laity (Perry et al., 1992). Stakes are roughly equivalent to Catholic dioceses and are headed by a stake priesthood executive committee, which is presided over by a stake president and two counselors. These individuals are, in turn, assisted by a high council, which is comprised of twelve or more men (Perry et al., 1992). Hence, a stake president is somewhat akin to a Catholic bishop. Generally, a stake has 2,000–7,000 members (Perry et al., 1992).

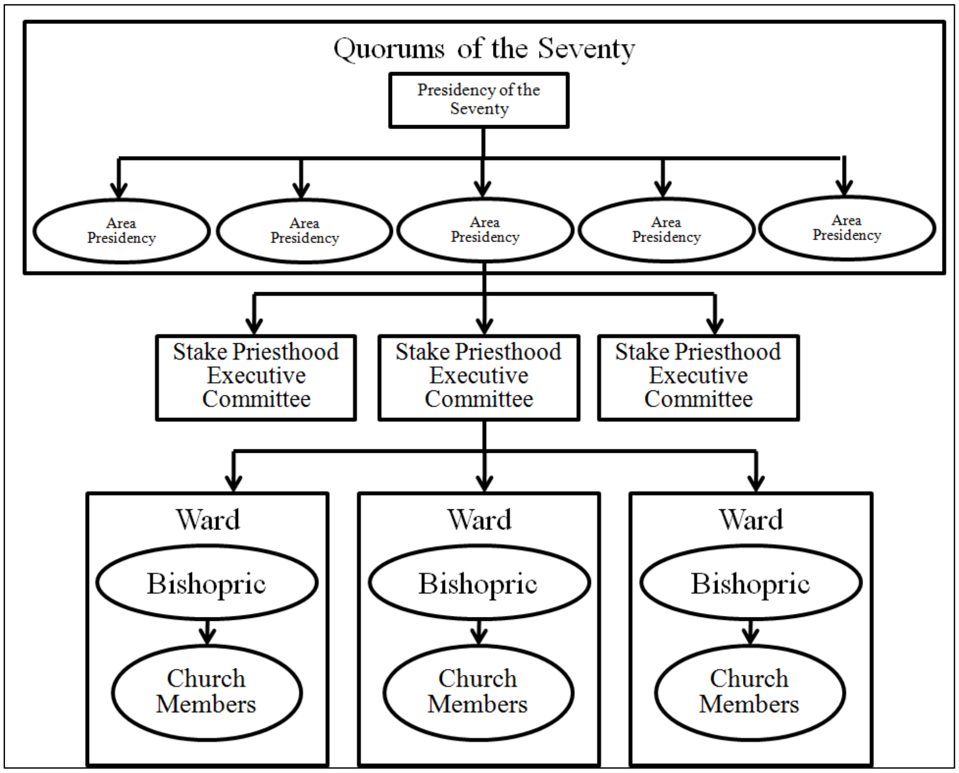
Quorums of the Seventy
Presidency of the Seventy
Area Presidency
Area Presidency
Area Presidency
Area Presidency
Area Presidency
Stake Priesthood Executive Committee
Stake Priesthood Executive Committee
Stake Priesthood Executive Committee
Ward
Bishopric
Church Members
Ward
Bishopric
Church Members
Ward
Bishopric
Church Members

Figure 4. Typical Area Divisional Structure

3. The Core

The ward is the "basic ecclesiastical unit" (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1048) of the Latter-day Saints church. Wards function as congregations and resemble Catholic parishes. They are led by a bishop, who is roughly the equivalent of a minister or priest presiding over a congregation. Unlike other churches, in which ministers are drawn from a professional clergy, bishops in the Mormon church, are drawn from among its members. Ward leadership mimics other leadership structures found throughout the church. A presiding bishop functions as the president of the ward and is assisted by the ward priesthood executive council and the ward council. Together they form the ward bishopric and provide leadership as well as administrative direction to church members. As the Latter-day church itself indicates, "Perhaps the most important of all work is done in the wards" (Perry et al., 1992, p. 1048).

A striking aspect of the Mormon church is the high degree of member involvement in church functions at the local or ward level. In a ward of 400 members, over half of these may be actively performing official duties in stake and ward positions. Members not only orchestrate official church gatherings such as worship, meetings, and social events, they are also involved in a variety of auxiliary structures within the church. A ward may include religious and non-religious programs that provide education, relief work, charity, and youth programs for the community-at-large. Hence, the church promotes and cultivates a high level of active participation and involvement under the auspices of the LDS. A set of sub-organizations which mimics stakes and wards are branches and districts, which serve under the direction of missions in areas where membership is insufficient to support an actual ward.

E. ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

In explaining organizations and how they operate, David P. Hanna (1988) argues that "wherever they turn, they are transacting business with (or competing against) cartels, associations, corporations, agencies, or networks" (p. 1). Although Hanna's theories are intrinsically business oriented, the LDS neatly fits his analysis. As with business and other competitive organizations, the Latter-day church must be able to collect resources from its operating environment and translate those resources into products. As in the case of for-profit organizations, a surplus of resources enables the organization to expand and grow. The LDS, through an exceptional system that focuses on religious socialization, creates a network of religious followers who not only commit to attending worship services, but donate significant amounts of time and money. These resources are reinvested by the church in continual religious socialization, thereby perpetuating member commitment.

For the Latter-day Saints church, religious participation alone cannot account for its dramatic and successful growth. It is the cultivation of religious commitment that provides the Mormon church with enormous resources. It is easy to see evidence of this capital wealth given the church's vast number of churches, temples, and training centers. The church, for instance, owns Brigham Young University, the fourth largest private university in the United States, which is also America's largest religious school (U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Science, 2011). Mormon influence has also permeated American politics, with numerous Latter-day Saints occupying high-level positions within government, to include that of treasurer, secretary of education, solicitor general, as well as several influential senators and representatives (Abanes, 2003; Flake, 2004). The church also maintains a high degree of influence among certain for-profit enterprises. For instance, through aggressive investments, the LDS gained significant control over sugar production in the United States beginning at the turn of the twentieth century (Godfrey, 2007). Currently, business interests include newspapers, hotels, merchandising, agriculture, and financial investment holdings (LDS, 2010).

Undoubtedly, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been successful in business, in education, and at maintaining a steadily growing membership. If the church was a for-profit organization, it would be the envy of numerous corporations, given its ability to consistently generate surpluses. However, does this businesslike success mean that the church *has been* successful? In other words, does the ability to collect surplus resources and produce continual organizational expansion match the church's organizational objectives? This is a pertinent question because the measures of success we have addressed so far do not translate into ideological transformation or even religious conversion.

In describing its values, the Latter-day church (2010) states, "Our faith influences nearly every aspect of our lives. Beyond simply believing in Jesus Christ, we try to bring His teachings to life at home, at work and in our communities" (Our values). The church provides the following as components of church values: strengthening families; service to others; missionary work; lifelong learning; freedom to choose; humanitarian aid; good citizenship; and family history. Other than church doctrine defined in the church's *Doctrine and Covenants*, the church does not maintain a singular publically espoused objective. Yet, the values which the church espouses hint at the church's ultimate organizational focus on promoting faith, maintaining family bonds, and providing humanitarian relief.

F. STRUCTURAL EFFECTIVENESS

Since the organizational structure sets the foundation for work, the structure should provide insight into the nature and focus of the organization’s objectives. Within the operational structure, the LDS maintains seven major departments: (1) the correlation department conducts research and evaluates church literature; (2) the missionary department directs the “worldwide proselytizing effort;” (3) the priesthood department supervises the activities of church leaders, as well as church auxiliary organizations; (4) the curriculum department develops and produces church media; (5) the temple department supervises the operation of all church temples; (6) the family history department manages genealogical research; and (7) the history department oversees church archival and library collections. Key functional departments under the administrative side include welfare services, investments, finances, physical facilities, material management, and information systems.

Aside from its stated values, the LDS’s organization suggests a distinct value placed on ideology (with a focus on media and education), missionary work (via a global effort), family genealogy, and church-based activities and groups. We deduce that the LDS organization does not only sustain a clear vision, but also an unstated organizational objective, evident in its organizational structure, which reaffirms its values. The church evidently seeks to: (1) promote a standardized ideology among its members; (2) spread its ideological principles among non-members; (3) expand its membership; (4) promote family values; (5) provide community and humanitarian relief; and (6) cultivate a religious community. The similarity between the church’s organizational objectives, which can be deduced from its organizational structure, and its stated organizational values, demonstrates that the LDS has developed an effective organizational mechanism to fulfill its goals. This also suggests that the church’s organizational goals and vision are harmoniously aligned. This, in turn, ensures an effective foundation for guiding the church as it expands, as well as in its allocation of resources.

Essentially, from its inputs, the church reinvests its surplus in expansion and in creating religious socialization. This process results in increased religious commitment, and an increase in membership, thus sustaining growth. Simply put, the church recognizes the value of compound investment and the prudence of reinvesting earnings into more capital production. The result is a self-reinforcing cycle of membership expansion via religious socialization programs and expansion of religious socialization programs via membership.[2]

G. CONCLUSION

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints represents an expansionist movement, which seeks to spread its ideological principles. It is not unique in this regard; however, the church's organizational model and its methodology are distinct from other religious movements. The church is comprised of an elaborate hierarchical structure, which creates a bureaucracy that maintains a highly formal and standardized process. Nonetheless, despite clear mechanistic dimensions, the church also exhibits a divisionalized structural form that permits greater adaptability and flexibility than is common with machine bureaucracies. This allows the Mormon church to effectively perform a great balancing act, capitalizing on the benefits of a highly structured organization, while at the same time permitting the flexibility required to appease its membership and cope with growth.

The church has created a self-perpetuating religious model that exhibits effective homeostatic characteristics. Through deliberate attempts, as well as a natural outgrowth of its history, the LDS has created a structure which capitalizes on religious socialization–a key factor in influencing church participation. More importantly, the Mormon church has found the key to harnessing a great deal of church commitment. It has done this in ways that numerous cults and sects have failed to do; the LDS has harnessed church commitment on a global scale, allowing the church to experience continual growth throughout its entire 180-year history. This trend has yet to be reversed and will likely continue in the future.

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[2] See Photiadis (1965), Seggar & Blake (1970; 1972), Alston & McIntosh (1979), Albrecht & Bahr (1983), Roberts & Davidson (1984), and Cornwall (1987; 1989). The one measure we omit is that of ideological conversion. While numerous studies have examined the nature of the Latter-day Saints' ideology, the theological particulars are beyond the scope of our model.

This leads to the question: if the LDS model has proven successful for church growth, is its model applicable to other kinds of movements or organizations? In a contentious global environment, where Huntington’s clash of civilizations seems to be playing out, is there a way to harness the LDS system to promote or counter other ideological beliefs? Can Western nations borrow from this model to curtail the influence and spread of anti-Western radicalization? As the next chapter will make clear, and as the LDS example suggests, curtailing radicalism might best be accomplished by institutionalizing socialization measures that harness the power of personal, family, and community relationships to influence behavior and actions.

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III. DETERMINANTS OF CHURCH GROWTH

A. INTRODUCTION

Religious scholars have developed a number of theories to identify the environments and conditions critical to a religion's growth or decline (Miller, 2002, p. 435). Each theory, at its root, attempts to explain why individuals choose a particular religion and why some religions are more successful than others. Religions seek growth for varying reasons, including ideological, fiscal, and political. Maintaining adherents, in terms of religious participation, is an existential requirement for any religious organization, since adherents provide resources that sustain a religion's existence (Iannaccone, Olson, & Stark, 1995). Beyond promulgating doctrine and theology, religious organizations seek to grow to also motivate increased religious commitment and participation, which then translates into resources (Finke & Stark, 2005). It is to this end that the LDS has so successfully structured its organizational aspects, both formally and informally. The result has been sustained growth.

B. THEORIES ON THE GROWTH AND DECLINE OF RELIGIONS

Among the most prominent theories of religious growth is secularization theory, which "posits an overall decline of religion and religious influences because of a set of specific conditions related to industrialization and modernization, including economic development, rationality, and the growth of scientific thinking" (Duke & Johnson, 1989, p. 210). Although popularized by some of the most notable social thinkers of the nineteenth century, secularization theory can be traced back to the Enlightenment when leading intellectuals believed practices, superstitions, and rituals based in theologies would be outgrown as they gave way to modern advancements (Norris & Inglehart, 2004). Peter Berger (1969) describes this well, when he posits that modernity results in the "inculcation of highly rational modes of thinking and on the level of practical living by the application of equally rational techniques to solve problems which previously rendered human beings helpless" (p. 201). The putative basis for religion, according to Berger (1969), is to address man's helplessness in an incomprehensible world. Having replaced the requirement for religion with modern scientific understanding, many modernists assumed religions would decline in appeal. However, the empirical challenge to secularization theory is that in the United States and South America, for example, there has not been a decline in religiosity in the last century, but rather the opposite. Indicators point to a strong vitality of religious involvement, thus rendering secularization theory premature at best, if not wrong (Norris & Inglehart, 2004).[3]

Religious pluralism refers to the existence of multiple religions in a given society. To the degree that religions are unregulated in a given society, pluralism is expected to thrive, and no religion will hold a monopoly (Finke & Stark, 2005). Secularization in the West, and the movement toward the separation of church and state, created the conditions for religious pluralism. Secularization theorists believe religious pluralism is detrimental to religions because it undermines "the element of absolute certainty" (Swatos & Christiano, 1999, p. 221) claimed by religions. Furthermore, each religion "discredits the other and this encourages the view that religion per se is open to question, dispute, and doubt" (Finke & Stark, 2005, p. 10). Much as secularization theory turns out not to have predicted the decline of religion accurately, the notion that pluralism would contribute to a decline in religiosity proves inaccurate as well. The open competition for adherents in unregulated religious "markets" has actually been shown to boost religious membership and levels of commitment (Perl & Olson, 2000).

The idea of competition for adherents by religions in unregulated markets has further developed into a "religious economies" theory that draws on concepts about the competition among businesses operating in a free market (Phillips, 1999). This theory of religious economies proposes that religions work like businesses in the manner in which they organize, market their "product," and seek to satisfy the needs of their current and potential customers (Finke & Stark, 2005). Society is viewed as a market full of "utility-maximizing consumers," each with disparate preferences and knowledge about a variety of religious options. Religious organizations seek consumers by demonstrating their

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[3] Peter Berger no longer subscribes to the secularization theory, which he explains in his work, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (1969). An eloquent summary of this reassessment of secularization theory can be found in Charles T. Mathewes's (2006) interview with Berger for the *Hedgehog Review*.

ability to best meet a given set of preferences (market segmentation), and thus, organizations increase their market share (Miller, 2002). As is the case with business competition, these "diverse 'consumers' are best mobilized when a number of religious firms are free to specialize and compete for distinct 'market segments'" (Phillips, 1999, p. 72).

This economic approach to explaining religious organizations speculates that religious commitment and participation increase with increased competition as a result of religions working ever harder to "increase membership and maintain commitment levels" (Perl & Olson, 2000, p. 12). A foundational premise of the theory is the assumption that the demand for religion in a society, or a "market," is constant, and religions seek to increase market share by meeting consumer demands (Phillips, 1998). Conversely, large market share religions, or religious organizations holding monopolies, will see a decrease in religious activity and participation because of complacency and indolence in attending to adherents' needs given the absence of competition (Perl & Olson, 2000). Also explained in terms of supply-side theory, the theory of religious economy contends that an additional factor in the reduction of commitment and participation is the putative inability of any one religion to meet the numerous demands of a market (Phillips, 1999).

C. MORMON GROWTH

The growth of the Latter-day Saints church has been attributed primarily to the charismatic leadership of its founder, Joseph Smith (Abanes, 2003). Sustainable growth, however, was not realized until the nascent religion's other prominent leaders, such as Brigham Young, transformed the LDS into an effective bureaucracy, in the process routinizing Weber's (1999) notion of charismatic authority. Once the church organization was settled in Salt Lake City, its followers were governed by theocratic principles. However, pressure from the U.S. government and aspirations for Utah statehood drove a separation between theocratic and state affairs (Phillips, 1999). The result was increased secularization of Utah's government, and an increasingly permissive environment for religious pluralism.

Again, according to secularization theory, the movement towards an increasingly secular society would suggest a decrease in religious participation. However, empirical evidence makes clear that Mormon religious participation actually increased as Utah's government moved towards more secular politics. Moreover, during its theocratic period, and continuing today, the church's religious market share in Utah displayed monopolistic characteristics (Phillips, 2004). As we have seen, religious economies theory would predict an inverse relationship of religious market share and religious commitment. Therefore, this theory too, might fall short vis-à-vis the LDS, at least in Utah (Perl & Olson, 2000).

D. MODELING GROWTH

The Mormon church exists in an "open system," in which the organization "must interact with the environment to survive" (Daft, 2001, p. 7) consuming resources and converting those into outputs. As with a for-profit business, "a religious organization cannot survive, much less grow, unless it obtains sufficient resources from the environment" (Iannaccone et al., 1995, p. 706). Any discussion of church expansion must, therefore, consider the effects of the environment, resources, and religious production. These concepts form the foundation for "inputs" and "outputs" for a religious organization.

As in any religiously plural environment, the LDS must contend with numerous competing groups. This is particularly the case for the LDS in secular states, although the degree of non-governmental interference varies dramatically. For instance, in Utah, Mormons dominate the religious market with a distinct advantage. The case is even more striking in certain specific locales, such as in Colorado City, Arizona, where the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints maintains an almost absolute monopoly on the religious supply (Krakauer, 2004). Apart from extreme examples like this, most Mormons benefit from an availability of religious alternatives that compete with the LDS.

For a church to survive, its resources must match its expenditures. Growth can only occur when a surplus of resources can provide more than the "minimum required to maintain current operations and to compensate for depreciation in physical facilities and in membership lost to death or departure" (Iannaccone et al., 1995, p. 706). While both secularization theory and religious economies theory fail to explain the basis for such prodigious LDS growth, they do help make sense of religious competition, particularly when one takes into consideration the social factors that drive religious preferences and choices (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995). It is with a thorough comprehension of these factors that the LDS has been able to organize its bureaucratic structure and socialization programs to maximize individuals' religious commitment and religious choice. This results in the successful application of an implicit business approach by the LDS which seeks to maximize "profit" (in terms of members' investment of time and money). The church successfully attains individuals' time and donations because the LDS successfully attains individuals' religious commitment and choice (Iannaccone at al., 1995).

Several psychological and social factors typically drive an individual's religiosity and participation (Roberts & Davidson, 1984). Models have been developed to highlight the relationships among these factors and to demonstrate how they directly or indirectly affect individuals' choice of a religion and their level of involvement in that religion. While there are numerous competing theories about what drives religious preferences, we prefer theoretical models of religious consumption and choice developed by Darren E. Sherkat and John Wilson (1995), and by Marie Cornwall (1989). Each takes into account the interplay among factors such as socialization, religiosity, and socio-economic context.

Cornwall's (1989) model uses five factors that have been found to influence religious activity: group involvement, belief-orthodoxy, religious commitment, religious socialization, and socio-demographic characteristics. Since this model was derived from data specifically collected from Latter-day Saints in the United States, it offers ample substantiating data to help explain LDS growth. In describing her religious survey data, Cornwall (1989) writes that:

> Religious socialization has a direct positive influence on personal community relationships. Personal community relationships influence religious belief and commitment, and both personal community relationships and religious belief and commitment influence conformity to the norms and expectations of the religious group. Religious belief also

> influences commitment. Demographic characteristics influence the nature of one's personal community relationship. (p. 578)

Figure 5 is a graphic description of this theoretical framework. Its strength lies in its explanation of how numerous ideological, societal, and demographic factors work to influence religious behavior. It also recognizes a difference between religious commitment, religious beliefs, and religious behavior.

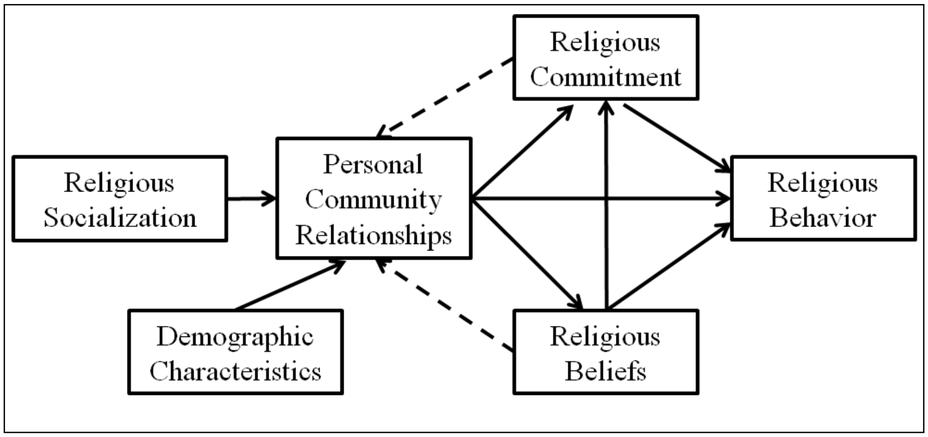
Religious Commitment
Religious Socialization
Personal Community Relationships
Religious Behavior
Demographic Characteristics
Religious Beliefs

Figure 5. Cornwall's Religious Involvement Model (After Cornwall, 1989).

Sherkat and Wilson (1995) analyze the role religious socialization plays in participation and preference development (see Figure 6). Their model of consumption, preference, and religious choice demonstrates: (1) how status, socialization, and denominational factors are expected to influence religious consumption, preference, and choices; (2) how consumption influences religious preferences and choice; and (3) how preference directs choice. In explaining their model, Sherkat and Wilson (1995) propose that "preferences arise from prior socialization and consumption as well as social status" (p. 1007). They explain the rise in more conservative religious movements this way: "strict churches should both participate more and believe more strongly, and this in turn will guide" religious choice (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995, p. 1008).

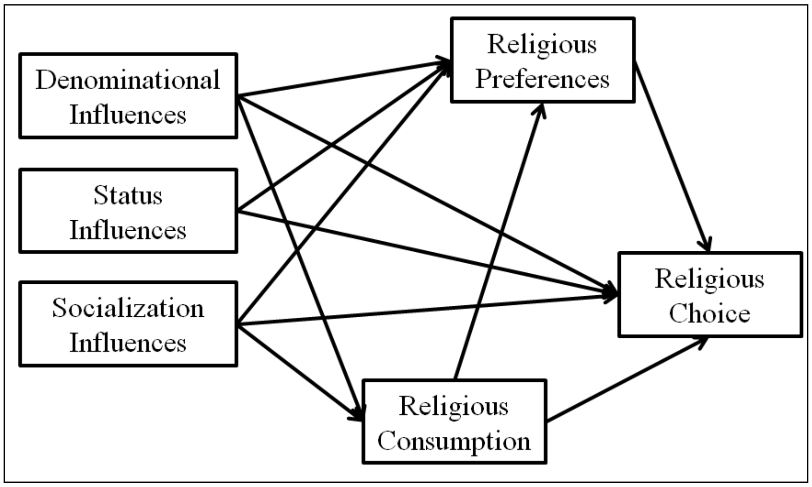

Figure 6. Sherkat and Wilson's Religious Choice Model (After Sherkat & Wilson, 1995).

E. A THEORETICAL MODEL OF CHURCH EXPANSION

Combining Sherkat and Wilson's theoretical framework with Cornwall's analytically derived and Mormon based model leads to our model of religious choice, which is depicted in Figure 7. We rely heavily on the research data and conclusions drawn by Iannaccone, Olson, and Stark (1995) that indicate religious choice is predominantly driven by an individual's commitment. This commitment is mostly a result of personal and community relationships, formulated through religious socialization as well as indirectly through demographics. Religious commitment, to a lesser degree, is influenced by ideological preference. Here we adopt Cornwall's (1989) conclusion that "religious commitment has the strongest direct effect" on religious behavior, while "belief, personal community relationships, and religious socialization variables also influence behavior, but their influence is primarily indirect" (p. 572).

We try to account for correlations between several variables in our model. For example, religious socialization plays a greater role than ideological preference. Furthermore, we believe religious preference drives religious choice, which drives religious consumption. The final dynamic is a religious consumer's selection of a church. This, combined with the individual's degree of commitment, will drive the amount of resources a church can draw from a member. If the consumption of resources by a member is greater than the resources he or she provides the church, the organization will experience a net loss. On the other hand, if a church can extract resources from an individual that exceed the resources he or she requires from the church, then the organization experiences a gain. This concept is important for understanding church growth, since a church must have a mechanism by which it collects more resources than it provides in order to grow. The greater the rate of growth, the more efficient the church organization must be in securing resources. The empirical basis for generating this model is supported by a wealth of other studies and data.[4]

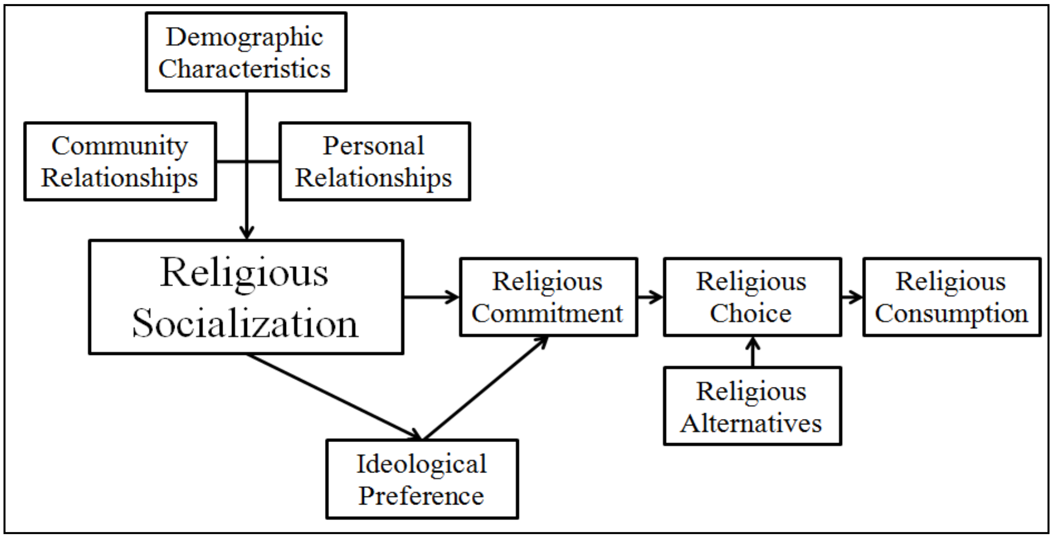
Demographic Characteristics
Community Relationships
Personal Relationships
Religious Socialization
Religious Commitment
Religious Choice
Religious Consumption
Religious Alternatives
Ideological Preference

Figure 7. Religious Consumption Model

One implication of our model is that in order for a church to attract members, it must create and maintain a system that influences religious choice. It appears that successful and expansionist churches are able to influence religious socialization, and foster personal and community relationships that compel and impel individuals to not only join a church, but to do so with a high level of religious commitment. When individuals join a church, they do so not only with an ideological commitment, but also with a resource commitment in the form of time, money, and donations.

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[4] See Photiadis (1965), Alston & McIntosh (1979), Roberts & Davidson (1984), Shepherd & Shepherd (1984), Cornwall (1987; 1989), and Nelson (1993).

As previously discussed, evidence indicates that the LDS is able to collect an abundance of resources or inputs (Iannaccone at al., 1995). To simplify the concept of resources we divide resources into “labor and capital” which roughly equate to “time and money.” While religious organizations often depend on a paid clergy, the Latter-day Saints rely extensively on lay preachers and volunteers. Thus, the church is able to effectively capitalize not only on fiscal capital, but also on time and volunteerism.

Surveys usually use the level of weekday church attendance as a measure of religious commitment. Surprisingly, comparative data places Mormons somewhere toward the middle of the pack. Members of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Assemblies of God, Nazarene, Churches of Christ, Adventists, Reformed Christian Churches, Baptist, Church of God, and Southern Baptist churches all average greater weekday church attendance than LDS members. Over 45 percent of Jehovah’s Witnesses, for instance, attended church several times a week, while Southern Baptists’ percentage was approximately 15 percent. This contrasts with LDS members, whose average weekday church attendance was under 10 percent. However, when measuring annual dollar contributions, the LDS far outpaced other religious groups, with the average annual dollar contribution per member approaching $900. This contrasts with most other Christian-based groups, who generally saw average annual contributions under $500 per member (Iannaccone at al., 1995).

The data analyzed by Iannaccone, Olson, and Stark (1995) underscores the Latter-day Saints church’s ability to outpace other religious groups in financial contributions. Likewise, despite a lower weekday church attendance rate than that seen in other prominent religious groups, LDS volunteer involvement is remarkably high (Iannaccone at al., 1995). This is in light of the fact that the LDS does not maintain a professional clergy, and that all of its leaders are selected from its membership. Not only this, but the administrative, operational, and auxiliary organizations of the church are staffed predominantly by volunteers who are not compensated for their time. As Reed E. Nelson (1993) points out:

> Each standard congregation or “ward” staffs as many as 200 different administrative positions that support a plethora of activities, including

> regular worship services, genealogical research, missionary activity, choir, nursery, child and your programs, Cub and Boy Scout troops, employment placement assistance, separate women's and men's organizations, comprehensive charitable activities, singles activities, youth and men's sport teams, a library teacher training, periodical subscription drives, monthly visits to all church members of record, two types of introductory classes for new church members, promotion of food storage and emergency preparedness, homemaking classes, member contributions to church maintenance, daily early morning religion classes for youth, and occasional church socials, dances, and conferences. (p. 668)

Nelson's detailing of the level of activities at the core of the LDS organization illustrates the high degree of church commitment. These activities elicit member support of church-sanctioned activities, many of which take place outside church settings. This is something not taken into account by simply analyzing weekday church attendance. More importantly, these activities serve to create and reaffirm cultural bonds within families among community members. This solidifies the role of the LDS in interpersonal relationships and creates a high degree of religious socialization. If the level of church commitment is largely driven by religious socialization, then a religious organization's ability to increase religious socialization will result not only in sustained membership rates, but also in sustained membership rates with high levels of individual religious commitment. This manifests itself in commitments of time and money to the church, as well as in terms of volunteerism and tithing. As overall resources increase due to this process, the church is able to reinvest its surplus in increasing religious socialization (see Figure 8).

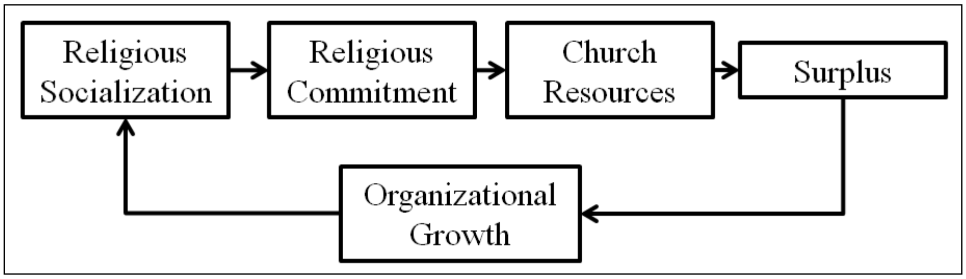

Figure 8. Church Growth

F. RELIGIOUS SOCIALIZATION

Arguably, religious socialization, the social process by which beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and friendships are acquired, monitored, and shaped by current members, is the most significant factor in the growth of the Mormon church (Cornwall, 1989). The inexorable conflation of religious and social ties contributes greatly to the ubiquity of religious socialization in the life of a Latter-day Saint. An additional effect of the coalescing of religious and social structures is that status in one structure is tantamount to status in the other; ergo, individuals are driven toward higher levels of participation and commitment in the church *and* to their communities (Phillips, 1998). The resulting "dependence between church participation and attachment to the social system" (Photiadis, 1965, p. 428) strongly influences conformity and the success of the religious socialization process. This success is achieved via formal and informal processes and through mandates by the LDS that seek to reward propitious behavior, and to sanction behavior that is considered pernicious to the church or the community (Miller, 2002).

Religious socialization within the LDS and its community of followers manifests itself in two distinct ways at the family level: through pervasive religious endogamy and promotion of high birth rates (Phillips, 1999). The LDS "is a denomination with a history of strong inducements from its leaders for members to marry other Mormons" (Barlow, 1977, p. 149). In terms of promoting high birth rates, "membership in the Mormon Church provides not only a theology that places a high value on family, but also an institutional setting designed to aid in child rearing" (Heaton, 1986, p. 257). Socialization, in terms of the requirement for endogamy, benefits church growth because it ensures the retention of current members who marry, and it encourages non-Mormons who wish to marry Mormons to convert to Mormonism. Furthermore, high birth rates promote growth since children tend to retain the religion of their parents, and because the more religious a Mormon family is, the more children it tends to have (Phillips, 1999). According to David Stewart (2007), LDS children account for an annual increase of 0.6 – 0.8 percent of overall membership per year. Given an average compounded growth rate of approximately 1.8 percent per year, births account for approximately 30 percent of new Mormons (Stewart, 2007).

The most prominent and overt example of LDS religious socialization is its missionary system. All Mormon men are expected to serve as full-time missionaries for two years, and are expected to finance the endeavor themselves, minus roundtrip transportation. Despite the enormous time and effort this demands, 40 percent of Mormon men serve as missionaries (Stark, 1984). Currently, this results in over 52,000 Latter-day Saints serving as full-time missionaries worldwide (Hales, 2011). As for the church's contribution, it provides training to its members via missionary training centers. Members spend up to 12 weeks at these centers, immersed in language, culture, and religious training in preparation for their assignment (Worthy, 2008).

One basic characteristic of social interaction is that people tend to hang out with people most like themselves (Perl & Olson, 2000). This phenomenon manifests itself in the formation of homogeneous in-groups resulting from LDS religious socialization vis-à-vis church social mandates such as the abstention from alcohol, tobacco, and profanity. These social mandates help alleviate the free-rider problem. Individuals who wish to join the church, must adhere to certain social standards of behavior, which prevent truly uncommitted people from joining. This allows the church to focus its religious consumables to individuals who are truly committed, and thus can be counted on to volunteer time and money. Likewise, LDS religious socialization solidifies religious commitment through the threat of social and church sanctions for noncompliance (Miller, 2002). Additionally, the consolidation of church and social ties strengthens the "in-group and intensifies group pressure" (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995, p. 1000), thus creating an innate monitoring system for compliance.

The influence of religious socialization is pronounced even in non-socially based doctrines and practices of the LDS. Because all members are expected to tithe, and because detailed records which include a “member’s age, number of children, marital status, [and] financial contributions” (Nelson, 1993, p. 668) are kept by the church, tacit pressure exists to make periodic financial contributions in order to maintain status in the church and the community. The importance of maintaining good status within the church and community, by means of overt compliance with normative and cultural expectations, is further reinforced by the threat of excommunication. Because church, family, friends, and community are all interwoven, excommunication results in social isolation that is far more profound than mere exclusion from church activities (King & King, 1984).

G. SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CAPITAL

Yet another element critical to religious participation and commitment is the accumulation of religious and social capital (Iannaccone, 1990). Religious “preferences are formed and sustained by the social relationships people maintain and discard,” (Loveland, 2003, p. 154) and the degree to which an individual is “invested” in these relationships determines the amount of social capital he or she has. Essentially, religious capital is accumulated as a member of a religion increases his or her familiarity with that religion’s doctrines, rituals, and practices. Religious preferences are significantly shaped through increases of social and religious capital; not only does the member receive greater motivation and satisfaction from his or her religious participation, but he or she will also extract more out of the religious experience (Iannaccone, 1990).

The amount of religious and social capital one accumulates is equally important in preventing conversion to another religion, since the greater the accumulated capital, the less likely religious switching is to occur (Iannaccone, 1990). In the early stages of developing religious preferences and belief systems, children will “naturally gravitate to those of their parents” (Iannaccone, 1990, p. 300). Later in life, relationships and personal attachments outside of the family can become very influential. This factor often contributes to one’s social capital and, since social capital is the most significant capital in determining *whether* someone will choose to convert, if his or her social attachments and personal relationships in another religion outweigh those in his or her own religion, then the potential for conversion is high (Stark, 2005). Logically speaking, the greater the accumulated religious capital, the more costly it becomes for people to change to a religion where none of this capital can itself be converted or used.

H. IDEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Our religious consumption model points to the diminutive effect of ideological preferences on an individual's religious choice and level of commitment. Intuitively, scholars have concluded that religious choice is mainly the result of a particular religion's doctrinal and ideological appeal, "that people embraced a new faith because they found its teachings particularly appealing, especially if these teachings seemed to solve serious problems or dissatisfactions that afflicted them" (Stark, 2007, p. 199). Extensive research on the subject over the past several decades, however, has revealed that of the factors influencing one's involvement in a religion, the belief system and dogma of that religion are least important (Roberts & Davidson, 1984). The much more prominent determinant of an individual's religious belief and commitment is personal community relationships (Cornwall, 1987). Indeed, personal community relationships, the collective expression of an individual's social system comprised of family, friends, and neighbors, has a major impact not just on an individual's choice of religion, but level of participation as well (Photiadis, 1965).

I. CONCLUSION

Unfortunately, the most prominent theories of religious growth cannot account for the "Mormon phenomenon." Secularization theory falls short in explaining the increasing religiosity seen in so-called secular states. When it comes to Utah in particular, secularization theory also fails to explain why the Mormon commitment remained exceptionally high following Utah's statehood, which undercut the Latter-day Saints' control over their political environment. Religious economies theory provides an alternative explanation, which would seem to better fit the twentieth century. However, this theory fails to explain why, with increasing religious competition in Utah, the

Mormon church has been able to maintain such a monopolistic hold over market share. There are clearly factors missing from both theories.

As Chapter II indicated, the Mormon church takes a highly systematic approach to resource collection, which is rooted in creating an institutional framework for group socialization. As this chapter has explained, this organizational structure enables effective LDS socialization. The church has created an effective organizational apparatus that collects and re-distributes resources, and creates a tight-knit community of members, which influences behavior by instilling a mandate for church participation through community, economic, and family structures.

Church membership is promoted while dissent is hindered. In a self-reinforcing process, the Mormon church efficiently collects resources, and turns those resources into greater socialization, further strengthening church membership and permitting expansion.

So far, we have focused on this particular church and its methods. Next, we will examine what the LDS model offers when it comes to others' ideologies.

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IV. GROWING AN INSURGENCY

A. INTRODUCTION

Ideology plays an important role in armed conflict. It serves as the *raison de guerre*, fueling nationalism, solidifying group cohesion, and justifying violence. Ideology in itself can create a socializing effect and is evident in major conflicts. Waves of American men volunteered for military service following the declarations of war in World War I and World War II. In similar fashion, the 9/11 attacks galvanized American popular support for military action.

Having explored how an ideology-based organization grows, this chapter aims to explore the applicability of our conclusions to armed conflict. While ideology can be influential in all military conflicts, we focus on insurgencies. An insurgency is a violent struggle between a state's government and counter-state forces who seek to overthrow that government (Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, 2010). Embedded in this violent conflict is the battle of competing ideologies taking place among the state's population (Field Manual (FM) 3-24, 2006). Much as religious competition focuses on people, insurgencies are motivated by popular support; they both seek adherents among a population.

The Latter-day Saints have created social systems, practices, and formal mechanisms that have created the conditions for phenomenal growth. This chapter suggests ways in which the LDS model of growth can be applied to insurgent conflicts. Doing so not only forces an examination of the role of ideology in a conflict, but also presents more effective methods to conduct and counter insurgencies.

B. RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

The contrast between religion and insurgencies lies in the nature of their ideologies. Insurgent organizations maintain fundamentally political ideologies, as these groups seek to contest the state's power over a political space. Religious organizations, on the other hand, maintain theologically based ideologies. Otherwise, insurgent and religious organizations share important common attributes. They both seek adherents; hence, the relationship between ideological expansion and the target audience is similar.

In essence, they seek to attract members of the population, for an increasing membership facilitates organizational growth. Insurgencies aim to attract "political consumers," while religions seek "religious consumers." In these two types of organizations, the intended audience boils down to *people*.

The Mormon church invests a great deal of time cultivating relationships with potential members before attempting to "suggest" conversion. This method creates the requisite trust that is a *sine qua non* for opening one up to the possibility of embracing a new ideology and for considering adopting and living according to its prescripts. In the end, conversion results from the new member's bonds and relationship with current members (Stark, 2005). This means that cultural, societal, and family bonds play a more influential role in expanding membership than the Mormon ideology itself.

Our examination of LDS growth suggests that an insurgency or counterinsurgency strategy, which places ideological persuasion at the forefront of interactions with the populace, is inefficient. A more successful strategy would invest greater effort in creating a sympathetic societal framework. This involves creating an institutional structure that uses cultural, religious, societal, tribal, clan, and family relationships. Group membership typically drives acceptance of the group's ideology (or at the very least, tolerance of the ideology). In contrast, a strategy that pushes ideology without first establishing these organizational structures is likely to be less effective. Adherence to an ideology is not likely to occur if the adoption is the result of a *quid pro quo* for promised goods or services. This ideological conversion, if it does occur, will be ephemeral and based only on the continued offerings, or the receivers' interest in those offerings.

Another important element of Mormon socialization is not only "religious consumption" by its members, but also the "religious product" provided by the church. While the level of Mormon religious commitment, and subsequently manpower and fiscal capital, is high in the LDS, so is the level of services provided by the church to its members. Within a ward, Latter-day Saints benefit from a wide variety of church-sanctioned activities and social groups. These include youth groups such as scout troops, employment assistance, professional training, and sport teams. In the realm of education, the Mormon church owns several colleges and universities, providing subsidized higher education to its members. The missionary program, while appearing to simply enhance church capital, also serves as a uniquely valuable resource to its members. The missionary program provides language training, cultural immersion, as well as exposure to theoretical and practical job skills. What better way to learn the craft of persuasion than to promote an ideological product to complete strangers, in a foreign language, and among people from distinctly different cultures? Recognizing this to be a difficult endeavor, the LDS expends considerable resources in preparing its missionaries for this task, and in the process imparts invaluable expertise to its young men and women. Latter-day Saints benefit from an exceptional "religious product" that undoubtedly serves to promote organizational growth.

Coincidentally, insurgencies often grow by providing a better "political product" than the state. Incentivizing group membership or compliance by providing better political goods and services than the opposition helps these groups grow in the same way that religious organizations benefit from delivering a more appealing "religious product." An important aspect in this dynamic is that over the long term, promised goods need to be delivered, and need to be sustainable. Failing to deliver a political product may result in the loss of credibility and trust, and thus makes it easier for an opposing organization to exert influence. We see this with religious organizations. Religious groups often loose adherents when prophecies fail to come true.[5]

C. SOCIALIZING INSURGENCIES

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been able to create and continue to adapt a persuasive and significant socialization process, which enhances its religious product. This process not only attains ideological objectives, such as theological conversion, but also provides powerful incentives that attract members and persuade them to remain in the church. The result is people who provide church capital, which drives church surplus, which in turn, is reinvested in church members. Important to this cycle is that the ideology plays a secondary role in attracting or maintaining members. It is the combination of the socialization created by the church along with the ideology that makes the LDS such a successful institution.

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[5] Failed religious prophecies can also have a revitalizing effect on church membership. Chris Bader (1999) provides an illuminating synopsis of this phenomenon, and proposes that failed prophecies and religious membership may have a curvilinear relationship.

What this model suggests is that for an insurgency or counterinsurgency to be successful and enduring, it must establish an efficient socialization process, whereby members are given sufficient incentives to compel them to stay in the organization. These incentives must also be provided at such a level that they entice sufficient commitment, which allows for organizational surplus, and thus growth. Adapting our religious consumption and church growth models from Chapter III, we depict the process of political organizational growth in Figure 9. This model can be used to explain the growth of insurgencies, counterinsurgency movements, or radical organizations that have not developed into insurgencies.[6] As with religious growth, these organizations expand by individuals influencing members of their family and community, or when families influence children and other relatives. In this process, ideological expansion becomes less the result of inculcation, and more a result of personal interactions and relationships (Mushtaq, 2009). Our model suggests that when socialization processes drive expansion, the organization benefits from a reduction in the required resources needed to expand the ideology and fight for legitimacy. Thus, socialization drives the organizational resources required for expansion, as opposed to resource collection becoming an additional organizational task.

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[6] The process of radicalization, and subsequent growth of terrorist organizations follows a distinctly social pattern, in which social networks serve as a primary recruiting mechanism. Marc Sageman (2004) explains this in his work, *Understanding Terror Networks*.

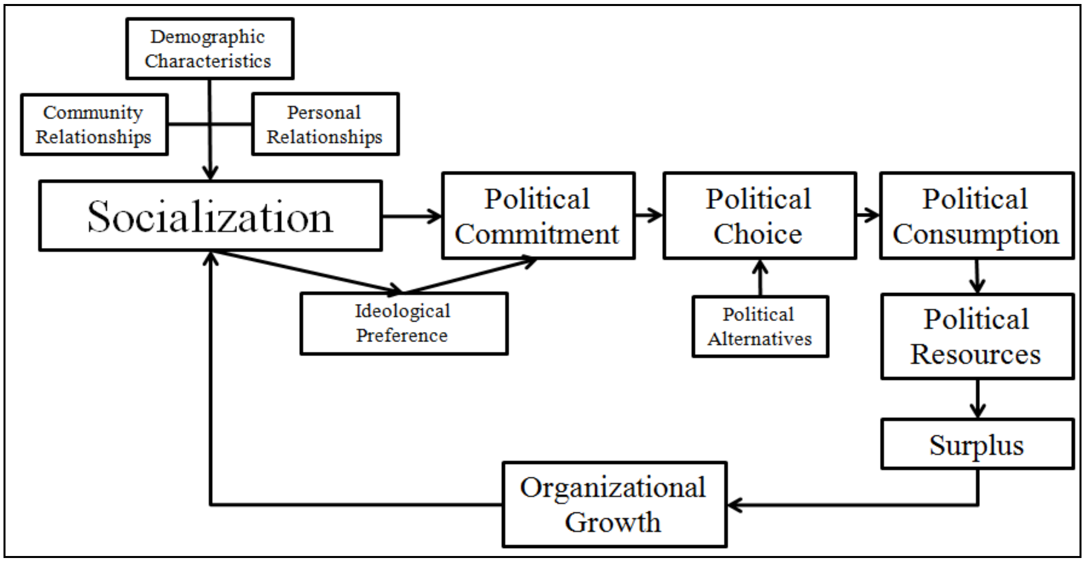
Demographic Characteristics
Community Relationships
Personal Relationships
Socialization
Political Commitment
Political Choice
Political Consumption
Ideological Preference
Political Alternatives
Political Resources
Surplus
Organizational Growth

Figure 9. Political Consumption Model

By emphasizing socialization structures, the potential for a population to adopt a competing ideology should be reduced. This is true to the degree that the organization's socialization structure entices members to a greater degree than competing groups. A free market of ideologies facilitates this, by permitting greater leeway for individuals to switch allegiances. Investment in an organization is also important. As we demonstrated in the previous chapter, to the extent an individual is already invested in an ideology, the less likely he or she is to abandon that ideology. Insurgency strategies must strive for more than just basic acquiescence from the populace; otherwise, allegiance will be sustained only as long as the government or counter-state provides resources. If the population has little invested in the state structure, in terms of social ties, status, dependence, or services, the result is a population with little commitment to the state's ideology. Switching to a competing ideology becomes easy. The switch will be especially likely if the competition provides sought-after goods and does so more effectively than the government (Rust, 2011).

Commitment to an ideology-based organization, besides implying individual investment, also entails time. This is because it takes time to cultivate relationships and forge social bonds that are integral to the development and maintenance of socialization processes. Any insurgency strategy that seeks to achieve success in a quick tactical manner will certainly demand a high resource allocation and may be met with unsustainable success. The United States has acknowledged the need for lengthy campaigns in counterinsurgency with its involvement in the “Long War” in Afghanistan (Fulk, 2011). This is why simply setting short-term objectives, rather than making long-term commitments, cannot work. No matter how well intended, short-term strategies are bound to prove ineffective.

D. AN INEFFECTIVE APPROACH

The conduct of village stability operations is the most recent counterinsurgency strategy to be adopted in Afghanistan. These operations depend heavily on special operations forces who act as the vanguard for expanding the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s presence (Catanzaro & Windmueller, 2011). Typically, in these operations, special operations forces teams enter villages and seek counsel with village elders and community key leaders. *Quid pro quos* are discussed at these meetings, and the leaders who speak for the village, determine whether to accept the terms. If a village chooses to side with the government and security forces, then special operations forces teams will often train locals to provide village security. They also provide the village with a “host of efforts” that range from medical care to work projects (Connett & Cassidy, 2011).

While it is understandable that the special operations forces teams seek to use a culturally sensitive approach by engaging mainly village leaders and elders, this approach does not build new relationships in the community that are required for a new ideology to take hold. Village leader engagements are not creating strong, dependable relationships; at best, they are building a modicum of rapport that allows special operations forces teams to do their jobs. In the absence of embedding a new structure, the socialization processes cannot flourish. In order for villagers’ attitudes to significantly change, an organization must earn the trust of individuals who can become open to adopting a new ideology and then, in turn, can use community and family relationships to influence others. Without strong relationships, ideological adoption does not occur, and the desired socialization processes will never take hold.

Without the requisite conditions for altering attitudes, village stability operations achieve limited success and whatever success they do achieve is only through the constant presence of forces and the resources they contribute to the village (Catanzaro & Windmueller, 2011). While the ultimate goal is to remove special operations forces from this process, continued success is not likely without structural shifts. This is because the driving force for adopting the U.S. and Afghan government's preferred ideology will be removed as soon as the Americans leave, and the costs of switching to counter-state allegiances will be negligible.

When village stability operations are examined in contrast with our organizational growth model, we find several failings. The first is that the organizational growth of the Afghan government is a result of foreign intervention, and is not self-sustaining. In our model, a self-sustaining mechanism for growth involves resource collection resulting from political consumption. In contrast, village stability operations depend on an external resource base, as the preponderance of effort is a result of foreign assistance. Manpower and capital are provided by other nations. Because this system is not dependent on the political consumers, it is not self-sustaining. A more effective program would cultivate an indigenous work force to not only provide manpower, but also the administrative oversight and leadership. In essence, it would shift the *quid pro quos* from a military-to-village contract, to a village-to-villager contract.

Secondly, any strategy may be difficult to achieve if political choice does not result in political consumption. In Afghanistan, there is a lack of plurality–or political freedom. The ability of the population to freely consume "political capital" is often curtailed as a result of conflict. Eliminating constraints on political capital, such as permitting a free political environment, necessitates a sufficient degree of security. Security allows individuals to more freely associate with political organizations and enables a greater pluralistic political environment. Critical to plurality is an environment that promotes political competition and discourages political monopolies.

Lastly, it is critical to develop a system that is mutually reinforcing. That is, operations must identify communal activities in which the dividends resulting from these activities are able to generate sufficient surplus to enhance the community, and further solidify group socialization and incentives for cooperation.

Figure 10 depicts these "weak bonds:" political choice does not result in political consumption; political consumption does not drive political resources; and organizational growth does not translate into socialization. The lessons from our LDS study suggest that efforts to curtail the Afghan insurgency must focus on fixing these severed links. Failing to do this creates inefficiencies that will continue to result in unattainable goals.

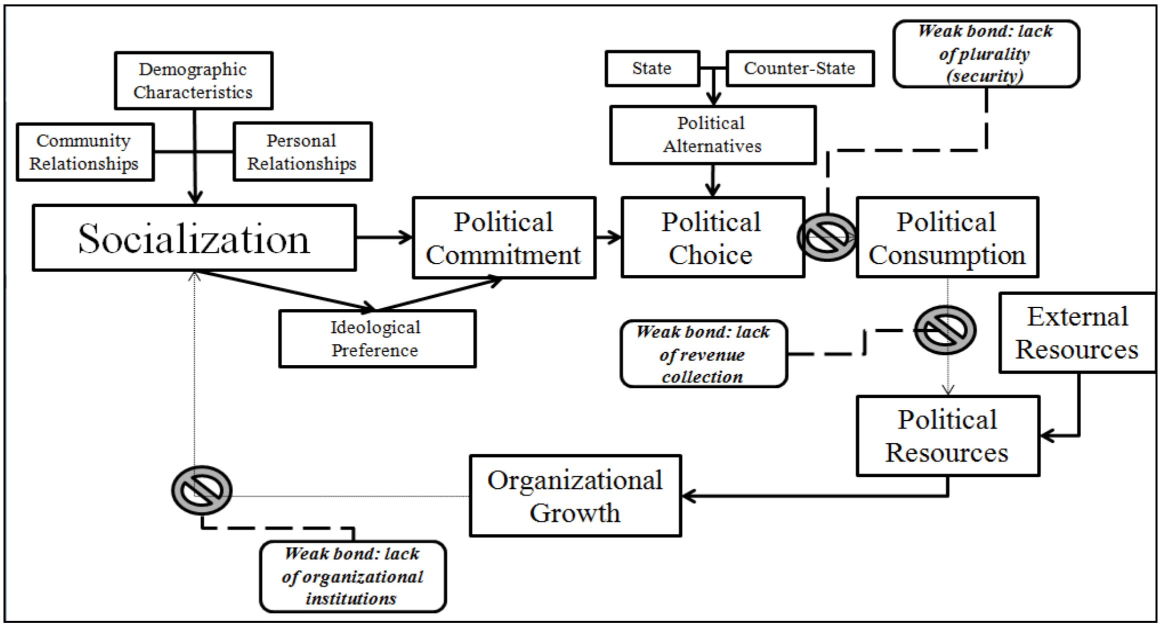
Demographic Characteristics
Community Relationships
Personal Relationships
Socialization
Political Commitment
Ideological Preference
State
Counter-State
Political Alternatives
Political Choice
Weak bond: lack of plurality (security)
Political Consumption
External Resources
Weak bond: lack of revenue collection
Political Resources
Organizational Growth
Weak bond: lack of organizational institutions

Figure 10. Weak Bonds in Village Stability Operations

E. THE LDS TEMPLATE: AN INSURGENCY MODEL

The method for ideological growth among the Mormons is simple: foster a socialization framework. This approach could be applied to either develop or counter an insurgency or other ideology-based movement.

1. Promote Socialization First, Not the Ideology

Successful Mormon conversions typically begin when a non-Mormon is first introduced to a Latter-day Saint. These individuals develop a relationship and friendship, often without any conversation about theology. Only after this relationship develops over time, and grows to include a circle of family friends and associations, is the non-Mormon slowly introduced to the wider community of a Latter-day Saint ward. This may include an invitation to participate on a sports team, have a son join an LDS-sponsored Boy Scout troop, or a spouse attend book club meetings. Inevitably, as the circle of Mormon friends grows, the non-Mormon's association with Latter-day Saints likewise grows. Spouses and children share in this process, and a family's social relationships become increasingly Mormon. Only after these associations are well developed, is the non-Mormon invited to attend church service, or is the LDS ideology mentioned. By then, commitment to the LDS community is high, and joining the church serves to solidify these community bonds. As a member is introduced to the church, LDS members periodically visit a new convert at home, ensuring that the new member not only feels welcome, but that the convert is also taking advantage of the services and activities available from the church. Increasing involvement entails increased tithing, which is closely monitored by the church. This further reinforces member commitment, as well as allows the church to effectively sponsor its socialization activities.

This approach ensures that socialization, not ideology, plays the predominant role in expanding and retaining membership. The result is that members share more than just ideological homogeneity; they are integrated into a social community, which not only provides its members with valuable services, but also demands a certain degree of cooperation and commitment. The message this sends to the counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan is that the agenda that should be at the forefront of strategy is not *democratization* or *liberal ideals*, but rather, the institutionalization of a system, which provides services that in turn, require a certain level of cooperation and commitment from Afghans. In other words, development of community-based services, which are staffed by the community members themselves, should steer operations. Foreign entities, whether from the central government, the national military, or abroad, should play only a secondary and supporting role. This means that projects to improve communities must originate with the villagers themselves. These projects should also be undertaken by the village members, and not by external contractors or military personnel.

2. Curtail the Free-Rider Problem by Increasing Commitment

The LDS provide valuable resources not only to their members, but also to the community. Education, vocational training, job placement services, donation centers, food-banks, and disaster assistance are a few examples. Yet, the church also has to contend with the individuals who specifically seek the greater benefits of church membership, without contributing their share. The church overcomes this through meticulous record keeping while instilling unique social conformity standards. The capability of the LDS for record keeping is renowned. Arguably, the church maintains the world's most comprehensive genealogical records. The website *Family Search* is maintained by the LDS, which also runs over 1800 family history centers in the U.S. alone (LDS, 2008). This record keeping also includes maintaining a well-established record of financial contributions from church members. Whereas many religions rely on anonymous contributions, often collected by passing a basket around during Sunday service, the LDS has defined and standardized procedures and practices to oversee member contributions.

Members are also expected to conform to standards of social behavior. Mormons are forbidden to drink alcohol, coffee, or tea, or to smoke. They are expected to adhere to standard styles of dress and appearance, and refrain from profanity, watching violent movies, or other behavior that is acceptable elsewhere in society. This conformity requires adherence, which is a particular form of commitment that could dissuade those who are not truly committed to the church. It forms a barrier for membership, and excludes those who are not willing to fully adhere to Mormon social norms and practices. The casual member is therefore persuaded to make a choice: to conform and maintain a certain level of church commitment or to leave the church.

Nation-states, as well as counter-state organizations likewise have to contend with free-riders. In the case of a state, laws and rules usually curtail this problem, but only to the degree that these laws are enforceable. Counter-states often deal with the free-rider problem in a similar fashion, by creating rules, which likewise are only effective to the degree they are enforceable. During insurgencies, challenges to the state's ability to enforce rules and law aggravate the free-rider problem. This condition cannot be permitted to become so pervasive that a state is unable to generate sufficient resources to function. Likewise, for an insurgency to flourish it must maintain an ability to extract resources, which means that it must, to some degree, overcome the free-rider problem.

One way to do so is to increase the commitment levels of a population. Increasing commitment levels not only increases the cost of disaffiliation, but also alleviates the free-rider problem. Village stability operations could serve these ends. Increasing popular commitment towards the Afghan government could be orchestrated through security operations, public works, or the provision of other goods and services. Paramount to this, however, is the requirement for significant involvement from villagers, who besides having a vested interest in the success of these operations, also have to invest time and resources. In order for an activity or good to be valued, villagers must take part in contributing to its costs, whether through capital investment or manpower.

3. It Is Not about Winning Hearts and Minds

The LDS model reveals that while ideology matters, its role is secondary to other factors that enable organizational growth. Simply put, the Latter-day Saints have not achieved sustained growth by preaching theology to non-Mormons, but by developing a socialization system that not only appeals to converts, but also dissuades its members from dissenting. While revolutionaries might like to think that their ideas are the driving factor in political change, other factors may play a more dominant role in the success of revolutionary war. Yet, too often American strategy has centered on ideological principles, as though the proposition, “if only we can convince them that our ideas are better, they would join us,” is all that is needed. Going back to the Vietnam War’s “hearts and minds” campaign, it should be clear that successful growth of an ideology-based organization depends on incentivizing its membership. While this may entail an attractive or compelling ideology, other factors may play a more dominant role. In the case of the LDS, socialization trumps ideological appeal. The same may hold true for an insurgency. If so, the ideological contest deserves de-emphasis. A more efficient method of attracting members, or ensuring compliance is to instead create institutional incentives for membership which focus around socialization.

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V. CONCLUSION

Americans are familiar with Mormon missionaries. They travel neighborhoods as pairs of clean-cut, well-dressed recent high school graduates. These Latter-day Saints are the product of a significant amount of resources placed in the missionary program by the church. In a remarkably efficient manner, the LDS trains and prepares these missionaries through language immersion, religious education, and even training in sales techniques. When examined in light of the fact that the Mormon church is among the fastest growing religious organizations in the world, this missionary effort seems to deserve the bulk of the credit for new converts. However, missionary efforts account for only a small portion of new LDS members. Mormon missionaries may be successful at converting one out of a thousand when approaching strangers (Loomis, 2002). Among non-Mormons who were receptive by allowing in-depth LDS missionary proselytizing efforts, the conversion rate was approximately 2–3 percent (Stark, 2005). Yet, when approaching a non-Mormon in the home of a Mormon acquaintance, conversions occur approximately 50 percent of the time (Stark & Bainbridge, 1980; Stark & Finke, 2000).

Without question, societal factors play a determining role in a person's religious commitment and, in turn, his or her commitment to an ideological organization. The LDS is an ideological organization that maintains an infrastructure oriented towards socialization, and is thus able to draw people. It thereby spreads ideological principles indirectly. Instead of focusing on promulgating its ideological message, the church focuses on sustaining a robust social organization through which it attracts and keep its members. The result has been sustained and remarkable growth.

Several lessons can be derived from this study. The first is that other factors besides the appeal of an ideology permit ideological organizations to grow. This stands in contrast to strategies that aim to change people's ideological "reasoning" head-on. While ideological appeal, such as that captured in the phrase "winning hearts and minds," is important, other factors may play a more determinant role in influencing an individual's choice about which group to join and how much to participate. As the Latter-day Saints case demonstrates, socialization appears to be more important than religious doctrine.

Secondly, in order to counter an organization that espouses a revolutionary or counter-state ideology, one must go beyond simply providing an alternative contrasting narrative. For instance, effective organizations will offer a social framework, one that provides cultural, economic, religious, and societal incentives. Indeed this may play a more pivotal role than the message itself.

Basically, this thesis suggests what may be wrong with current methods of applying psychological operations in a grand strategy. Certainly, a tactical application of psychological warfare can play a useful and even critical role in a campaign. But a dependency on psychological operations as a strategic determinant for garnering sympathy might be overly optimistic–especially when confronting an ongoing insurgency. This is because in an insurgency the battle is for the people, and critical to any people are societal relationships and bonds.

Applying these concepts to insurgent warfare raises some intriguing and challenging issues. For one, these concepts fly in the face of current American strategy, which places emphasis on spreading an ideological message of democracy. Changing course from this is likely to meet resistance. Yet, as the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have demonstrated, U.S. counterinsurgency strategy is problematic, warranting, at the very least, a fundamental re-examination of guiding principles. Secondly, United States history is studded with ideological battles, fought in the name of anti-colonialism, Manifest Destiny, federalism, anti-slavery, isolationism, humanitarianism, anti-fascism, anti-communism, and anti-terrorism. Each American generation has fought its own ideological battle, which has served to justify war and conflict. Proposing that ideology plays a secondary role to group socialization could be construed as calling into question the legitimacy of American policy. However, our argument is simply that that without taking socialization into account, the ideology will never be made to stick.

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