

The Dynamics of LDS Growth in Guatemala, 1948-1998

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THE U.S.-BASED CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS is rapidly becoming a worldwide church, particularly since the 1950s. One major reason for this is the church's ambitious evangelization program: In 2000 it had 60,000 volunteer missionaries between 19 and 23 years old, who proselytized for 1.5 or 2 years in 168 countries all over the world.¹ However, the LDS church is more typically a Western Hemisphere church. Although it claimed over ten million members by year-end 1997, one-half lived in the United States, and a full one-third were Latin Americans.² In Latin America, the Mormon church is considered neither a strange cult with a tiny membership (as in Europe), nor a major mainstream church (as in the United States). Latin America is increasingly the place where church leaders face the challenge of defining what a world church, or a world religion, actually stands for. Understanding the dynamics of LDS growth in Central and South America is thus an important task both for church leaders and for social scientists.

¹*Salt Lake Tribune*, January 15, 2000. See also Gordon Shepherd and Gary Shepherd, "Membership Growth, Church Activity, and Missionary Recruitment," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 29, no. 1 (1996): 39; and Joseph T. Hepworth, "A Causal Analysis of Missionary and Membership Growth in The Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter-day Saints (1830-1995)," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 38, no. 1 (1999): 59-71.

²*Church Almanac 1999-2000* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1998), 544, 547-549.

In Latin America the church is currently strongest in Chile, Uruguay, Guatemala (and Central America as a whole),³ and in the Andean countries of Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia,⁴ where between one and over three percent (in Chile) of the population has been baptized into the church. Between 1995 and 1997, the LDS church in Latin America had its highest average annual growth rates in Paraguay (24 percent), Nicaragua (18 percent), Honduras (12 percent), El Salvador (10 percent), and Panama (11 percent). On the other hand, the 1995-97 average annual growth rate for Uruguay and Mexico was only about 3.5 percent, and for Guatemala, 5 percent.⁵ In the Central American countries, Guatemala has the highest proportion of Mormons: 1.3 percent of its population. In order to shed light on the dynamics of Mormon membership in Latin America, this paper will identify and analyze LDS growth periods specifically in Guatemala.

PATTERNS OF LDS GROWTH IN GUATEMALA

In an earlier article,⁶ I have identified five periods of LDS growth in Guatemala, which can be distinguished by their drastic differences in growth rates. There are several factors, both internal and external, which, in general, help account for these variations in rates. In this essay, I offer a more detailed analysis of each of the five periods, and I will attempt to specify the differential factors most important in each period. There is one constant factor: LDS history in Guatemala has unfolded in a social and political context of anomie almost from the beginning, which has sometimes helped and sometimes hindered LDS growth.

The information presented here is based on two first-hand empirical studies. The first is my Ph.D. study of small-scale entrepreneurs of various churches (Roman-Catholic, Pentecostal, Neo-Pentecostal, and Mormon) in and around a low-income neighborhood of Guatemala City, called La Florida.⁷ The central question in that study was: How does a

³See Henri Gooren ("Analyzing LDS Growth in Guatemala: Report from a Barrio," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 33, no. 2 (2000): 97-115) for a shorter analysis of LDS growth in Latin America, based on slices of life from members in Guatemala.

⁴See Table 1. The numbers suggest that Rodney Stark is wrong, or at best only partly right, when claiming that "Mormons are strongest in the most, not the least, modernized nations of Latin America" ("Modernization, Secularization, and Mormon Success" in Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony, eds., *In Gods we Trust*, 2nd ed. [New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1990], 212).

⁵*Church Almanac* (1998), 307, 309. The 1995-97 growth percentages are calculated by comparing the statistics from *Church Almanac* (1996, 1998). See also Table 1.

⁶Gooren, "Analyzing LDS Growth," 102-107.

⁷Henri Gooren, *Rich among the Poor: Church, Firm, and Household among Small-scale Entrepreneurs in Guatemala City* (Amsterdam: Thela, 1999).

person's membership in a particular household and church help or limit the operation of a small firm? The fieldwork was conducted from 1993 to 1995 and consisted of participant observation in churches and enterprises, open-ended interviews with church members, tape-recorded life history interviews with entrepreneurs from three churches (Roman Catholics, Neo-Pentecostals, and Mormons), and a review of the literature. The second source of information is my master's study of the growth dynamics and problems facing an LDS ward in San José, Costa Rica.⁸ This fieldwork took place in 1990 in the residential area of Los Yoses, east of the center of San José. It consisted of participant-observation during various types of church meetings and many informal interviews with members, leaders, and missionaries.

Extensive Mormon membership statistics for Guatemala are presented here (see Table 2). Calculated over the entire 1949-98 period, the average annual growth rate (AAGR) of the LDS church in Guatemala is almost 20 percent. However, there have been heavy fluctuations. In general, five main LDS growth periods have occurred in Guatemala since 1949.⁹

- 1) 1949-56: High Growth (AAGR around 27 percent)
- 2) 1956-67: Boom Years (AAGR around 42 percent)
- 3) 1967-78: Stagnation (AAGR around 1 percent)
- 4) 1978-90: High Growth (AAGR around 20 percent)
- 5) 1990-98: Very Low Growth (AAGR around 3.5 percent)

The chronology of LDS growth in Guatemala will be analyzed here using a framework which I have presented before in this journal (see Figure 1).¹⁰ This framework outlines the external and internal factors for church growth in Guatemala, taking into account both religious and non-religious elements.

⁸Henri Gooren, *De expanderende mormoonse kerk in Latijns Amerika: Schetsen uit een wijk in San José, Costa Rica* ["The Expanding Mormon Church in Latin America: Sketches from a Ward in San José, Costa Rica"] (master's thesis, Utrecht University, 1991).

⁹I have left out the years 1948-49, when the LDS church went from 1 to 48 members, thus attaining an average annual growth rate of 1100 percent. See John Forres O'Donnal, *Pioneer in Guatemala: The Personal History of John Forres O'Donnal, including the History of the Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter-day Saints in Guatemala* (Yorba Linda, Calif.: Shumway Family History Services, 1997), 66-67.

¹⁰See Gooren, "Analyzing LDS Growth," 102, and Henri Gooren, "Reconsidering Protestant Growth in Guatemala, 1900-1995," *Holy Saints and Fiery Preachers: The Anthropology of Protestantism in Mexico and Central America*, James W. Dow and Alan R. Sandstrom, eds. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood/Praeger Press, 2001), 169-203.

	(I) Internal Factors	(II) External Factors
Religious	Appeal of the doctrine	Dissatisfaction w/Roman Catholic Church
	Missionary activities	Competition w/Protestants and RCC
Non-Religious	Appeal of organization	Economic and social anomie
	Natural growth/retention	Urbanization process

Figure 1. Analytical Framework for Understanding LDS Church Growth in Guatemala.

PERIOD 1, 1949-56: HIGH GROWTH

By year-end 1949, after the LDS church had been in Guatemala for over one year, there were 48 baptized members.¹¹ Seven years later, the number was more than five times greater: 250. The average annual growth rate for the entire 1949-56 period was about 27 percent, ranging from around 25 percent between 1952-56, to over 32 percent in 1950.

During this time, the LDS church in Guatemala shared with the beginning Protestant churches a distinctly foreign (North American) origin, and a Christian doctrine and ethic which was very different from that of Roman Catholicism. The mission program was still in its early stages: The LDS Central America Mission was not officially founded until 1952. In that year, there were only twelve full-time missionaries,¹² who were mainly working in Guatemala City and other major cities. Investigators who were interested in joining the church had discussions with the elders for several months before their baptism. The appeal of the church as a social organization was limited, since there were very few Guatemalan members. Those who joined the church were often dissatisfied Catholics, but there was little competition between the LDS church and the Roman Catholic Church (and probably even less with the emerging Protestant churches).

Politically and socially, Guatemala was in turmoil. After a unique decade of democratic reforms (President Arévalo, 1945-50), the Arbenz government (1950-54) was deposed by a CIA-sponsored military invasion and coup. As part of their struggle against "world communism," the military took over the government; they would remain in control for almost thirty years. During this time, trade unions and peasant movements were ruthlessly repressed by jailing or killing their leaders and rank-and-file members. However, the visa restrictions imposed by the former Arbenz

¹¹O'Donnal, *Pioneer in Guatemala*, 66-67.

¹²Terrence L. Hansen, "The Church in Central America," *Ensign* (September 1972): 41.

government on all foreign missionaries were abolished, and both Mormons and Protestants benefited from the new rules. In short, small, initial LDS membership figures led to high average annual growth rates, based largely on dissatisfied urban Catholics who felt attracted to a North American church with young North American missionaries.

PERIOD 2, 1956-1967: EARLY BOOM

By 1956, the church had been present in Guatemala for nine years, and the total number of baptized members was only 250 (see Table 2). Then, something remarkable happened: By year-end 1966, there were almost 10,000 baptized members, meaning that the average annual growth rate for 1956-67 was an astonishing 42 percent.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Catholic Action movement sponsored a return to orthodoxy which caused severe clashes with indigenous religious leaders, particularly those in the predominantly Indian western highlands. Religious competition in Guatemala was beginning, and both Protestants and Mormons benefited from dissatisfied Catholics who were increasingly open to experimenting with something new. Among Protestants, the Pentecostal churches began an early boom, especially the Assemblies of God and the local Prince of Peace Church. Jehovah's Witnesses (already present since 1920) and Latter-day Saints also saw high growth rates. The number of LDS missionaries steadily increased, and after 1955, they were much better prepared for their proselytising.¹³ At that time, the LDS church thoroughly revised its worldwide mission program, requiring missionaries to use standardized "lessons" (now called discussions, six of them) to teach investigators all over the world the same basic principles of Mormonism. There was more emphasis on Mormon theology and on the rejection of the status quo in the mainstream Christian churches (i.e., both Catholic and Protestant). In short, the Mormons were working on improving their unique assets in the religious market.

The late 1950s saw a violent repression of left-wing political sectors and of open conflicts within the Guatemalan military. In 1960, the first guerrilla movements were formed by reform-oriented army officers and soldiers. High economic growth rates in the late 1950s and early 1960s only slowly reduced poverty, although inflation rates were also very low. Meanwhile, the urbanization process was in full swing: Guatemala City grew by an average annual rate of about 7 percent in 1950-64.¹⁴ For the Mormons, these new city dwellers formed an easily accessible reservoir

¹³See e.g., Mark L. Grover, "Mormonism in Brazil" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1985), 129, for a similar process in Brazil.

¹⁴Gisela Gellert and J.C. Pinto S., *Ciudad de Guatemala: Dos estudios sobre su evolución urbana (1524-1950)*, (Guatemala City: Universidad de San Carlos, 1992), 32.

for recruitment,¹⁵ and there were more and more well-prepared missionaries to contact them. The future for Mormonism in Guatemala looked bright in 1965-66.

PERIOD 3, 1967-1978: STAGNATION

On December 31, 1966, the LDS church claimed almost 10,000 baptized members in Guatemala; ten years later, that number had grown to only 14,260. Meanwhile, Guatemala City, which included six wards, became the first Central American stake in May 1967.¹⁶ Yet the average annual growth rate for 1967-78 was only 1 percent, compared to 42 percent for 1956-67. The Mormons' AAGR, in fact, fluctuated wildly from 1.5 percent in 1967, to 8 percent in 1968, 17 percent in 1969, and only 4.5 percent in 1970-72. The trend is unmistakable: Growth was low in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with an historical low reached in 1972: -12 percent. There was some improvement in 1973 (5 percent), but then another negative rate followed for 1974: -7 percent. Moderate positive and negative rates kept alternating in 1975 (6 percent), 1976 (-2.4 percent), and 1977 (2.2 percent), but essentially, church growth in Guatemala was stagnating between 1970 and 1978.

What were the causes of this stagnation? The church was still an alien element in the Guatemalan context. Competition with Protestant churches gradually became more intense. Some Pentecostal churches, like the Assemblies of God and Prince of Peace, were experiencing a membership boom (see Table 3), and were in the process of cutting the ties with their mother churches in the United States; Guatemalans were taking over important leadership positions. In the LDS church, however, all stake presidents were North Americans,¹⁷ as were many bishops. Although the mission program was further professionalized in the 1960s, it took some time until the positive effects of this (in the form of faster membership growth) became visible. The same goes for the increase in the size of the missionary force. The appeal of LDS doctrine and organization to dissatisfied Catholics was low, possibly because Protestantism offered a more Guatemalan religious alternative to many at this time.¹⁸ Protestant churches had local, Guatemalan leaders.

¹⁵The new Protestant churches also benefited from the urbanization process. See e.g., Bryan R. Roberts, "Protestant Groups and Coping with Urban Life in Guatemala," *American Journal of Sociology* 73, no. 6 (1968): 753-767.

¹⁶Hansen, "The Church in Central America," 42.

¹⁷The last U.S. stake president left Guatemala as late as 1990.

¹⁸Unfortunately, the first column in Table 3 gives only the average annual growth rate for 1960-80, which for all 21 non-Catholic churches together was 11 percent, and for the Mormon church 14 percent.

Meanwhile, the country was still in crisis. In 1966-67, ruthless counterinsurgency offensives in the east of the country destroyed entire villages and killed thousands. The infamous death squads also started their activities in the 1960s, indiscriminately killing people suspected of left-wing sympathies in both urban and rural settings. The urban growth rate decreased in the 1970s as the industrialization process stagnated, and land shortages were still manageable in most rural areas.¹⁹

The 1967-78 LDS membership stagnation was probably caused by a combination of factors: The economic boom might have lessened the need for a (deviant) religion; intensive competition with the surging Protestant churches led by Guatemalans could have affected the LDS "market share" in a negative way; the urban growth rate decreased somewhat, and the withdrawal of U.S. missionaries for security reasons at the height of the war between army and guerrillas also negatively affected growth.²⁰

PERIOD 4, 1978-90: HIGH GROWTH

For analytical purposes, I have divided this period into two sub-periods: 1978-82 and 1982-90.

1978-82: Pre-boom Interval. On December 31, 1977, there were almost 14,000 baptized Mormons in Guatemala; only five years later there were 22,234, creating an average annual growth rate of 12 percent, significantly below the 1949-98 AAGR of almost 20 percent, but the stagnation had clearly come to an end. The average annual growth rate for 1978 was an amazing 26.3 percent, and for 1979, almost 15 percent. It is true that the growth rate for 1980 was -1.3 percent, but 1981 was again at 9.2 percent. Compared to the previous decade, growth had picked up.

What allowed this modest growth? For one thing, competition with Protestants had become more, rather than less, intensive. The Protestant boom years were 1976-86, more specifically, 1978-82.²¹ While the Protestant churches were experiencing AAGRs of between 7 percent (the older churches) and 30 percent (Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches), the Mormons still managed to maintain a modest but steady annual growth rate. In other words, LDS growth began a modest increase exactly when Protestant growth exploded (see Table 3). Perhaps the Mormons benefited from the Protestant explosion after the 1976 earthquake: People were in shock after the destruction and deaths. Poverty and re-

¹⁹Source of this paragraph: Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*, 31-33.

²⁰Armand Mauss (personal communication) pointed out another factor: During the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war (1965-74), the LDS church was constrained to limit the number of young U.S. missionaries deferred from the military draft.

²¹See Gooren, "Reconsidering Protestant Growth."

construction activities caused many peasants and workers to organize themselves, which led to increased political repression. The brutal war between army and guerrillas flared up again, and it was the civilian population in the highlands which paid the price. The war and the economic crisis of the early 1980s caused an increase in urban growth.²²

Meanwhile, internal growth factors had also changed shape. Mormon doctrine now appealed to many dissatisfied Protestants and Catholics, who liked a church which challenged them to study and work hard, where the priesthood was open to all men, where family and marriage bonds were for time and eternity, and where everyone could eventually hope to become a god. The professionalization of the mission program—better training of missionaries and mission presidents, better written and audiovisual materials, better language preparation—began to bear fruit. Another important factor was the sharp increase in the worldwide number of LDS missionaries, with a corresponding increase in the number of missionaries serving in Guatemala.

As church organization was consolidated and Mormonism became more established in Guatemala, its appeal increased. The extensive church infrastructure, with its countless voluntary tasks (“callings”), attracted many converts, who appreciated the opportunity to grow spiritually and develop leadership, teaching, and management skills in the process.²³ Like the closely-knit Protestant churches, the LDS church could also function as a social community, a protected environment where people experimented with new values and norms, new discipline, and a new mentality.²⁴ In summary, as Mormon membership grew in size, the appeal of its organization increased, too. Unfortunately, almost all missionaries and local leaders (bishops, stake and mission presidents) were still North Americans.

1982-1990: The Recent Boom Years. By 1982, it was clear that the LDS church in Guatemala was experiencing a genuine growth explosion. As can be seen in Table 2, the total baptized membership increased from a little over 22,000 on December 31, 1982, to over 103,000 only seven years later. From only 0.29 percent of the Guatemalan population in 1982, the Mormon proportion increased to no less than 1.32 percent by 1990. The

²²The fact that the Mormon church in Guatemala is predominantly urban (Knowlton, *Mormonism in Latin America*, 169) would suggest that a large urban population is conducive to LDS growth.

²³Wesley W. Craig, Jr., “The Church in Latin America: Progress and Challenge,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 5 (Autumn 1970): 68; David C. Knowlton, “Thoughts on Mormonism in Latin America,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 25, no. 2 (1992): 47-48; and Knowlton, *Mormonism in Latin America*, 169-171.

²⁴Or, what David Martin (*Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1990], 280) calls “free social space.” See also Gooren, *De expanderende mormoonse kerk*.

average annual growth rate for 1982-90 was 24 percent, but the real boom years were 1984 (44.2 percent) and 1988 (35.7 percent).²⁵ The Mormon church was reaping the fruits of its long-term proselytizing program and the increasing number of post-adolescent missionaries.

It is hard to gauge whether LDS doctrine actually appealed to more people between 1982 and 1990, but there is no doubt that more Guatemalans than ever before came into contact with the church.²⁶ In early 1985, there were about 320 missionaries in Guatemala, more than half from the United States.²⁷ They were well-prepared, well-organized, and guided by equally prepared U.S. mission presidents, often with a corporate background. The 'discussions' held by missionaries with investigators were smoothly rehearsed and aided by six-color brochures in Spanish. A great many investigators were baptized within two to six weeks after their first meeting with the missionaries.²⁸ These new members were obviously not well-prepared and thus depended on established members to help them get settled as active Mormons. Many dropped out within a year after baptism, suggesting that the wards and stakes were not sufficiently prepared to deal with the high influx of new members. Still another important change was that local LDS leaders (except the mission presidents) were now almost all Guatemalans.

The impact of competition with the Roman Catholic Church and the myriad Protestant churches remains a factor that is hard to assess. The Catholic counteroffensive against Protestantism after 1983, led by the new archbishop Penados del Barrio, obviously did not affect the LDS growth rate negatively. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches consistently called the Mormons a "sect."²⁹ Protestant hostility toward Mormons in Guatemala City increased, especially after 1985.³⁰ Beginning in 1986, the first Protestant churches begin to experience a stagnation in their annual growth rates (see Table 3). The LDS church had experienced its recent boom exactly in 1988-90, when Protestant growth was waning.

The 1980s were a pivotal decade in Guatemalan history. The united guerrillas were all but defeated in the ruthless counterinsurgency

²⁵The 1985-88 AAGR was still an impressive 21 percent.

²⁶The fact that the 1988-90 average annual LDS growth rates throughout Latin America were very high, ranging from 8 percent in Uruguay and Puerto Rico to 25 percent in Mexico (see Table 1), suggests that the church made a deliberate effort to boost its missionary activities in this region.

²⁷Peter Wiley, "The LDS Missionary Program in Guatemala: A Case Study" (unpub. document, c. 1985), 14.

²⁸Out of about thirty investigators I followed in San José, Costa Rica, no fewer than twenty were baptized (Gooren, *De expanderende mormoonse kerk*, 30).

²⁹The rhetorical and emotional equivalent of this term in American English is probably "cult."

³⁰Interviews with La Florida and Santa Marta LDS bishops, November 28, 1993.

campaigns of 1982-83, when the evangelical General Ríos Montt ruled the country. Thousands of people were killed or disappeared, and hundreds of villages were destroyed, especially in the predominantly Indian highlands. Poverty also increased dramatically in the 1980s, following a serious economic crisis. Military governments and human rights abuses made Guatemala an international pariah, struggling to earn economic aid from the United States or the United Nations. Hence, the military allowed a return to civilian rule in 1986. However, less repression and surveillance, mixed with out-of-control or even renegade police and guerrilla elements, caused a surge in crime.³¹ War and poverty, exacerbated by growing land shortages, drove many people to Guatemala City, which grew by an annual average of 5 percent in 1981-89.³²

I believe three main factors combined to produce Mormonism's 1982-90, and especially 1988-90, boom in Guatemala: First, the waning of Protestant growth after 1986 and the suspension of big Protestant evangelization campaigns;³³ second, strong anomie caused by political violence and the economic crisis of the early 1980s, and the return to civilian democracy in 1985-86; third, the effect of the huge, though predominantly U.S., missionary force in the country, combined with the gradual takeover of local (ward and stake) leadership positions by Guatemalans.

PERIOD 5, 1990-1998: LOW GROWTH OR STAGNATION?

On December 31, 1990, there were almost 125,000 baptized Mormons in Guatemala; eight years later there were almost 167,000. Thus, the AAGR for 1990-98 was only 3.5 percent, with 3.5 percent occurring in 1990-95, 5.5 percent in 1995-97, and a meagre 1.7 percent in 1997—all far less than the annual population growth of almost 3 percent. Since AAGRs do not usually decrease so drastically—from 20.6 percent (1989) to 3.5 percent (1990-95)—in one year, it is likely that the 1991-92 growth rate was still around 8 percent, but the turnabout is amazing: From an average annual growth rate of 20 percent in 1978-90 to a dismal 3.5 percent for 1990-98.

What happened? Obviously, neither LDS doctrine nor church organization had changed, but somehow Mormonism's appeal to Guatemalans had dramatically decreased. Nor had the Mormon missionary effort in Guatemala been reduced: In late 1993, there were about 590 missionaries in Guatemala,³⁴ with only 25 percent of them Latin Americans (usually Guatemalans or Central Americans), and the others all North Americans.

³¹This paragraph is based on Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*, 34-40.

³²Gellert and Pinto, *Ciudad de Guatemala*, 32.

³³This factor likewise contributed to the growth of Jehovah's Witnesses in Guatemala after 1983 (see Table 3).

³⁴These 590 missionaries represented a little over 1 percent of the total worldwide missionary force, about the same proportion as in 1985.

If it is true that "the single best predictor of the annual Mormon conversion rate is the size of the LDS missionary force,"³⁵ Mormon growth rates should have continued above the 1982-90 levels, but they clearly did not. Many fewer converts entered the church in the 1990s than in the 1980s, but even worse, the high drop-out rates remained the same. In other words, many people were leaving the church, but few were entering. This was the main cause of membership stagnation after 1990.

The LDS membership stagnation mirrored similar developments in the Protestant churches and, for instance, among the Jehovah's Witnesses (see Table 3). One might speculate that most people who were willing to experiment with belonging to a Protestant church, to the Latter-day Saints, or to the Jehovah's Witnesses, had probably done so by 1990. The reservoir of dissatisfied Catholics who were willing to join other churches was running empty. Growth in the 1990s might have been due mostly to the "circulation of the saints,"³⁶ i.e., religious "shopping" between various churches to see which was more agreeable. However, there were only a handful of former Pentecostals, and one ex-Adventist, in the LDS wards I studied in Guatemala City.³⁷

In 1995, most people were still pessimistic about Guatemala's future, but there were a few improvements to be seen: The war between armed forces and guerrillas continued at a lower intensity, and the political power of the military was waning. Also, after 1990, Guatemala's economy slowly began to recover from its 1980s economic crisis.³⁸ People seemed less in need of a church to help them through times of anomie and poverty. In conclusion, it is likely that saturation of the religious market, the waning of the armed conflict (with a new chance for peace accords), the slow consolidation of democracy, and the slow recovery of the economy once again brought the Mormon growth rate down.

SUMMARY OF LDS GROWTH PERIODS IN GUATEMALA

Between 1949 and 1956, LDS growth was high, with an AAGR of 27 percent. The main factors here were the initial, tiny membership (250 in 1956) and the North American attraction of the church. In 1956-66, Mormon membership experienced a clear boom. LDS church growth exploded at a time of great political and social turmoil in Guatemala, concurrent

³⁵Shepherd and Shepherd, "Membership Growth," 38-39. See also Hepworth, "A Causal Analysis."

³⁶Merlin B. Brinkerhoff and Reginald W. Bibby, "Circulation of the Saints in South America: A Comparative Study," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 24, no. 1 (1985): 39-55.

³⁷In a survey of fifty active members of the La Florida and Santa Marta wards on November 28, 1993, only three people reported they had been active Pentecostals, while over half had been active Catholics.

³⁸Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*, 34-40.

with high urban growth rates, while its mission program was at the same time being improved. However, growth rates between 1967 and 1978 fell to only 1 percent, essentially stagnation. Perhaps the relative novelty of Mormonism had worn off; economically, Guatemala was also better-off in these years. Then, religious competition began in the 1970s, and became fierce in the mid-1980s. Protestant growth exploded, especially in 1978-82, starting with the 1976 earthquake. The waning of Protestant growth after 1986 and high levels of anomie, caused by the war and by poverty, were the main causes of the 1982-90 LDS growth rate of 24 percent. The restructuring of the Mormon missionary program of the 1960s and 1970s, the huge number of missionaries in the country, the Guatemalization of local leadership positions, and the increasing appeal of large volunteer networks, all laid the basis for this new growth.

Since the LDS church competed mostly with Protestant churches, it is likely that during the Protestant boom, the Mormon growth rate was conversely below average. As the Protestant boom faded after 1982, Mormon growth gradually started to explode: 44 percent in 1984, 23 percent in 1985, 19 percent in 1986, 21 percent in 1987, 36 percent in 1988, and 21 percent in 1989. The Jehovah's Witnesses experienced a similar growth. After 1990, however, the growth rates for both Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses were again much lower than their 1960-93 averages of 18 percent and 9 percent respectively. Since the Protestant churches suffered a similar phenomenon, it seems likely that most people who were willing to experiment with belonging to a Protestant church, to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or to the Jehovah's Witnesses, had probably done so by now. The new challenge would be to retain membership, to keep the flock already inside as active members.

ANALYZING THE FACTORS FOR LDS GROWTH IN GUATEMALA

The reader will recall that the five main periods of church growth in Guatemala were:

- 1) 1949-56, high growth (AAGR around 27 percent)
- 2) 1956-67, boom years (AAGR around 42 percent)
- 3) 1967-78, stagnation (AAGR around 1 percent)
- 4) 1978-90, high growth (AAGR around 20 percent)
- 5) 1990-98, very low growth (AAGR around 3.5 percent)

In this section, I will first assess the relative importance of the growth factors which comprise the analytical framework for LDS growth in Guatemala (Fig. 1). Finally, I will analyze three major problems and consequences resulting from the Mormon growth explosion in Guatemala and connect these with the literature on Mormon growth in Latin America.

MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

The evidence suggests that the main reasons for the Mormon success in Guatemala are all internal to Mormonism, and, of those, the most important factors are of a religious nature (see Figure 1). I concur with the literature that the huge and well-equipped LDS missionary force of dedicated post-adolescents has been a major factor in explaining Mormon growth. As the number of missionaries steadily increased throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, so did the Mormon growth rate. In Guatemala City, most members converted to the LDS church at turning points in their lives—in adolescence, after experiencing alcohol problems, or when they became parents.³⁹ Meeting the missionaries was a matter of good timing;⁴⁰ most people came into contact with the church through friends or family.⁴¹ The new converts were generally young, between 17 and 25 years old, and joined the church around the same time they started their own small firms and their own families.⁴²

APPEAL OF THE DOCTRINE/ORGANIZATION

The second most important factor is the appeal of both the LDS organization (especially callings) and its doctrine. The LDS church organization appealed to Guatemalans for many reasons, some religious, but many non-religious.⁴³ Religiously, people appreciated the opportunity for spiritual growth, by serving fellow-members in callings as leaders or teachers, but these callings also provided practical life experience, the opportunity to acquire leadership, teaching, organizing, and other skills. Economically, small entrepreneurs have said the church has a business ethic which makes their firms more successful. Finally, the closely-knit church organization provides members with excellent social networks. On the other hand, the main weakness of the LDS church in Guatemala is also an internal one, but not a religious one: namely, its very poor retention rates, which I will deal with later.

The Mormon church probably appeals to some Guatemalans because of its roots in the United States. This partly explains the success of the U.S. missionaries throughout Latin America. That appeal is further stimulated by some supposed U.S. cultural elements in Mormon doctrine and practice. If this is true, the Mormons should be more successful in countries

³⁹Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*, 109-111.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 154-157.

⁴¹According to a November 1993 survey of fifty members in Guatemala City (La Florida and Santa Marta wards), 30 percent came into contact with the church through friends, 28 percent through relatives, and another 28 percent through missionaries (see note 38).

⁴²Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*, 101-107; 201-202.

⁴³See Craig, "The Church in Latin America," 68, and Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*, 214-218.

where people generally like the U.S. (for example, Costa Rica) than in countries with a strong anti-American tradition (Mexico comes to mind).⁴⁴

DISSATISFACTION WITH THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Although Mormonism considers itself firmly Christian, it is certainly a different kind of Christianity, different from Catholicism, of course, but also very different from Protestantism, whether mainstream or Pentecostal. The majority of LDS converts in Guatemala had a Roman Catholic background; only a few were ex-Protestants. Some converts had been active Catholics who attended prayer groups and studied the Bible by themselves. They felt their priests could not satisfactorily answer their doctrinal questions. They appreciated the Mormon church, because it urged all its members to study (both at school or in Bible classes) and gain life experience in order to achieve spiritual progression. Another large group, probably the majority,⁴⁵ was composed of formerly nominal Catholics, who had never understood the Catholic religion and generally cared little for it. These converts knew nothing of Catholic doctrine and the sacraments, and keenly noted that nobody had ever bothered to explain anything about it to them. By contrast, the young LDS missionaries always took plenty of time to answer all their questions about God, Christ, and salvation, and explain the idiosyncrasies of Mormon doctrine and practice.

COMPETITION WITH PROTESTANTS AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Since the 1970s, the LDS church has competed not only with the Roman Catholic Church in the religious market, but also with Protestant churches. LDS growth was low in 1976-82, the time of the Protestant boom. Mormon growth exploded in the second half of the 1980s, when the Protestant (more accurately, Pentecostal), boom in Guatemala was waning.⁴⁶ Protestants with a good knowledge of the Bible might have been less inclined to join a church which extended the Holy Scriptures with three new books and used the Old and New Testaments in a somewhat different way.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Table 1 does not support this connection (see the 1995-97 and 1988-90 average annual growth rates).

⁴⁵I assume that the 38 percent who claimed in the 1993 survey no prior church membership before becoming a Mormon were mostly nominal Catholics.

⁴⁶See Gooren, "Reconsidering Protestant Growth," for an analysis.

⁴⁷The prohibition to smoke or drink alcohol would be considered normal by former Protestants, but not the taboo on coffee and tea.

This leaves only the external non-religious factors to consider: *anomie* in various forms (whether economic, social, or psychological), and the urbanization process. For each of the LDS growth periods mentioned here, I indicated that the population was suffering from *anomie*, whether from poverty, forced migration, the armed conflict, the 1976 earthquake, or from political repression. However, Guatemala was always in crisis after 1954. This fact alone limits the explanatory strength of the *anomie* factor. In 1976, the year of the devastating earthquake, Mormon growth was negative by 2.4 percent; one year later it was positive by only 2.2 percent. The evangelicals exploded after the quake, but the Mormons certainly did not. Similarly, when the armed conflict flared up in 1979-1983, LDS growth was not particularly high.⁴⁸ It was, by contrast, after 1983 when Mormon church growth exploded, when the armed forces and the guerrillas were locked in a stalemate, and especially after the return to civilian democracy in 1985-86.⁴⁹ Since then, Guatemala's five major problems have basically remained the same: armed conflict, widespread violent crime, a weak state, a weak civil society, and rampant poverty.⁵⁰ The conflict between the Guatemalan state (or more specifically its guardian, the armed forces) and the guerrillas formally ended with a peace treaty in 1996, but the implementation of that treaty has been problematic. Guatemala continues to be in crisis, but the churches (whether Protestant or Mormon) are no longer growing. Since 1990, growth in almost all churches has stagnated, although they prefer the word "consolidated."

⁴⁸ David C. Knowlton reports that in Chile, LDS growth was also low during massive and violent government repression in 1982-83 ("Mormonism in Chile," in Douglas J. Davies, ed., *Mormon Identities in Transition* [London: Cassell, 1996], 77).

⁴⁹ Guatemalan guerrillas apparently did not consider Mormons to be legitimate targets, representing U.S. political and economic power. Between 1984 and 1989, however, there were over 62 bombings of LDS Church buildings in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Colombia, Argentina, and Venezuela. Two U.S. missionaries were assassinated in Bolivia in 1989; one year later, two Peruvian missionaries were killed by Shining Path in Peru. Political violence against the Mormon church was concentrated in countries which were experiencing severe economic and political crises, where military governments received open U.S. support, and where the LDS church arrived relatively late. See R. Beekman, "The Mormon Mini-Empire," *NACLA's Latin America & Empire Report* 6, no. 5 (May-June 1972): 8-9; F. LaMond Tullis, "Three Myths About Mormons in Latin America," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 7 (Spring 1972): 79-87; F. LaMond Tullis, "Church Development Issues Among Latin Americans: Introduction" in F. LaMond Tullis, ed., *Mormonism: A Faith for All Cultures* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 85-105; F. LaMond Tullis, "The Church Moves Outside the United States: Some Observations From Latin America," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13 (Spring 1980): 63-73; Robert Gottlieb and Peter Wiley, *America's Saints: The Rise of Mormon Power* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986 [1984]), 143-151; Gooren, *De expanderende mormoonse kerk*, 13-14; and especially David C. Knowlton, "Missionaries and Terror: The Assassination of Two Elders in Bolivia," *Sunstone* 13 (August 1989): 10-15.

⁵⁰ See Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*, 34-43, for an elaborate analysis.

PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM LDS GROWTH IN GUATEMALA

The Mormon membership boom in Guatemala has led to three main problems for the LDS church as an institution, which I think can be generalized for all of Latin America, and possibly for other developing countries as well. The first problem involves the church's organizational infrastructure. The same efficient structure which works perfectly in the United States is too weak and functions badly in Guatemala. There are simply not enough priesthood holders,⁵¹ many callings go unfilled,⁵² the local leaders are not functioning well (see below), and the organization is paralyzed because U.S. manuals are followed in a Latin American cultural setting.⁵³

The second major problem is with leadership. In Guatemala, as in other parts of Latin America, the local leaders in the wards and stakes are often young and inexperienced.⁵⁴ Bishops and stake presidents in Guatemala find it hard to imitate the North American managerial leadership model.⁵⁵ Young people lack the necessary experience and maturity to perform as leaders. Those few leaders who do function well often stay in office too long (more than five years), because there is nobody to replace them. This sometimes makes good leaders complacent, thus destroying leadership dynamism. Likewise, good leaders are often authoritarian and find it hard to delegate responsibilities to church organizations like the quorum of elders or the stake high council.⁵⁶ This causes an increased burden and an increased importance of the bishop. When combined with a huge church bureaucracy which requires that all membership information be reported on standardized documents, the role of a bishopric becomes greatly inflated, especially since most bishopric decisions and rules are presented as divinely inspired, making it almost

⁵¹Knowlton, "Thoughts on Mormonism"; Knowlton, "Mormonism in Latin America."

⁵²A hard life, marked by poverty, health problems, and low schooling, reduced performance in callings in the poorer wards, like La Florida. New members often found it hard to handle a calling and many shirked responsibility (see Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*).

⁵³John Hawkins cites some excellent examples ("Behavioral Differences Are Like Language Differences; or, "Oh Say, What Is Truth?" vs. "Do As I'm Doing" in Mary E. Stovall and Carol Cornwall Madsen, eds., *A Heritage of Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1988], 157-170). See also Tullis, "The Church Moves Outside."

⁵⁴See Gooren, *De expanderende mormoonse kerk*, for a similar report on Costa Rica.

⁵⁵Reynolds in Tullis, *Mormonism*, 16.

⁵⁶Tullis sees hierarchical and *machista* elements in Latin American culture as important factors here: "Cultural inclinations. . . have led to some ecclesiastical and leadership atrocities in Latin America. . . . As it is the most prepared and qualified people who tend to speak up against abuses of the kind described above, they find their own membership status placed in question. They are either cowed or driven underground. The Church is therefore not able to enjoy the benefit of its most able people because they are afraid to become involved. Such behavior turns counselors and advisors into 'yes men' who refuse to voice a disagreement with their leader even in private council" ("The Church Moves Outside," 72).

impossible for members to question them.⁵⁷ Also, like ordinary members, these local leaders in low-income wards suffer from various social and individual problems.⁵⁸

The third main problem for the LDS church in Guatemala was ironically caused by the very high growth rates of the 1980s: poor retention rates. Converts were often baptized too soon, with insufficient knowledge of Mormonism and its highly demanding nature, so their socialization into LDS life was problematic, their commitment low, and they also suffered from the consequences of social and individual problems.⁵⁹ For example, most members in La Florida could only be called active because they went to church regularly (usually weekly), but their participation in church activities was generally low. In fact, growth in the La Florida stake in Guatemala City was reported to be passive and stagnating: There were few church activities of either a purely social or even of a spiritual or missionary nature.⁶⁰ Some of the younger leaders openly criticized this situation.⁶¹ The four ward missionaries managed to baptize a few new members each year, but these people attended only a couple of times. They felt too uncertain to handle a calling or answer questions during Sunday School. Moreover, most of the established members tended to ignore them. This made new members reach out to the leaders who could tell them what to do. If they had a problem, they usually skipped the elders' quorum and went directly to the bishop.⁶² If the bishop was too busy, most of them simply dropped out, creating high inactivity rates.

Besides feeling excluded by old members, new members also felt excluded even by leaders. They never received the time, much less the support, of established members to build an LDS identity. A Mormon identity is not just an individual matter. While salvation and spiritual progress, culminating in eventual godhood, are concerns of the individual, they are firmly imbedded in the concepts of eternal marriage and eternal family bonds. To achieve spiritual progress, it is necessary to start a family and

⁵⁷Gooren, *De expanderende mormoonse kerk*, 35-36.

⁵⁸For example, poverty, low schooling, and alcohol problems (see Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*).

⁵⁹See *ibid.*, and Gooren, "Analyzing LDS Growth."

⁶⁰Judging from two short visits to middle and upper-class parts of Guatemala and 1990 fieldwork in San José (Costa Rica), La Florida was quite badly organized by general Central American LDS standards. Middle-class Vista Hermosa ward had a great many social, spiritual, and missionary activities, as did lower to middle-class Los Yoses ward in San José.

⁶¹The new La Florida bishop, a 33 year-old computer programr who began his calling in June 1995, was one of these. He said that most members were in a deep "spiritual sleep," forgetting that their salvation ultimately depended upon their active *participation* in church. He traced the origins of the current state of malaise to the 1990 changes in the stake leadership.

⁶²Craig L. Blomberg and Stephen E. Robinson, *How Wide the Divide: A Mormon and an Evangelical in Conversation* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 40.

become a parent. Work also fulfils a part in this, but full participation in church is required for spiritual progress: This includes, Sunday meetings, Sunday School, Priesthood or Relief Society, classes, committees, and especially callings. Mormonism is a very demanding religion.

The main consequence of the three problems mentioned above is a declining growth rate for the church in Guatemala. This has been the case since the 1960s,⁶³ continuing in the 1980s when growth was very high, and into the 1990s. Again, it is a consequence evident all over Latin America, and possibly in Africa and Asia, too. Since the early 1990s, the failure of the LDS church to accommodate its new members has been very obvious. On paper, there might still be modest membership growth, but in practice there was stagnation.⁶⁴ Social problems among converts and problems in LDS organization and leadership caused at least half the new members in the 1980s to leave the church in Guatemala. It may be that LDS retention rates in Guatemala will increase again. Indeed, current LDS policy in Latin America seems to emphasize involvement of members in the organization, consolidation of church structures, and training of leaders. Numerical growth is no longer the main issue; the church must now focus on retaining the members it already has.

⁶³The following quote by Craig suggests that 30 years ago the inactivity rates in Latin America were already high: "Little question remains as to the initial attractiveness of the LDS Church to many Latin Americans. Increasing numbers of baptisms attest to its centripetal force in drawing converts. More salient at this point is the question, 'Can converts become integrated and find satisfaction materially as well as spiritually?' No formal studies have been carried out on the subject of LDS inactivity in Latin America; however, indications are that in many areas there is a high loss of church membership after baptism" ("The Church in Latin America," 73-74). Grover reports that in Brazil in 1968-73 only 15-20 percent of converts remained active in the church, 30-35 percent became inactive Mormons, and 50 percent no longer considered themselves Mormons at all ("Mormonism in Brazil," 137-139).

⁶⁴The Guatemalan case may help put the spectacular LDS growth in Latin America into perspective. See also Rodney Stark, "The Rise of a New World Faith," *Review of Religious Research* 26, no. 1 (1984): 18-27; Stark, "Modernization, Secularization, and Mormon Success"; Rodney Stark, "So Far, So Good: A Brief Assessment of Mormon Membership Projections," *Review of Religious Research* 38, no. 2 (1996):175-178; Lowell C. Bennion and Lawrence A. Young, "The Uncertain Dynamics of LDS Expansion, 1950-2020," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 29, no. 1 (1996):8-32; Gooren, *Rich among the Poor*; and Gooren, "Analyzing LDS Growth"). The data from Guatemala also shed new light on Stark's high estimate of over 267 million Mormons (and a low estimate of almost 64 million) by the year 2080. Stark is projecting the high 1980s growth rates a century into the future, ignoring the equally high drop-out rate ("So Far So Good," 179).

Table 1

LDS Membership Statistics for Latin America on December 31, 1997;
the LDS Population Proportion; and Average Annual Growth
Rates for 1995-97 and 1988-90⁶⁵

Country (year of arrival)	Membership	% pop.	AAGR 95-97	88-90
Chile (1956)	462,000	3.1%	8%	16.5%
Uruguay (1948)	64,000	2.1%	3.5%	8%
Guatemala (1947)	164,000	1.3%	5%	28%
Honduras (1952)	82,000	1.3%	12%	12.5%
El Salvador (1948)	77,000	1.3%	9.5%	15.5%
Bolivia (1964)	100,000	1.3%	6%	17%
Peru (1956)	312,000	1.2%	5.5%	n.a.
Ecuador (1965)	139,000	1.1%	4%	13%*
Panama (1941)	32,000	0.9%	11%	12%
Mexico (1876)	783,000	0.8%	3.5%	25%
Costa Rica (1946)	28,000	0.77%	6%	14%
Argentina (1925)	268,000	0.74%	6.5%	16%
Nicaragua (1953)	25,000	0.7%	18%	n.a.
Dominican Republic (1978)	62,000	0.7%	7%	14.5%*
Puerto Rico (1964)	21,000	0.5%	2.5%	8%**
Paraguay (1939)	37,000	0.4%	24%	n.a.
Venezuela (1966)	80,000	0.35%	4.5%	19.5%*
Colombia (1966)	122,000	0.3%	4%	16%*
Brazil (1928)	640,000	0.3%	8%	n.a.
Total Latin America	3,498,000	0.67%	8%	15.5%
Total Central America	408,000	1.15%	10%	16.5%

* = AAGR for 1986-90

** = AAGR for 1987-94

n.a. = not available

⁶⁵Sources for Table 1: Inter-Hemispheric Resource Center, *Profiles of U.S. Private Organizations and Churches: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)* (Albuquerque, N.M.: Resource Center, n.d. [c. 1988]); *Church Almanac, 1999-2000*; Knowlton, "Mormonism in Latin America," 161; www.lds.org (1997).

Table 2
Registered LDS Membership in Guatemala, 1948-98⁶⁶

Year-end	Total membership	% Pop.	AAGR (%)
1948	4	0	1100%
1949	48	0	29%
1950	62	0	32%
1951	82	0	26%
1952	103	0	ca. 25% (est. average 1952-56)
1956	250	0.01%	ca. 64% (est. average 1956-60)
1960	1,807	0.05%	ca. 35% (est. average 1960-65)
1965	8,156	0.18%	23%
1966	9,996	0.22%	12%
1967	11,171	0.25%	1.5%
1968	11,339	0.23%	8%
1969	12,252	0.24%	17%
1970	14,361	0.27%	ca 4.5% (est. average 1970-72)
1971	n.a.	n.a.	ca 4.5% (est. average 1970-72)
1972	15,721	0.28%	- 12.5%
1973	13,777	0.24%	5.5%
1974	14,523	0.24%	- 7%
1975	13,459	0.22%	6%
1976	14,260	0.23%	- 2.5%
1977	13,924	0.22%	2%
1978	14,225	0.22%	26%
1979	17,973	0.27%	15%
1980	20,625	0.30%	- 1%
1981	20,352	0.29%	9%
1982	22,234	0.30%	16% (est. average 1982-84)
1983	n.a.	n.a.	16% (est. average 1982-84)
1984	30,177	0.39%	44%
1985	43,503	0.55%	22.5%
1986	53,311	0.65%	18.5%
1987	63,176	0.75%	21%
1988	76,329	0.88%	36%
1989	103,554	1.16%	20.5%
1990	124,916	1.32%	3.5% (est. average 1990-95)
1995	148,013	1.41%	5.5% (est. average 1995-97)
1996	n.a.	n.a.	5.5% (est. average 1995-97)
1997	164,000	1.30%	2%
1998	166,720	1.28%	n.a.
1949-98	49 year average		20%

⁶⁶Sources for Table 2: Management Information Center, Membership and Statistical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, 1999; *Church Almanac 1997-98* (Salt Lake City 1996); *Church Almanac 1999-2000* (Salt Lake City 1998); O'Donnal, *Pioneer in Guatemala*.

Table 3
AAGR for 21 Non-Catholic Churches in Guatemala, 1960-1993⁶⁷

Church	1960-80	1980-83	1983-86	1986-90	1986-93
1. Presbyterians	5	6.5	10	1.5	-5
2. Quakers	-0.5*	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
3. Baptists	3.5	7.5	7	n.a.	7
4. Central American	6.5	8.5	10.5	n.a.	0.2
5. Nazarenes	8.5	9	12	-0.5	2.5
6. Full Gospel	n.a.	15	11.5	n.a.	-1
7. Assemblies/God	16	9	9.5	6	-2
8. Príncipe de Paz	25	11	12.5	n.a.	-4
9. Espíritu Santo	n.a.	29.5	39	n.a.	10
10. Pentec./América	n.a.	7	15	n.a.	n.a.
11. La Voz de Dios	n.a.	28	27	n.a.	7
12. Profecía Univ.	n.a.	9	11	n.a.	n.a.
13. Cong. Pent.	n.a.	17	17.5	n.a.	n.a.
14. Elim	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	9.5**
15. Calvario	n.a.	19	10	n.a.	8
15. Bethania	n.a.	20	23	n.a.	n.a.
16. Word (Verbo)	n.a.	30	40	n.a.	n.a.
17. Frat. Cristiana	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3.5***
18. El Shaddai+	n.a.	n.a.	100	68	n.a.
19. 7th-Day Adv.	9.5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	5.5++
20. Jehovah's Wit.	12.5+++	5	10	8.5	6.5
21. LDS	14	8	27.5	24	15
HPC (1-3)	2.5	7	8.5	n.a.	1
HC (4-5)	7.5	9	11	n.a.	1.5
PC (6-13)	20.5	14.5	18	n.a.	2
NPC (14-18)	n.a.	23	24.5	n.a.	7
IC (19-21)	12	6.5	18.5	16	10
All (N)	10 (10)	14 (17)	17 (17)	8 (5)	4.5 (14)

* = AAGR 1935-78

** = AAGR 1980-93

*** = AAGR 1989-93

+ = The extreme Shaddai growth rates have been ignored for the last 'All' category.

++ = AAGR 1978-93

+++ = AAGR 1966-78

HPC = Historical Protestant churches

HC = Holiness churches

PC = Pentecostal churches

NPC = Neo-Pentecostal churches

IC = Independent Christian traditions

⁶⁷Sources for Table 3: Clifton Holland, ed., *World Christianity: Central America and the Caribbean* (Monrovia, Calif.: MARC/World Vision, 1981); Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World* (Carlisle, U.K.: Overseas Ministries (OM) Publishing, 1995), 252-253; Virgilio A. Zapata, *Historia de la iglesia evangélica en Guatemala* (Guatemala City: Génesis Publicidad S.A., 1982); Vitalino Similox, ed., *Los protestantismos en Guatemala* (Guatemala City: CIEDEG, 1991); *Church Almanac 1997-98*, 333; *Church Almanac 1999-2000*, 329; Knowlton, "Mormonism in Latin America"; various Jehovah's Witnesses yearbooks.