

MISSIONARY FAMILIES: A CASE STUDY OF EXPATRIATION IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

CHARLES VANCE
MARK E. MENDENHALL
FRED E. WOODS

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CHAPTER 8

Missionary Families: A Case Study of Expatriation in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Charles Vance, Mark E. Mendenhall, and Fred E. Woods

Introduction

The examination of issues, challenges, and activities of various non-corporate expatriates in religious, sports, education, and nonprofit sectors can provide useful generalizable insights for enriching our understanding of the broader expatriation phenomenon (McNulty, Vance and Fisher, 2017). Within the religious sector, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is well known for its efforts to send missionary expatriates abroad, most notably young men and women, as are parodied in the highly popular musical, *The Book of Mormon*. The musical's characterization of youthful American missionaries portrays a stereotypical image of youthful, American Latter-day Saint missionaries and a very limited picture of the Church's overall expatriation activity and experience. For example, the present authors interrupted their university studies and served two-year volunteer missions for the Church in their early 20's (Italy, Japan, and Australia, respectively) and then returned to finish their undergraduate degrees. There is little resemblance between their missionary experiences and how missionary life is portrayed in the musical. In addition to their two-year volunteer missions, one of the authors is a *Third Culture Kid* (Lauring, Guttormsen, and McNulty, 2019; Pollock Van Reken, and Pollock, 2017), and each author has spent significant time overseas as an expatriate on short-term and long-term international work arrangements over the course of their academic careers.

Our purpose in this Chapter is to provide an historical overview of expatriation within the Church and the general philosophies and perspectives that have undergirded associated human resource (HR) policy and practice for individuals and their families. Consistent with the major theme of this book, we anchor our analysis within the construct of family and do so by framing our analysis on the multiple levels of the construct that is unique to the ideology of the Church, which in turn profoundly influences the mindset, strategy, and organization of its expatriate program. We first briefly examine the multi-dimensional aspect of the construct of the family that flows out of the doctrine of the Church and that is often forcefully at play in the mindset and working environment of the missionary expatriate. After delineating this framework, we then examine the historical arc of the Church's expatriate activities since its founding in 1830. We conclude the Chapter by recommending avenues for future research that hold the potential for providing more insight into the dynamics and processes of religious expatriation.

The Church's Ideology of the Family

Key to the success of religious expatriates, particularly related to adaptation and adjustment, is their intrinsic motivation driven by cognitions associated with religious ideology and a deep sense of missionary or Church-service purpose (Presbitero, 2017). One cannot comprehend the dynamics of the Church's expatriation practices without an understanding of the central role that family plays in its doctrine. An often-repeated official assertion within

the faith states: “the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children” (Hinckley, 1995: 1). Unlike the doctrine of most Christian denominations, a core tenet of the Church is that all human beings lived as spiritual children of God before being born into mortality. Mortal birth is viewed as a uniting of “the spirit with a physical body” so that children of God can “receive a fulness of joy” (Bradford, 1992: 487). Mortal life is viewed as a necessary experience that all God’s children go through, ideally within a supportive family structure, to gain necessary experience with good and evil to prepare for further growth and advancement in the eternities.

The concept of and commitment to family, both in mortality and in eternity, is at the center of the Latter-day Saint belief system, and therefore must be acknowledged and examined to gain an accurate perspective of the Church’s expatriation experience. The family is the nucleus of individual socialization in the Church, and is a powerful catalyst in overcoming fear to volunteer for expatriate missionary assignments, often to remote, under-developed parts of the world. The dimensionality of the construct of family within the Church is based on two core dimensions: (1) mortal vs. eternal, and (2) enclosed vs. extended. The framework of our analysis is illustrated in Figure 8.1.

INSERT FIGURE 8.1 ABOUT HERE

<Figure 8.1 Multidimensionality of the construct of family in Latter-day Saint ideology>

In Figure 8.1., we first distinguish between the mortal and the eternal. *Mortal* refers to institutions or conditions that are limited in their existence to an individual’s life on earth; that is, upon entering into life after death these institutions or conditions would no longer exist. *Eternal* refers to institutions or conditions that exist both here on earth and that will continue to exist into eternity. On the other axis, *enclosed* refers to the degree to which an individual’s membership in a sub-institution within the Church is both temporally and spiritually circumscribed to a relatively small number of people, whereas *extended* reflects being in a condition where the individual is formally and spiritually linked to a wider number of people.

Eternal/ Extended: Humankind as family

Perhaps most fundamental in the mindset of expatriate missionaries in the Church who are sent abroad is the deep personal conviction that everyone is, beyond metaphor, literally spiritual sisters and brothers – actual daughters and sons of God – who have chosen in a pre-mortal existence to come to earth to obtain a physical body in order to gain knowledge and wisdom and to learn to serve and love one another with the goal of eventually returning to God. In recognition of this spiritual reality, members of congregations often address each other as “sister” or “brother” with their surnames appended to the title (for example, “Sister Jones” or “Brother Miller”). Thus, with this belief and mindset, expatriate missionaries consider the host nationals to whom they are assigned to serve not as “heathens” who are backward and need “fixing,” but as literal spiritual sisters and brothers who are deserving of their complete commitment, love and support, both in this life and the life hereafter. Often it is this fundamental desire to serve God and His children (i.e., their spiritual brothers and sisters) that enables expatriate missionaries to override their fear of leaving their families and friends and the comforts of home at a very young age to accept an expatriate missionary assignment.

Eternal/ Enclosed: The central position of the nuclear family in the Church's ideology

The nuclear family is viewed as the core, earthly institution wherein our mortal experience takes place, and families on earth are essentially an extension of the family of God. As such, families are designed to be eternal in nature, and to remain intact throughout eternity if family members keep their covenants with God. Marriage is viewed as the main relationship wherein people develop through trial and error, sacrifice, and commitment to follow God's counsel (Bradford, 1992: 487).

Nuclear family members play an important role in the lives of expatriate missionaries. It is common for one or both parents of a missionary to have been missionaries themselves; thus, as they regularly communicate with the expatriate missionary through weekly phone/ video calls, email exchanges, and regular mail, parents are able to provide guidance, counsel, and encouragement based on their own missionary service. The ongoing, weekly familial influence through this communication system is quite powerful in influencing feelings of gratitude and obligation on the part of the missionary towards family members in the home culture. For example, one former missionary, in reflecting on his initial youthful missionary experience, believed that his motivation to not disappoint his parents back home far outweighed his fears about how well he would be able to perform his missionary labors (Stone, 2018).

Mortal/ enclosed: Congregation as family

All members of the Church are assigned to attend the geographically closest congregation to their domicile. This policy discourages "shopping around" to find a congregation that one is most comfortable in, thus creating the necessity of learning to love and serve those one finds oneself living by – often it puts members outside their social comfort zones, stretching their capacity to learn to appreciate those who culturally and/or socially differ from them. In Latter-day Saint congregations, like families, one isn't able to choose one's siblings or co-parishioners. Congregations in the Church are called *wards* and are often referred to by their members as the *ward family*. There is no paid local ministry in the Church, so everyone is given responsibilities that are generally rotated every two-to-three years, which builds strong familiarity within the ward. This results in fellow ward members of the expatriate missionary, whether by special assignment or simply through genuine concern, regularly writing to expatriate missionaries serving abroad to provide encouragement, support, and advice.

Also, in the foreign location where the missionary is serving, there typically is a local ward of Church members who possess the same *spiritual brothers and sisters* mentality and deep associated commitment to the well-being and success of the expatriate missionary. Unlike those regularly sending encouragement and support from back home, these local host country ward family members are able to provide on-site direction, guidance, and emotional support to the expatriate missionary to promote effective adjustment to the host culture. With their joint commitment to missionary efforts, these local Church members also are able to assist missionaries in their labors. It is common for host country members to invite missionaries to enjoy meals in their homes and provide other forms of generous personal assistance, as well as accompany missionaries in visiting and sharing their teachings with other host nationals who are interested in learning about the Church. Home and host country congregations both provide significant, consistent positive influence of spiritual, financial,

and emotional support and encouragement throughout the duration of missionaries' two-year assignments.

Mortal/ Extended: Mission as family

The Church divides the world into geographic boundaries that form *missions*. As of spring 2022, the Church has 407 missions in operation housing a total of 54,539 missionaries (Newsroom, 2022) that are on either 18-month or two-year assignments. Each mission has approximately 100 to 250 missionaries assigned to it at any given time, and individual missionaries are assigned to work in pairs and are transferred throughout cities, with pairing changes within the mission boundaries roughly every 3 to 6 months. Thus, within a two-year expatriate mission assignment, a missionary will live and work with many different missionaries and usually be a member of between 4 to 6 different local host country congregations.

Missions have an organizational structure (explained in detail later in this Chapter) that is designed to provide missionaries with guidance, support, and aid. The combination of the informal and formal support structures within the mission has strong influence on individual missionaries, usually facilitating strong bonds of friendship and kinship due to shared *crucible experiences* (Bennis and Thomas, 2002). For many missionaries, the mission's culture is viewed and felt as being familial in nature, with familial terminology often used as slang to refer to fellow missionaries (e.g., wives of mission presidents are commonly referred to as being *mission mothers*). It is not uncommon for some relationships that are formed during one's missionary experience to be life-lasting, and it is common for mission reunions to be held decades after the end of the missionaries' expatriation. These missionary reunions are modeled after the concept of family reunions with the ethos for both being markedly similar in nature.

Division of labour in caring for families

Given the centrality of the construct of family in the Church's doctrine, much attention has been given since the founding of the Church to how the family can be ideally preserved, sustained, and edified. While gender roles are viewed traditionally, they are also intertwined, and the expectation is that both women and men will support each other in leading and taking care of their own families and their congregational families (Hinckley, 1995). At the congregational level, there is no paid ministry in the Church – all aspects of pastoral and administrative functions are carried out by volunteers. Men, if they desire, are ordained to priesthood offices that entail specific administrative and pastoral responsibilities while women in the Church belong to an organization (The Relief Society) that administers a variety of pastoral and administrative responsibilities separate from those associated with priesthood offices (Oaks, 2014). For example,

Among other things, Latter-day Saint women preach sermons in Sunday meetings and the Church's general conference; serve full-time proselytizing missions; perform and officiate in holy rites in the Church's temples; and lead organizations that minister to families, other women, young women, and children. They participate in priesthood councils at the local and general levels. Professional women teach Latter-day Saint history and theology at Church universities and in the Church's educational programs for youth. (Gospel Topics, 2019)

The leadership responsibilities of women and men are expected to be integrated so that the *congregational family* operates in as well-coordinated a way and as seamlessly as possible. Traditionally, the responsibility for missionary outreach has been designated as a responsibility of those ordained to the priesthood in the Church, with the Relief Society playing a support role in missionary efforts (Hinckley, 1997). Thus, the administration of missions in the Church is led by men who hold the priesthood who work closely with women who volunteer for missionary assignments. An in-depth review of how administrative and pastoral responsibilities operate and are integrated in the Church in relationship to gender are beyond the scope of this Chapter; for comprehensive analyses, please see: Ballard, 2013; Cassler and Sorenson, 2004; Dew, 2014; Oaks, 2014).

With this multi-dimensional perspective of family in Church doctrine and practice in mind, we now provide a broad view of the historical arc of expatriation policies and practices in the Church and the general philosophies that have undergirded human resource policy formation associated with them. We divide the expatriation activity in the Church into three broad phases or eras: (1) the Sacrificial Era, 1837-1945; (2) the Familial Era, 1945-1970; and (3) the Multinational Era, 1970– present (see Figure 8.2). We also summarize the attendant problems, challenges and obstacles the Church faced in deploying and managing expatriates during each era.

INSERT FIGURE 8.2 ABOUT HERE

<Figure 8.2 Expatriation activity in the Latter-day Saint Church, 1837 to present day>

The Sacrificial Era, 1837-1945

From its very beginning, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been missionary-oriented in nature. In his ministry of restoring in the “latter days” the same Church that was originally established by Jesus in antiquity, Joseph Smith fully accepted the injunction of Jesus to: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19-20). Joseph Smith’s charge was to not “let a single corner of the earth go without a mission” (Roberts, 1978: 368), a bold undertaking for a very young Church (Britsch, 2012).

Assigning, or in the Church’s vernacular that we will use hereafter in this Chapter, *calling* mature men to become missionaries for short periods of time, became normative from 1837 to 1880. Usually, this arrangement involved a married man leaving his wife and children for a specified time period that could range from a few weeks to a few years, depending on the nature of the assignment. Missionaries worked in pairs or *companionships*, and following New Testament proselyting norms, went as unpaid agents “without purse or scrip” (see Matthew 10:9-11), relying on the charity of the local populace to house and feed them (Britsch, 2001). Between 1830 and 1899, general Church leaders called over twelve thousand missionaries (Neilson, 2012).

We term this period the *Sacrificial Era* because when these men became missionaries their spouses and children had to provide for themselves in the absence of their husband and father. While neighbors and loved ones offered what support they could, often the women

(who came to be known as *missionary wives*) had to engage in entrepreneurial activities to provide for their children in the absence of their husbands (Perrin, 2012). These early families modeled their discipleship after early Christians who suffered severe persecutions in New Testament times, and therefore they operated under the assumption that following Jesus Christ meant one would naturally have to endure hardships. Many of these women and men had already experienced severe persecution because of their faith, having been driven from their homes multiple times by mobs. They experienced forced relocations from Ohio to Missouri, (at one point in Missouri, the governor issued an extermination order upon any Latter-day Saints who chose to reside in the state), from Missouri to Illinois, and finally from Illinois to Utah. The sacrifice of parting with loved ones for an extended period to follow Christ's injunction to "go and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19-20) was viewed as a sacred responsibility by these early converts of the Church.

The first group of missionaries called to go outside of North America for an extended period were sent to England in 1837, and then nine more were sent to that country in 1840, initiating a pattern of missionary-related expatriation to nations throughout the world. Between 1843 to 1865, missionaries were sent to 30 countries including Australia, Chile, Germany, Hong Kong, Jamaica, India, Palestine, Scotland, South Africa and the Society Islands (Britsch, 2001; Golding, 2010). Expatriate missionaries continued to be called to these countries throughout the Sacrificial Era, although sometimes due to war or shifts in governmental restrictions or other circumstances missionaries were recalled and had to abandon their missions (Neilson, 2012). For example, missionaries were called to Japan in 1901, and while they and subsequent missionaries labored diligently (some came to learn the language fluently), political and cultural dynamics made it difficult to establish a strong foothold there. Very few Japanese converted, and in 1923, after a particularly devastating earthquake, the missionaries were recalled from Japan and reassigned to work with Japanese immigrants in Hawaii. The Church did not have a missionary presence again in Japan until 1948 (Britsch, 1992). From 1865 to 1900, groups of missionaries were called to Belgium, Bulgaria, The Cook Islands, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Mexico, New Zealand, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Syria, and Tonga; and from 1900 up until World War II, the missionary effort expanded to Argentina, Brazil, Japan, Latvia, Slovakia, and Zimbabwe (Britsch, 2001; Church Almanac, 2012). It should be noted that large numbers of missionaries were not sent to every country; in some countries (e.g., Syria, Turkey), very few missionaries were ever assigned. Larger numbers of missionaries were sent to countries where the populace and culture were more hospitable and open to the missionaries' teachings (Britsch, 2001).

Emergent issues that arose from the Sacrificial Era

During the Sacrificial Era, two major challenges surfaced for the Church: 1) familial stress; and 2) missed opportunities due to lack of human resources policies and management. The first challenge has been discussed earlier. Notably, while it was seen as a badge of honor to have the primary provider assigned to be a missionary in a far-flung corner of the world, it put a tremendous burden on the wife and children left behind (Perrin, 2012). Additionally, inequities arose in the degree of sacrifice, as some families had more financial reserves and/or extended family support to draw upon during the father's absence than others (Golding, 2010). In many cases, wives had to primarily carry the burden of providing for their families while their husbands were far away from home on missions (Perrin, 2012).

The settlement of Utah beginning in 1847 provided the Church with a stable headquarters from which to launch missionary work more effectively (Neilson, 2012), and converts from around the world (especially those from Great Britain, Central Europe, and Scandinavia) desired to relocate to Utah in order to “gather physically with other faithful members to assist in building...a covenant community of righteous Saints” (Whittaker, 2000: 459). The success in conversions up to that time revealed a great potential for increasing the Church’s membership, but to do so it required that more missionaries be sent overseas. However, “missionary demand exceeded supply” (Golding, 2010, p. 133). Assigning significantly higher numbers of more mature, experienced (married) men as missionaries had become unworkable (Golding, 2010) because doing so would place strains on their wives and families as well as upon local leadership resources within the Utah Territory (the Church had no paid ministry but relied on – and continues to do so to the present – on congregational members to act as clergy).

To remedy these two challenges, beginning in the 1880s men who were young adults and had not yet married were increasingly called on for missionary assignments. The unmarried young adult population was the only demographic to draw from in order to increase the number of missionaries and to reduce the number of fathers being separated from their families. This shift in policy allowed the total number of missionaries in the Church to nearly triple in size by the 1890s. In 1898, single, young adult women also were assigned to go on missions if they desired to do so, and by the turn of the century roughly 900 missionaries were being assigned annually by the Church (Neilson, 2012). The increase in numbers of missionaries required the Church to design customized missionary training classes, which were conducted at Church educational facilities. In the mid-1920s, a Salt Lake City-based *Mission Home* for departing missionaries was established, where for two weeks they received instruction on proper etiquette, diet and personal care, and basic missionary strategies for teaching Church doctrine (Ludlow, 1992). From the 1920s to the onset of World War II began a gradual evolution away from traditional missionary norms (e.g., traveling without purse or scrip) to processes designed to oversee large missionary cadres in various countries (Neilson, 2012). The increasing practice of calling single young men and women as missionaries in preference to married men, who would otherwise be separated from their young families, set the stage for the next phase of expatriation in the Church, which we term the *Familial Era*.

The Familial Era, 1945-1970

The Church’s missionary work was suspended throughout Europe, the South Pacific and Asia in the late 1930s and globally throughout World War II (Britsch, 1992). After World War II, the Church formally ended its policy of calling both married men *and* single men and women as missionaries, with only a few exceptions (discussed later in this Chapter). It transitioned instead to a policy of calling *only* single men and women (approximately 19 to 21 years of age) from local congregations throughout the world, to serve as missionaries for time periods of 18 months to three years (although by the early 1970s, the uppermost length was reduced to two years, and has remained that way to the present). These young men and women constituted the vast majority of the expatriate missionary force. We note here that other types of missionaries were called to serve in this era as well – mission presidents and their families, education missionaries, and construction/labor missionaries – and we will discuss this aspect of the Church’s expatriation later in the Chapter.

The strategy for expatriate missionaries to learn foreign languages during the early part of this era consisted of informal, immersive learning in the host country. This laissez-faire approach worked to varying degrees, but was largely dependent upon the individual missionary to best figure out how to do it without any trained, formal guidance (Neilson, 2012). It wasn't until 1968 that the Church's leaders implemented a program for teaching missionaries' foreign languages before their overseas departure. Missionary pre-departure training facilities were established in Church-owned colleges in Idaho and Hawaii, and soon afterward in Utah near Brigham Young University. These pre-departure training programs were six weeks in length and focused primarily on language acquisition and cultural orientation (Britsch, 2012).

Upon completion of the pre-departure language training program, missionaries then traveled to their appointed mission country and were assigned to work in a dyad or *companionship*. New missionaries were paired with others who had been in the country long enough to have developed a working knowledge of the local language and cultural norms. Once assigned to their companions, the new missionary continued language and cultural learning, with general missionary training and coaching being largely the responsibility of the more experienced missionary in the companionship. This initial training assignment typically lasted for two to three months before the companionship was changed and/ or the missionary was transferred to another area within the country. Under such arrangements, though perceived as being a stressful experience by almost all missionaries, working language fluency became common for the majority of missionaries within the first year of their sojourn (Graham, 2012; Kirk, 2014).

'Mission Presidents' and 'Mission Mothers'

The sending of relatively inexperienced young men and women on long foreign assignments during the Familial Era (a practice that continues to this day) required the Church to provide a support system to help them through the inevitable personal adjustments and challenges they encountered in living and working in new, unfamiliar cultures. This led to the development of a policy where the Church began assigning experienced, married couples to leave their home congregations and become expatriates to live abroad to become *CEOs* of missions and care for the young missionaries assigned to their specific mission (Britsch, 2012). These experienced couples were typically older empty nest couples or more established families with pre-college-age children, where a father was called for three years to lead and preside over a single mission as a *mission president* (Britsch, 2012). A distinctive feature of the Familial Era was that, unlike the time of the Sacrificial Era, the father was now expected to keep his family intact and have his wife and children accompany him (see Doss and Oberholster, 2023, *this volume*). However, in addition to caring for his own family, the father was also required to train, counsel and give spiritual support to the young and uprooted missionaries in his mission (Day, 1992). His wife was similarly expected to serve by his side with separate duties to nurture the missionaries and primarily look after their health, welfare, and safety needs (thus often being referred to by missionaries as *mission mothers*). This arrangement continues to the present day in the 407 Church missions located around the world where the Church is officially recognized (Newsroom, 2022). In alignment with the lay ministry orientation of the Church, the responsibility of a mission president,

is not a regular remunerative position, but interrupts professional employment; what financial losses accrue are part of the expected sacrifice. The family involved gives of

its time and energies without salary, though there is a modest allowance for living expenses. (Day, 1992, p. 914)

To buffer possible financial losses incurred from mission president responsibilities, a home was provided for the mission president and family to live in without cost. During most of the Familial Era, mission presidents and their families were not provided with much *on the ground support* from corporate headquarters in Utah (Britsch, 2012). They were expected to arrive, exert faith, and use personal initiative to solve challenges on their own. In many cases, mission presidents asked host country members to serve as counselors or advisers to assist with mission leadership and administration. It was not until the early 1960s that the Church began formalized pre-departure training for mission presidents and their spouses (Britsch, 2012). The post-World War II years saw an increase in nuclear families being expatriated to assist with the missionary effort of the Church, but this trend would soon extend beyond the proselyting realm and into other Church operations as well.

Labour missionaries

The worldwide membership of the Church more than tripled between the years 1900 to 1945, from 268,331 to nearly a million (979,454). Its worldwide membership continued to greatly increase into the 1950s and 1960s (Ludlow, 1992). Naturally, these new Church members required buildings for worship and communal gatherings, and in some parts of the world (especially the South Pacific) where local education systems and facilities were inadequate, their children needed to be educated as well (Anderson and Jackson, 1992). The vast majority of the need for meetinghouses and schools were in countries where skilled labor and financing were sparse. In an innovative response to this need, the Church began a different type of missionary program: the *Building Missionary Program* (Anderson and Jackson, 1992; Britsch, 2012). It did not replace the expatriate missionary effort we have heretofore described, but rather worked in tandem with it. In South Pacific countries, young men and women as well as young married couples were called to be *labor missionaries* for an assigned period, usually two years but sometimes longer. Their assignment was to learn a trade skill (e.g., carpentry, bricklaying) and to participate in constructing the needed meetinghouses and school buildings in their countries (Britsch, 2012). To lead the skill development and oversee the construction of these buildings by the labor missionaries, North American members of the Church who were experienced in the construction industry were called by the Church (not unlike mission presidents) to expatriate to countries like New Zealand, Samoa, and Tonga to supervise the training of the local labor missionaries and the construction of meetinghouses and schools by them (Anderson and Jackson, 1992).

This Church building construction program began in New Zealand with the building of the Church College of New Zealand (a boarding high-school for teenagers) and the New Zealand Temple. These buildings were constructed just outside of Hamilton, New Zealand, and a Latter-day Saint community, *Temple View*, formed around them. This became the headquarters of the building program in the South Pacific (Anderson and Jackson, 1992; Cummings, 1961). Small factories were established at Temple View that provided materials needed for construction throughout New Zealand and the South Pacific. This initiative expanded into Australia, and by 1961 the program was established in the United Kingdom and central Europe, and a few years later in Asia and Latin America (Anderson and Jackson, 1992; Cummings, 1961). As local Church members assisted in the construction of their own chapels, they built a stronger relationship with each other and an accompanying mind shift that they were “building Zion” in their homelands (Cummings, 1961).

In countries where school buildings were constructed, teachers and school administrators were required to staff them, and these too came in the form of missionaries with families, mostly from North America. Many Church members who were professional educators and school administrators were called as education missionaries to staff the schools that the labor missionaries built (Cummings, 1961). Like mission presidents, the construction specialists and the educators received no remuneration for their missionary labors, but rather received a modest living allowance and rent-free housing; rarely was the housing an upgrade (usually the opposite) from that to which they had been accustomed in their home country (Anderson and Jackson, 1992).

During the late 1950s through the mid-1960s, numerous wives and children of American contractors, school administrators, and schoolteachers found themselves living overseas, particularly in the South Pacific, within just a few months of their husbands and fathers being called to serve as missionaries (Cummings, 1961; Mendenhall, 2023). As was common in most non-Church organizations during this period, the expatriate missionaries and their families were not provided with pre-departure cross-cultural training, nor even organized in-country training. Logistical support services were basic and oftentimes rudimentary, and most expatriate families relied on more experienced expatriates as well as host country ward members to provide them with needed knowledge and support to negotiate their new and unfamiliar environment. The children of the expatriate missionaries were not provided with any predeparture social or cross-cultural adjustment training. Upon arrival, they were immediately enrolled into local public schools and were left to embed themselves into the host culture on their own. The extent of in-country formal social support mechanisms sponsored by the local congregations in the host countries included Boy Scouts, weekly organized youth activities, Sunday Schools, etc.).

Fortuitously, the Church's unique lay ministerial structure proved to be a boon for expatriate families under these conditions (Cummings, 1961; Mendenhall, 2023). In every congregation in the Church all over the world, each member was, and is today, expected to serve in a religious responsibility or *calling*. These callings can range from being the leader of the congregation, to teaching children in various age-group Sunday school classes, or to being the local meetinghouse custodian. There are scores of callings in each congregation that must be filled for the congregation to operate effectively. Expatriate parents soon after arrival were given callings that required them to meet, befriend, and immediately serve and interact with other local host country individuals in the congregation, which in turn enhanced their social adjustment in the host culture. Additionally, a support structure that exists in each congregation in the Church around the world acted as an important cross-cultural adjustment vehicle for these expatriate missionaries and their families. Every family in the Church is assigned a set of ministering brothers: two men (or an adult male and a teenager) from their congregation who have the responsibility to be aware of the family's needs and serve as the first point of contact in any type of emergency or significant need that might befall the family. All adult women are assigned ministering sisters: two women (or an adult and a teenager) from their congregation who carry the same type of responsibility as the ministering brothers, but in this case their focus is to support the needs of women. Thus, there was an institutionalized mechanism that was in place for these expatriates that encouraged the development of immediate meaningful relationships and social supports with the host country members that often – but not always – promoted cross-cultural adjustment and success in the international experience. And perhaps even more fundamentally, each local member, anywhere in the world, continues today to be strongly encouraged to assist every other

member, whether an expatriate or a local, as a brother or sister in the gospel, and even as a literal spirit child of God who presides over the great spiritual family (see the *Humankind* dimension in Figure 8.1.). As explained by superordinate goal theory, such a shared long-term goal orientation, consistently instructed and promoted throughout the Church, supports the tendency of host country members to support and assist other expatriate members (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001; Gaertner and Dovidio, 2000).

As described above, the Church's policy and common practice during the Familial Era provided for high levels of interaction with host nationals, as in most cases the Church's congregations were (and still are) integrated. The expatriates all had callings in their local congregations that required them to teach, visit, and serve host country members, and these local members had callings that required them to teach, visit, and serve the expatriates. This close-knit interaction produced cultural misunderstandings at times, but more commonly, with their shared commitment to core Church values and beliefs and as followers of Jesus Christ, this meaningful interaction resulted in mutual adaptation and, over time, growth in mutual appreciation for the strengths inherent in the cultural orientations of both parties (Mendenhall, 2023). This "all-for-one and one-for-all" congregational culture provided a built-in support system for the expatriate families that, to a great extent, compensated for their inadequate pre-departure preparation.

Emergent issues that arose from the Familial Era

During the Familial Period, challenges arose within the missionary program, both at the individual and organizational levels. As young adult, unmarried missionaries largely constituted the missionary force in the Familial Era (except for mission presidents and labor and education missionaries accompanied overseas by their families), concerns arose regarding how to help them more effectively adjust to new cultures, learn new languages, manage emotional stability and illness, adjust to missionary life itself, and to re-adjust to their home cultures upon return. It is important to note that Latter-day Saint missions are not traditional "mission trips" where young adults travel to a foreign country for a few weeks or months to provide humanitarian service and then return home. Latter-day Saint missionaries live amongst host nationals in the same neighborhoods and in similar living conditions to them. They are out and moving around daily from 10:30am until 9:30pm at night. They are naturally drawn to those who suffer – the homeless, refugees, and those who often don't fit in with society. Those who are assigned to developing world countries see things that they have never encountered before: murders, child alcoholism, gang violence, criminal behavior, poverty, child abuse, and suicide. The stress associated with Latter-day Saint missionary service is high. Incidents of anxiety, depression, and other forms of mental illness were common at one time or another for many. Essentially, missionaries were placed in a *crucible experience* that had the potential to facilitate transformational growth (Bennis and Thomas, 2002) but also could overwhelm extant intrapersonal coping mechanisms.

Beyond the aid and support that mission presidents and their wives and other missionaries personally rendered, during the Familial Era there were few resources available to missionaries in-country who wrestled with the inherent challenges of missionary life. Like most organizations, the Church does not publish statistics on early returns of expatriates, but a minority – how sizeable is open to question – could not adjust and returned home early. As might be expected, when one takes on an idealistic quest and is not able to complete it due to illness, homesickness, physical limitations, and/ or emotional challenges, it is natural to feel a deep sense of failure. This self-imposed stigmatization was common in early returnees and

difficult for them to resolve despite the best efforts of family and friends to aid them. Others stayed throughout the assignment, thus avoiding self-stigmatization, but never effectively adjusted and were less effective in their performance than those who did elect to return (Doty-Yells, 2017).

For the missionaries who did adjust to life abroad and the host culture, a common challenge was re-entry shock. After spending two years abroad with an entire focus on serving and helping others, returning home to the United States, Canada, or Great Britain was difficult on many levels. For example, missionaries often returned with health issues that needed attention, or had trouble reconciling the disparities of wealth and convenience between their home and mission country. No formal repatriation training programs existed, and families and local congregations were the sole source of support for returning missionaries. Successful readjustment was common, but varied missionary by missionary in terms of its length and the degree of stress associated with it.

Toward the end of the Familial Era, the cost of sending large numbers of families abroad on labour and education missions and overseeing construction projects from Church headquarters became untenable (Prince and Wright, 2005). In 1965 the Church began to contract with local construction companies for the building of meetinghouses and in the 1970s began employing host nationals as school teachers and school administrators to staff the Church's educational institutions (Prince and Wright, 2005). By the 1970s the Church had become a global entity with many remote congregations and administrative arms that increasingly required more sophisticated organizational structuring to oversee and control its operations (Prince and Wright, 2005). Various types of organizational designs were implemented and then adjusted to manage the Church's growth, taking it into a new era, one that we label, the *Multinational Era*.

The Multinational Era, 1970–Present

Although it held a global perspective from the start, in the 1970s the Church began to increasingly organize itself in ways similar to that of multinational corporations (MNCs) in terms of structure, strategy, and administration, with attendant effects on its expatriation strategy.

International mission

With increasing awareness and concern for the needs of professional expatriates residing outside of areas where the Church had local congregations and support services, the Church established an *International Mission* in 1973 (Brockbank, 1973; Hunter, 1974). Prior to this era, the nearest mission president typically took care of expatriate Latter-day Saint individuals or lone expatriate families scattered abroad. For example, prior to the formation of the International Mission, the president of the Swiss Mission was responsible for individual expatriate members in unincorporated Europe (i.e., members without a Church unit), North Africa, and the Middle East. The International Mission functioned for a decade before being supplanted in 1984 by *Areas*, or Church administrative geographic regions organized in the U.S. and throughout the world. There now are 22 of these geographic Areas, seven in North America and 15 throughout the rest of the world. Each Area is led by three-person officially authorized Area Presidencies, typically consisting of men who are full-time global Church leaders called *general authorities* and beneath them in the organizational structure, *area authorities*, as well as regional lay priesthood leaders serving in the Church

part-time (i.e., while still maintaining their regular employment). These Area Presidency leaders administer the local and regional spiritual affairs of the Church, as well as coordinate Church-wide initiatives and programs (Area Presidencies, 2022).

It should be noted that several North America Area Presidency members with their families are non-U.S. expatriates, called as Church general authorities and living in the U.S. in Salt Lake City, Utah where the Church headquarters is based. These experienced individuals tend to remain at headquarters until they retire with emeritus status. To a significant degree, these individuals are selected for their expertise and diverse geographic and global perspectives that help broaden home country leadership perspectives for enhanced decision-making (Gertsen and Söderberg, 2012; Vance and Ensher, 2002). Leadership staffing in these Area Presidencies is consistent with a modern transnational MNC competitive strategy, where to a great extent leadership talent is recruited globally without concern for national passport (Collings and Scullion, 2009).

Members of the 15 Area Presidencies outside of North America typically live in an area headquarters city with their families and within the designated boundaries of the multiple-country area (except for the Middle East/Africa North Area, which is administered from Church headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah). These presidencies typically are composed of one or more leaders from one of the countries within the area or region. For example, currently the Philippines Area, has a president that is Fijian, and one assistant (called a *counselor*) is a Korean, while the other assistant is an American (Area Presidencies, 2022). In some Areas of a relatively small geographic region with multiple countries represented, such as in Europe, some Area Presidency members may live with their families in a nearby country and regularly commute to the Area headquarters (Mäkelä, Sarenpää and McNulty, 2017). Besides attending to other Church-related administrative duties, such as youth religious education and social and humanitarian services, these Area Presidencies take care of the individual worship and ecclesiastical needs of professional expatriates in locations with few or no local members, and who desire to form small Church units or groups for fellowship and support.

Full-time administrative expatriates

In addition to the International Mission, the Church has several paid non-ecclesiastical professional expatriates in senior leadership roles from the U.S. and other countries undertaking three to six-year foreign assignments, who deal with various technical and business needs and professional specialization functions within the 15 designated geographic areas outside of North America. They are employed to manage legal, financial, project management, humanitarian, educational, and other types of temporal needs of the Church in those areas. As with more conventional MNC expatriates, a major goal of these senior expatriates, often in semi-retirement from their home country career, is to provide training and development for local member professionals to eventually take over the reins of local professional leadership in technical and functional areas. These senior leadership expatriates, whose work is often coordinated with the more ecclesiastical efforts of the Area Presidencies, also typically reside with a spouse and their children in the same city as the Area Presidency headquarters. Unlike the challenging predicament of the traditional MNC expatriate's trailing spouse who faces unemployment and identity issues (McNulty, 2012), these often serve in tandem with their spouses, or are involved in separate assignments involving various types of pastoral, charitable or administrative work.

Increase in women missionaries

Perhaps the greatest change in active involvement of women as expatriate missionaries has come since the fall of 2012, when the accepted minimum age for single young women to serve as missionaries was lowered from 21 to 19. Since that time, there has been a huge increase in the representation of young women among the young Latter-day Saint missionaries serving throughout the world, more than doubling from approximately 12 to 26 per cent (Newsroom, 2019). The dramatic increase in young women's participation as expatriate missionaries, who will acquire significant and transformative international experiences and which will facilitate the development of inclusive global leadership competencies (Vance, 2005), is likely to have a positive impact on the future of the global Church as a whole, as well as on the lives and world views of future children in the families of these (then former) expatriate women missionaries.

Formal mission training

Today, there are 10 missionary training centers (MTCs) around the world dedicated to preparing single male (ages 18-25) and single female expatriate missionaries (ages 19 and older – there is no upper age limit for single women who desire to volunteer) to serve in over 400 missions. Senior couple missionaries (see the next section in the Chapter) also attend the MTCs. Training occurs over three to six weeks – three weeks for missionaries that are already language fluent and longer for others (Newsroom, 2022). The most prominent MTC is adjacent to Brigham Young University in Utah, while smaller MTCs are located in São Paulo, Brazil, Bogotá, Colombia, Preston, England, Accra, Ghana, Mexico City, Mexico, Auckland, New Zealand, Lima, Peru, Manila, Philippines and Johannesburg, South Africa. These MTCs are typically staffed and led by headquarters (US) expatriates, host country nationals, third country national male leaders and their wives, and other expatriate specialized personnel (Newsroom, 2022).

Humanitarian outreach

Although the primary emphasis for expatriate missionaries today is upon the core purpose of following Jesus' injunction to "preach the gospel to all creation," increasingly Latter-day Saint expatriate missionaries are also expected to perform regular charitable service for Church members and non-members alike, following the broader proselytization admonition often attributed to St. Francis of Assisi: "Preach the gospel always, and sometimes use words" (Galli, 2009). Although non-proselyting voluntary service expatriate missionaries were found in the previous Familial Era (e.g., in construction and education), they are increasingly found today providing voluntary assistance in a variety of areas including social services, medical and health care, education, agriculture advisement, and infrastructure development (Newsroom, 2022).

Senior couple missionaries

A growing number of current expatriate missionaries, now about eight percent of the total missionary cadre, are married couples of retirement age – *empty nesters* without child-rearing responsibilities. The husband and wife are considered *co-equal* in their expatriate duties. These senior couples serve for six to 24 months, work in local Church leadership development and youth engagement, and provide administrative support functions by fulfilling specific assignments given by local Church unit leaders and mission presidents.

Others may work in global humanitarian assignments related to such needs as vision care, newborn education and care, immunization, and refugee services throughout the world, with Church-sponsored charitable organizations such as LDS Charities and the Latter-day Saint Humanitarian Center (Newsroom, 2022). These senior couples are part of the wider trend of senior expatriate volunteers from Western countries who are providing a wide variety of volunteer and full-time services, in their home country and abroad, to nonprofit and charitable organizations that take advantage of their maturity, experience, and professional training (Einolf, 2009; Myers, Inkson, and Pringle, 2017; Toossi, 2012, 2006).

Emergent issues arising in the Multinational Era

The leaders of the Church would likely be the first to admit that the expatriation element of the Church's organizational structure rarely runs smoothly, due to human error and the fact that the expatriates that are sent abroad are mostly quite young (between 18 to 24 years of age), and thus are prone to making mistakes, errors in judgment, and cross-cultural adjustment challenges (Doty-Yells, 2017; Gull, 2017; West, 2018). However, despite the challenges, the Church now is able to efficiently handle the weekly entry and re-entry of cadres of new and returning expatriates, and daily maintains an overall expatriate force of 54,539 missionaries that require support, housing, health care, transportation, training, and leadership. That said, the nature of mission life and its inherent challenges has not appreciably changed from what we described in the Familial Era; though spiritually rewarding, it is difficult, challenging, and can at times be dangerous to be an expatriate missionary. This is a challenge that will never go away, no matter the era (Stack, 2017).

In the Multinational Era, especially in the past 15 years, the Church has responded to these challenges in a variety of ways. For example, mission regions have physicians assigned to them who are able to consult with missionaries who have medical and emotional issues and who can provide immediate guidance to mission presidents. A resource initiative, *Adjusting to Missionary Life* (2013), based on proven clinical psychological practices such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, was established in 2013 to assist missionaries to understand how stress affects their physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual well-being, and to learn how to apply efficacious cognitive and behavioral techniques to manage stress and its various manifestations.

Advances in affordable communication technology has enabled missionaries to have weekly video conference calls with their families, which provides them with encouragement and to remain emotionally close while overseas. Before the technological advances of the 2000s, the only way to affordably communicate with family members in the home culture was via letter writing. Heightened communication with family in the home country has had a positive impact on the majority of expatriate missionaries compared to the restricted contact in the Sacrificial and Familial Eras. Despite these efforts, a minority of missionaries continue to return early from their mission assignments. Most Latter-day Saints know someone from their ward or extended family who returned early due to illness, emotional struggles, physical injury, or for other reasons. Though Church leaders strongly teach that early returnees are to be welcomed, appreciated, and honored, early return is still often accompanied by an internal feeling of failure and discouragement on the part of the missionary (Doty-Yells, 2017). Dealing with not being able to finish a missionary assignment – an assignment that the missionary often looked forward to from early childhood – is a difficult challenge. In contrast to the Familial Era, policies for early returning missionaries are now more flexible in nature; for example, early returnees are able to be assigned to serve locally in situations that best fit

their circumstances. In other words, they may continue their mission in their home country and complete it there, however, the nature of their service in terms of their daily assigned tasks is usually different than those they were assigned abroad. This custom-designed missionary service has the goal to buffer feelings of failure by allowing early returnees to finish their missionary assignments and to give them a sense of emotional and spiritual completion.

Future Research Agenda

In this Chapter, we have reviewed the historical case of Latter-day Saint missionary expatriation since the founding of the Church in 1830, and we have done so within the context of a multi-dimensional concept of family that emanates from core doctrine of the Church, delineating expatriation policy eras and their associated practices. In this section, we explore areas for future research for global mobility, religious studies, and other scholars, which we believe will aid in developing a better understanding of the dynamics and processes associated with religious expatriation for families.

Efficacy of local support for religious expatriate family success

The importance of the role of the local host country congregation members in supporting the adjustment and success of missionary expatriate family members seems to be an under-researched variable in the missiology literature. Recent work in the international management field has demonstrated the valuable role and influence of local host country nationals, whether within the expatriate's organization or within the local environment, in enhancing such aspects as international adjustment and the development of intercultural competence and social capital (van Bakel et al., 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017). These findings align with our review; namely, that host country nationals can be a vital aid to religious missionary success. But we feel that this variable should be investigated for its effect on all expatriate family members.

Little is known about the actual dynamics that undergird this phenomenon. For example, what variables dampen inclination to offer aid and assistance to expatriate missionaries and their family members vs. what variables facilitate it? A variety of possibilities come to mind for the former, such as condescending behavior, lack of cultural empathy, divergent goals, negative past experience with expatriate missionaries, low delegation of power by the expatriate, and so on. In terms of facilitation, possible variables include possession of expertise that host nationals desire to acquire, exhibition of respect on the part of expatriate family members – including children – for the host culture and for host nationals, ability to speak the local language, degree of cultural distance between the expatriate family's home culture and the local culture, and sharing a superordinate goal. A more nuanced understanding of these dynamics would allow religious organizations to better select and place missionaries and their families and align their talents to specific congregational milieus.

Content and sequence of pre-departure training

The Church's pre-departure training currently focuses almost exclusively on language acquisition. Little time is spent on educating Latter-day Saint missionaries on the history, anthropology, government, geography, or economics of the country of assignment. Mission presidents and their spouses are jointly trained before departure for six months or longer via

numerous conference calls, online, reading assignments, distance mentoring, and a pre-departure face-to-face training seminar. The training focus is primarily on spiritual, leadership, and administrative facets of their responsibilities with history, anthropology, government, geography or economics of the country of assignment being limited in nature. Children of mission presidents and their spouses do not receive specialized training from the Church before moving abroad.

Being able to translate such knowledge into interpersonal/ relationship development strategies to bond with host nationals is yet another layer of cognitive sophistication, alternatively labelled by scholars as cultural intelligence (Earley and Mosakowski, 2004), global competency (Bird, et. al., 2010), and global mindset (Levy, et. al., 2007). The time available for pre-departure training, for all types of religious organizations is likely limited, and thus trade-offs are inevitable in terms of what content will be privileged in training program design. It is our belief that more of this type of content (e.g., cultural intelligence, historical, anthropological) needs to be included in pre-departure training for Latter-day Saint missionaries. A second concern, however, is that research in the area of pre-departure cross-cultural training is mixed – sometimes it is effective, sometimes it isn't (Mendenhall et. al., 2004). Mixed findings always point to a complexity in processes that operate beneath the surface of a phenomenon. Thus, more research needs to be done to determine the breadth and depth of content that is relevant for pre-departure training. For example, it may be that intensive education on cultural/ historical/ political dynamics of the host country can reach a threshold beyond which it yields diminishing returns. That is, it may be that until one actually has direct experience living and working in the host country, the knowledge that exceeds basic, introductory levels cannot be fully comprehended and internalized by trainees. More insight about the nature and degree of cultural content and its sequencing in training for expatriate missionaries and their families and how it combines best with language acquisition needs to be investigated. It may be that some levels of content are best learned pre-departure and other levels while in-country, which leads to the next proposed avenue of research: in-country developmental processes.

In-country developmental processes

Previous research has argued that in-country training is supportive to the enhancement of expatriate adjustment and global leadership skill development (Mendenhall, 2001; Mendenhall and Stahl, 2000; Tarique and Caligiuri, 2009); more specifically, in-country training that is experiential/ immersive vs. pedagogical in nature is superior for the development of intercultural competencies (Caligiuri and Thoroughgood, 2015; Pless, Maak and Stahl, 2011; Oddou and Mendenhall, 2018; Pless, et. al., 2011). It would seem that the majority of religious missionaries and their families of all denominations are placed in conditions that qualify as experiential/ immersive in nature, and thus would be prime candidates to gain a better understanding of how on-going experiences in an immersive new cultural context generate the development of intercultural skills necessary for effective leadership in the global context. Yet, this population of expatriates has been largely overlooked by organizational behavior and religious studies scholars.

Of primary interest is discovering what variables significantly influence successful intercultural competency development in experiential/ immersion contexts – *crucible contexts* – and which variables dampen such acquisition. From our review of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their families, it is clear that some find the immersive context overwhelming and return early – more common albeit to young unaccompanied expatriates than family

expatriation; thus, a question arises: what variables/ factors differentiate them from those who adjust and thrive overseas? Is it entirely personality based, or a factor of age and life experience? Or, does the nature of the local Church *surrogate family* social support context in the first two months overseas have non-proportional, long-term outcomes on effectiveness? That is, if a missionary happens to find herself in the first two months in-country in a context where others are kind, competent, coaching-oriented, and maternalistic/paternalistic, does that influence exceed personality orientation or interact with it in unique ways? Also, does incurring a lingering physical illness in the first two months in-country negatively impact being able to learn coping skills that are necessary to manage emotions and adjust to the culture? Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, to what degree does family support from the home country play in thriving overseas? Is family support a key adjustment factor that increases coping and acculturation? At present, scholars have not investigated the nature of support from family members in the home country with in-country adjustment. Also, as we reviewed earlier, recently the Church has deployed various resources to aid the adjustment of expatriate missionaries (e.g., increased video calls to family in the home country, cognitive-behavior therapy-based tactics to reduce stress and aid adjustment, etc). Research into the effectiveness of these approaches would be beneficial to both the Church and future missionary families. Knowing the relationships between such variables would allow for a more strategic placement of missionaries in their first location during their international missionary assignment, and perhaps lead to fewer early returns.

The role of religious expatriates in influencing shifts in local Church culture

In our review, we illustrate that the Church spends significant effort and resources to harmonize and standardize policies, practices, and structures throughout all congregations in all countries to develop a global organizational identity, ideology, and set of priorities and values. Doing so serves to enhance alignment, information flow, agility, and versatility in more successfully planning and implementing its strategies, operations, and initiatives (Chow and Liu, 2009; Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000). In this respect, the Church is highly centralized and goes to great lengths to ensure that whenever someone or their family walks into one of its congregations anywhere in the world, the visitor(s) will experience the same type of worship experience. That said, any indigenous and local cultural practice, set of norms, or tradition that does not conflict with core Church values and beliefs is celebrated and reinforced in the social life of the ward (Rutherford, 2016). Obviously, it is a balance that can be difficult to maintain, but that is ultimately the *North Star* around which performance and quality of organizational life is assessed. Conversely, other religious organizations are more fluid in their culture, and allow local congregations' autonomy to privilege certain beliefs, mores, and practices over others. In these denominations, attending a worship service in Perth, Australia one week and attending a worship service the next week in Bangkok, Thailand may constitute two very different types of worship experiences.

Expatriate missionaries and their families, especially mission presidents, are often sent for command and control (Kobrin, 1988) as well as for pastoral and ministerial purposes; that is, to some extent they are there to ensure that primary beliefs and practices remain at the forefront of worship and in the collective belief system of the local congregation. Little is known, however about how expatriate missionaries and their families influence the evolution and shaping of local belief and worship dynamics. While much work has been done on syncretism via historical, sociological, anthropological, and philosophical analyses (Leopold and Jensen, 2004), and some work exists on the role host national converts play in shaping local religious cultures (Rutherford, 2016), drilling down to better understand how the

individual expatriate missionary and their family influences consistency of practice or the altering of existing practice is an under-researched area in the field.

In many ways, this may be the most important dimension that expatriate missionaries and their families operate within and much of the influence they convey may not be consciously done by them. Simply by enacting behaviors and communicating beliefs and opinions that reflect their individual interpretations of doctrine and worship, in natural ways without intentional strategizing on their part, likely has more powerful influence effects at the grass-roots level on denominational change than would seem so on the surface. Social learning theory may provide a useful framework for studying how expatriate missionaries and their families both consciously and subconsciously influence the privileging of either orthodox practices or emergent, syncretic practices in both the congregational community and within host national parishioners' private lives.

The need for a typology of religious expatriates

Finally, focusing on the familial nature of expatriation leads us to highlight a problem that the expatriate literature has suffered for many years due to a lack of clarity regarding the operationalization of the construct *expatriate* (McNulty and Brewster, 2017). There was an unspoken assumption by scholars that an expatriate meant the same thing to everyone, i.e., an expatriate was *any* individual who lived in a different country other than their country of birth or citizenship. Scholars wound up populating their samples with expatriates that diverged from each other on a wide variety of variables. Upon reviewing the expatriate literature, McNulty and Brewster (2017) concluded, "There has been a sloppy and almost casual use of terminology, a failure to define terms adequately, or in many cases at all, and too many unstated assumptions about the people being researched that, collectively, has resulted in reducing understanding of the meanings of 'expatriate.'" (pp. 27-28).

As noted by Reiche, Lee and Allen (2019, pp. 360-361), "Without a clear and comprehensive construct definition, scholars may lump together qualitatively different forms of" expatriate experiences, which in turn winds up "disguising important differences in the individual experience and organizational management" associated with global mobility. This state of affairs caused findings to be conflated, and made it difficult to generalize findings with specificity. It is difficult for a research field to productively evolve when this problem persists (Pfeffer, 1993; Reiche et al., 2017). The research domain of religious expatriates appears to suffer from the same problem.

It is likely that religious expatriates differ significantly from other types of expatriates on variables such as motivation to go abroad, purpose of the overseas assignment, nature of performance assessment, degree of interaction with host nationals, and no doubt many others. Religious expatriates can, and should, be differentiated not only from other types of expatriates but even amongst each other using cogent variables such as age, accompanied-status, length of stay, roles, denomination, degree of remuneration and other financial support, past experience abroad, and so on. The creation of a typology or some other type of conceptual framework seems necessary to act as a useful heuristic for scholars studying religious expatriation, as it would enable a delineation of the nature of the samples of religious expatriates with specificity, thus allowing other scholars to be able to transparently ascertain the extent of generalizability of these studies' findings. In addition, it would benefit religious organizations to confidently ascertain which research studies to draw from to inform their global mobility practices and policies (Reiche, et al., 2019). The lack of a typology or

conceptual framework is perhaps the most important gap in the field of religious expatriation at present. For examples of such configurations, see McNulty and Brewster (2017) and Reiche et al. (2017).

Conclusion

In this Chapter, we have provided a broad historical overview of the evolution of expatriate policy in a religious organization and its influence on the families of its expatriate missionaries and the influence of the family on its unmarried expatriates' in-country adjustment. As stated above, we believe our analysis points to future streams of expatriate research that has largely gone unnoticed when investigating expatriation that takes place in business and governmental contexts, and in some cases, in the missiology literature as well. In addition to the previous areas we have discussed above, the Church's practice of allowing empty nesters to accept expatriate assignments in order to make use of their life experience and professional training to strengthen local congregations may hold useful implications for organizations in other industries. Creative application of this concept in the for-profit sector may hold the potential to suggest possible solutions to the war on talent and or aging workforce challenges in society and in the workplace.

In studying the various responses the Church has made to the emergent challenges it faced at different time periods regarding its expatriates, we have gained a deeper appreciation of the inherent difficulty in meeting expatriates' needs through policy creation. Even the most well-intentioned and carefully crafted policies do not seem to be able to prevent adversity or trigger timely healing interventions for all of an organization's expatriates. To date, the expatriation literature has largely taken organizations to task for failing to prepare, train, and support families and individuals who live and work abroad. While this focus is critical, nevertheless, it seems increasingly clear to us that enlightened organizational policy toward expatriation is a necessary, but insufficient component to expatriate productivity.

Perhaps it might be fruitful for global mobility scholars to consider venturing out to explore the *whitespaces* that exist between HR policy and programs and strategies and the lived reality of their expatriates. We are not entirely sure what these whitespaces are in any rich detail to formulate exactly how they should be addressed by scholars. But we sense that this may be where the real Goliaths lay in the lived expatriate experience. As we have considered what our own whitespaces might have been – and are – as expatriates, it seems they have to do with, in part, feeling oneself as *other* – either from external input or from one's self-realization of being separate on a variety of dimensions – and then, turning one's will to choose over and over again to fight to integrate and *complexify* one's sense of self to allow for new, hard-won wisdom to feel welcome and natural within us. It is a Sisyphean process that is more sweet than bitter for us, but we have observed that it has had the opposite effect on some whom we have known. That is only a part of the whitespaces of expatriation, only one illustration. To date, empirically minded social scientists have tended to shy away from exploring such processes; perhaps it is time we pay more attention to them.

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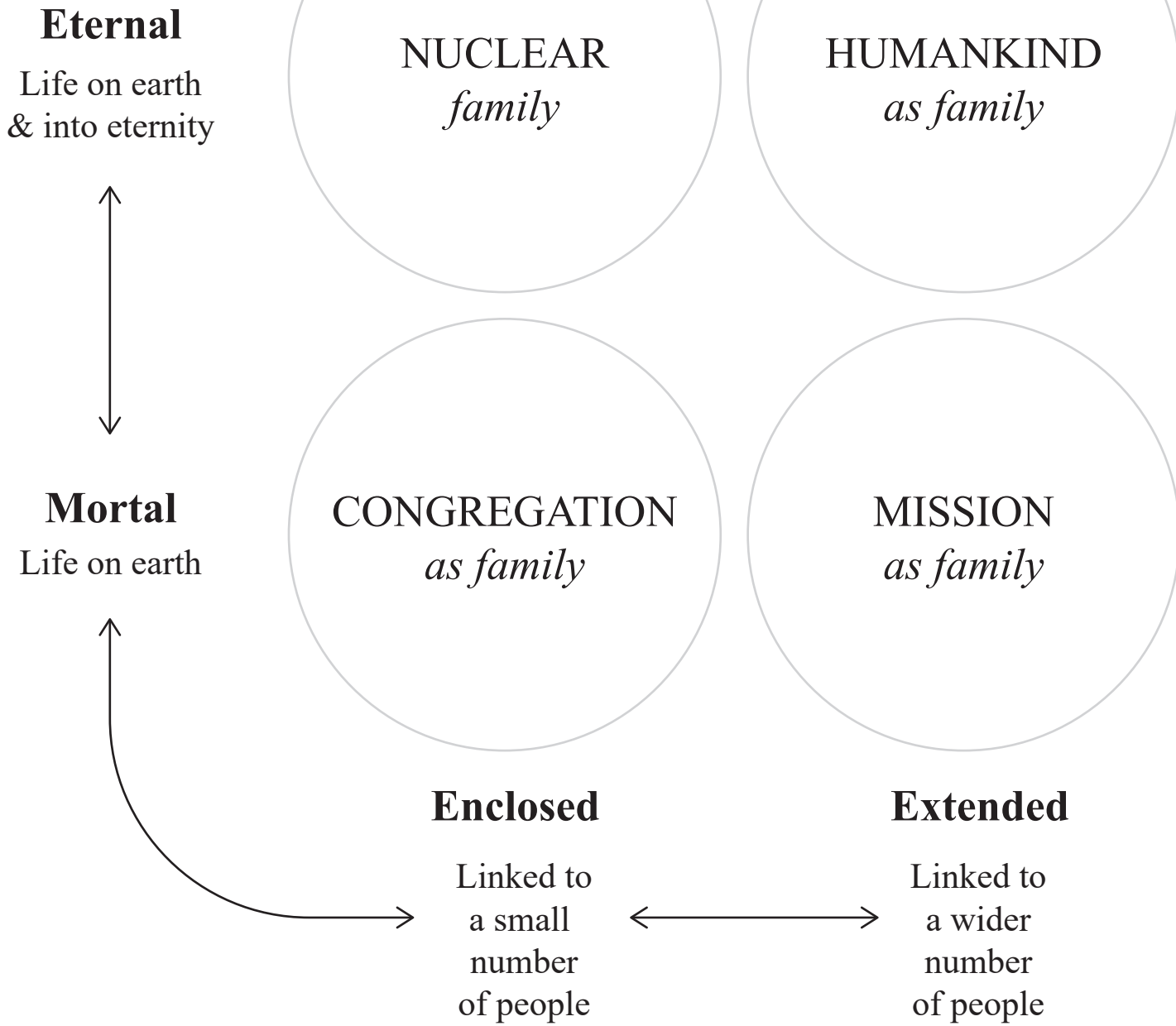
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SACRIFICIAL ERA

1837 - 1945



1837

Only married men as missionaries; spouses and children provide for themselves in absence of husband and father

1880s

Extended to single men as missionaries

1898

Extended to single women as missionaries

FAMILIAL ERA

1945 - 1970



1945

Predominantly single men and women (approximately 19 to 21 years of age) as missionaries

Some married couples as mission leaders, and their families; education missionaries; construction/labour missionaries

MULTINATIONAL ERA

1970 - Present



1970-2011

Predominantly single men (19 to 25yo) and single women (21 years and older).

Some senior couple missionaries (empty nesters), fulltime administrative expatriates and humanitarian missionaries

1973-1983

International Mission

1984

Area Presidencies

2012 - Present

Predominantly single men (18 to 25yo) and single women (19yo and older, with no upper age limit)