"THE AUTHORITY OF MY SERVANTS"
AUTHORITY IN THE EARLY CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

by

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Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the accompanying thesis by Benjamin Raymond McClain Menzies has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with Honors in Religion.

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Abstract

Much scholarship on early Mormonism has been devoted to biographical and doctrinal details of the presidencies of Joseph Smith, Jr., and Brigham Young, but little work has compared the divergent means by which each legitimized their authority over the church as a whole. I argue that each exercised similar forms of authority with different justifications and to different ends. I divide the authority exercised by both into three forms: revelatory authority, ritual authority, and administrative authority. Revelatory authority is the power to deliver messages from God. Ritual authority is the power to perform key rituals conferring spiritual benefits upon participating Saints. Administrative authority is the power to control the material business of the LDS Church. Each of these forms of authority produced symbolic capital for Smith and Young and their ability to control these authorities was integral to their continued leadership over the LDS Church.

I argue that each of these forms of authority originates in Smith's first presidency over the church. Unique to Smith is the emphasis he places upon revelatory authority as the root of his other forms of authority, but he also establishes a system of rituals available only to a worthy few, inaugurating a form of ritual authority, and a complex bureaucracy for managing the property and political affairs the church, establishing administrative authority.

After Smith's death, Brigham Young would seize control of the church through effective control over the ritual and administrative authority Smith had instituted, in contrast to Smith's emphasis upon the primacy of revelatory authority. Claiming a hermeneutical mode of revelatory authority, Young also distanced himself from Smith's practice of issuing new revelations frequently in order to resolve problems in church

governance, merely reserving the privilege of "reinterpreting" Smith's previous revelations in order to justify his new policies as President of the church. Young followed a process of combining administrative and ritual authority throughout his Presidency as he oversaw the transformation of the church from a small community of believers to a cohesive society in Utah, during which he radically altered the appearance of the church while never claiming to alter Smith's church in any way. While some scholars have argued Young's use of bureaucratic institutions such as the priesthood and the church administration contrasts him with Smith's "charismatic" prophethood, I argue that conversely it is Young's governance of the church by expanding and reinterpreting the church bureaucracy in new contexts that marks him as a "charismatic," or creative, prophet.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> "Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants…verily I say unto you, that they who go forth, bearing these tidings unto the inhabitants of these earth, to them is power given to seal both on earth and in heaven, the unbelieving and rebellious."
>
> Doctrine and Covenants 1:6-8

Few scholars have compared the means by which leaders of the early Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints legitimized their authority over the church as a whole. Indeed, most work on authority in this period of Mormon history have either represented the presidencies of Joseph Smith, Jr. and Brigham Young either as so divergent that no comparison is possible or as merely embodying a continuous and unitary form of authority as the head of the church. Both of these representations fail to account for both continuities and divergences in the authority of both figures. In contrast, I argue that authority in the early church should be seen as comprising three interrelated forms, revelatory authority, ritual authority, and administrative authority, which both Smith and Young exercised in varying methods and degrees. Each of these forms of authority produced symbolic capital for Smith and Young and their ability to control these authorities was integral to their continued leadership over the LDS Church.

Devising a method for understanding the early history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is no easy task. The group's early history involves such a multitude of individuals, doctrines, practices, and events, all of which are recorded only in the writings of historical narrators who are all, in their own ways, unreliable given their adherence to particular agendas or the pervasive secrecy in early Mormonism that constantly shifted the boundary between "insiders" and "outsiders," that any attempt to

examine it all at once can only produce a haphazard array of seemingly unrelated events and disconnected people. The LDS Church, in this perspective, appears to consist exclusively of duped individuals following unstable leadership in the form of a powerful cult of personality constantly buffeted by unexpected events. Such an understanding, although sufficient for the anti-Mormon polemicist, is highly unsatisfying in order to explain the behavior of Mormons themselves, a group with little in common besides a common religion that drew members from every part of North America and Western Europe with dramatically different degrees of education, wealth, and politics. On the other hand, to present a unitary and mechanical narrative of the early church, with beliefs and practices developing consistently out of certain foundational beliefs is to accept the modern church's self-representation. Early Mormonism was characterized by constant change often motivated by historical exigencies, not ahistorically coherent beliefs. In order to understand accurately the history of early Mormonism and the role of authority therein, I will develop a framework for analyzing authority in Mormonism that is grounded in the specific history of the LDS Church itself.

The most basic element of my framework is temporal: I limit the scope of my thesis to a period I term "early Mormonism" or "the early period" of the church. This scope roughly corresponds to the years 1828, the year in which Joseph Smith, Jr. and his associates translated the Book of Mormon, to 1877, the final year of Brigham Young's life and tenure as President of the LDS Church. I say that this scope roughly corresponds to these years because the material I analyze is not itself strictly delineated by these dates: Smith had been gathering followers and speaking of "golden plates" for years before he translated the Book of Mormon, and Brigham Young's death does not immediately mark

the end of an era. These are guideposts, not guardrails, but the vast majority of my scholarship will exist in between these two poles.

Hidden between these two poles are six shorter periods that I will briefly define here. The first, the pre-Kirtland period, refers to the time before the church's establishment of headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1832. During this period, Joseph Smith translates the Book of Mormon and organizes the church initially. The second, the Kirtland period, lasts from 1832 to 1838 and refers to the period of time in which the church headquarters was in Kirtland, Ohio. This period sees Smith develop the complex priesthood hierarchy, organize the various quorums of the church, first publish a record of his revelations as the Doctrine and Covenants, construct a temple with associated rituals, and flee from rising anti-Mormon violence.

I would also like to say a brief word about nomenclature. One distinctive characteristic of the early period of Mormonism is a certain cavalier attitude with regard to names. The church itself undergoes many changes in names and many of these names are themselves resurrected and appropriated by dissident groups. Throughout this thesis, my object of study is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, meaning the organization founded by Joseph Smith, Jr. in 1830 of which he claimed administrative leadership until his death in 1844. Following his death, the organization continued in similar form under Brigham Young's leadership until his death in 1877. Although I endeavor to complicate what it means to say that Smith and Young "led" the church, such basic terminology is necessary to delineate this body from the myriad organizations springing up from the main church using similar language to describe themselves. Moreover, I will generally refer to this body with its present full name, "The Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," its shorter name, "the LDS Church," or simply "the church." Individual members of this body, which I identify as any individual self-identifying as belonging to this church, regardless of whether he or she is recognized by that church as a member (a relevant distinction given the frequency of excommunication), are called Saints, "members of the church," or simply "members."

Finally, I argue in this thesis that Joseph Smith, Jr., and Brigham Young exercised distinct forms of authority as President of the LDS Church due to different manner in which they possessed and exercised three kinds of authority: revelatory authority, or the power to deliver messages from God, ritual authority, or the power to perform key rituals conferring spiritual benefits upon participating Saints, and administrative authority, or the power to control the material affairs of the LDS Church. This three-part classification of authority in the LDS Church is based on my reading of key histories of the events surrounding Smith's initial growth of the church, the transition in power from Smith to Brigham Young, and Young's subsequent further growth of the church in Utah. I apply Bordieu's concept of "symbolic capital" to conceptualize social exchanges between members of the LDS Church and its first two Presidents. Although I explain my movement from symbolic capital to these three forms of authority in the main body of the thesis, I would like to note one road not taken. Many commentators on the LDS Church, Thomas O'Dea perhaps being the most influential, have seen the transition from Smith to Young as a case study in Max Weber's concept of the "routinization of charismatic authority."[1] Weber sees charismatic leadership as "the leader [who] is obeyed exclusively for his purely personal, non-everyday qualities and not for his legal position or traditional

[1] Thomas O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957)

honour…his charisma confirms itself through proof."[2] The death of such an individual prompts a process of routinization, in which "steps the authority of judgments and precedents which they created or were ascribed to them."[3] According to this interpretation, Smith ruled the church through his extraordinary power as a revelator and prophet, as well as personal magnetism, and, following his death, Brigham Young "routinized" the charismatic leadership of Smith into a bureaucratic system based on the precedents Smith set. I argue this not only reduces, but reduces inaccurately the roles occupied by both Smith and Young during their presidencies. Significant bureaucracy already existed under Smith's direction, and Young was no "successor" to Smith *per se*, but rather the creator an entirely new form of authority Smith could never have harnessed. In other words, both displayed aspects of Weber's charisma, and both displayed aspects seemingly indicating a "routine" leader. The more accurate interpretation is that both had distinctive styles of leadership employing significant degrees of creative *fiat* and personal authority.

[2] Max Weber, trans. S. Whimster, "The three pure types of legitimate rule," in *The Essential Weber* (London: Routledge, 2004), 139
[3] Ibid., 142

Chapter Two: Joseph as President

> "You have too much power to be safely trusted to one man."
> "In your hands, or another's, so much power would, no doubt, be dangerous. I am the only man in the world whom it would be safe to trust with it. Remember, I am a prophet!"
>
> Josiah Quincy and Joseph Smith, Jr., May 15, 1844.[4]

Any attempt to define the role of Joseph Smith, Jr. in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints prior to his murder in 1844 invariably fails to capture his inextricability from the religious organization he founded fourteen years prior. Smith was officially designated, among other things, as the President of the Church, placing him at the top of any organizational chart of offices in the early church. At the same time, however, he himself was more vital for the early church than the list of responsibilities accorded to the office. One crucial reason for this is that those responsibilities seemed to change frequently, always at the direction of Smith himself. Smith's *modus operandi* throughout his career leading the LDS Church was not constructing detailed organizational instructions for each component of the church or authoring complex theological arguments for his unique interpretation of Christian theology; rather, he acted by prophetic *fiat* and rarely took the time, especially in the later years of his life, to commit his latest innovations in theology or church government to writing. Thus, historian D. Michael Quinn observes regarding the beliefs of both Mormons and non-Mormons, Smith "was viewed as though he were the keystone of the existence of Mormonism…as the removal of the keystone from an arch causes the arch to collapse, it

[4] Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 7. Bushman cites the original text as Josiah Quincy, *Figures of the Past: From the Leaves of Old Journals* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1883), 397. Quincy was a member of the wealthy Quincy family of Boston, making this exchange one of the last recorded exchanges between Smith and a non-Mormon before his death.

was assumed that the entire LDS Church would collapse…at Smith's death."[5] Thus, in order to answer the question of how LDS Church authority did not collapse following Smith's death and indeed passed effectively to Brigham Young, first we must ask how Smith's own authority over the LDS Church was constituted at the time of his death. I argue that Smith held authority in the LDS Church by directly controlling three overlapping practices of life: **revelatory authority**, meaning the communication and legitimation of statements believed to come from God, **ritual authority**, meaning the performance and legitimation of proxy performances of acts endowed with special spiritual significance, and **administrative authority**, meaning management of the LDS Church's business on Earth such as management of finances, relations with secular governments, and direct governance over the lives of the Saints. Furthermore, I argue that the concentration of these three modes of authority in the person of Smith demanded that a viable successor must demonstrate the continuation of that authority.

Smith's revelatory authority begins with the "translation" of the Book of Mormon. Following a theophany that commanded Smith not to join any existing church, Smith received a "Vision of an angel who identified himself as Moroni…to tell of records written on gold plates which, along with two special stones called the Urim and Thummim, were buried in a hill not far from the Smith family farm…for the purpose of translating the book."[6] Smith is eventually granted custody of the plates and begins "translating" by gazing into a seer stone buried in his hat and dictating to a scribe.[7] Finally, when Smith's scribe loses the first 116 pages of work, Smith is granted another series of revelations initially removing the plates from his possession and demanding

[5] D. Michael Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis of 1844," *BYU Studies* 16, no. 2 (1976): 1
[6] Jan Shipps, *Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 9
[7] Ibid. 14

repentance for his carelessness before he is ordered to begin the translation work again, albeit prohibited from translating the pages he had already completed.[8]

I include this conventional account of Smith's earliest career to emphasize the role of revelation over and against conventional scholarly work. Despite Smith's characterization of his work as "translation," every element of the translation narrative appears intrinsically tied to Smith's reception of revelation, from his initial calling, to the act of "translation" itself, to his punishment and atonement. Emphatically, it is not Smith's cleverness or scholarly acumen that is supposed to mark his work as authorized, but the repeated interventions of the divine into his work, guiding it and authorizing the final product. Thus, argues Shipps, "It was this 'gold bible' that first attracted adherents…that provided the credentials that made the prophet's leadership so effective."[9] The credentials of which Shipps speaks, I argue, constitute the initial facet of his revelatory authority.

This authority stems from Smith's role as the conduit for revelation, in this case of texts comprising the Book of Mormon, making Smith himself what I would term a "living canon." Steven Collins notes in the context of Theravada Buddhism that such a notion of "canon" is inevitably connected to notions of authority. Collins first describes a canon as, "An exclusivist specification that it is *this* closed list of texts, *and no others*, which are the 'foundational documents'"[10] This "exclusivist specification," necessarily involving an authority excluding certain texts and specifying others, for Collins, is a

[8] Ibid. 16
[9] Shipps, *Mormonism*, 33
[10] Steven Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 15 (1990): 90 (emphasis in original)

"crucial political element of closure: nothing can be added or taken away."[11] This suggests "The actual importance…has not lain in the specific texts collected…but rather in the *idea* of such a collection, the idea that one lineage has the definitive list."[12] Smith's revelatory authority for bringing forth "Another Testament of Jesus Christ" (the subtitle ascribed to the Book of Mormon) complicates this argument slightly. On the one hand, Smith's act of translation and creation of "new scripture" disrupts the authority of an existing canon. On the other, it does not reject the notion of a canon and closes the list once again. In other words, Smith does not open the canon indefinitely; he opens it temporarily in order to produce a new canon. Smith's revelatory authority is self-confirming here: the very fact that Smith is capable of abolishing one canon and offering another is proof of his unique revelatory authority, as he confirms the authority of the new canon through his own person as revelator.[13] Much like Collins's argument regarding "the very idea" of the canon in Theravada tradition, it is the fact that Smith is granted revelation to produce the new scripture more so than the content of the scripture that supports his initial claim to this revelatory authority.

Smith's capacity as a "living canon" is especially evident in the production of his second collection of new scripture, which is eventually compiled as a text called The Doctrine and Covenants. This text is a set of "Messages from God delivered through the medium of Joseph Smith" that further signify Smith's authority as revelator.[14] One representative passage in the first section declares, "Wherefore, I the Lord…called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him

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[11] Ibid. 101
[12] Ibid. 104
[13] Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 25
[14] Douglas J. Davies, *An Introduction to Mormonism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 45

commandments."[15] In this formulation, repeated in various forms throughout the 135 sections attributed to Smith, the voice of God in the first person designates Smith specifically as receiving communication directly from God. The revelations mentioned early, involving Smith's initial call to translate the plates and his subsequent punishment and atonement, are all recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, leading Thomas O'Dea to declare, "Before Latter-day scripture was born, Latter-day revelation had sprung."[16] O'Dea's formulation points to the difficulty of separating the act of translating the Book of Mormon (what O'Dea terms Latter-day scripture) from Smith's direct revelations recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants (what O'Dea terms Latter-day revelation), because the latter authorizes and provides the conditions for the former to exist. Once again, although the various revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants communicate many concepts in the early church, it is the form, "the very idea" of the Doctrine and Covenants, not the content *per se* that emphasizes Smith's revelatory authority. Conflicts between different sections of the Doctrine and Covenants indicate the importance in "the very idea" of revelation over and against the specific content.[17] Indeed, Smith explicitly engages in "correcting errors" in the "revelations." As one biographer indicates, "[Smith] never considered the wording infallible. God's language stood in an indefinite relationship to the human language coming through the Prophet…the revelations were not God's diction…Joseph freely edited the revelations "by the holy Spirit," making emendations with each new edition…the words were both

[15] D&C 1:17
[16] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 18
[17] For instance, see D&C 20:38-9 and D&C 107:63 which seem to describe entirely different offices despite both defining the role of "Apostles."

his and God's."[18] The relationship between Smith and his revelations is thus clear: by virtue of his authority to deliver revelations, he also retained authority over those revelations, granted "holy spirit" to understand and communicate them properly (albeit imperfectly). This authority to correct his own mistakes thus indicates the height of Smith's revelatory authority in the church writ large.

Smith's revelatory authority was also constituted as the capacity to legitimate (or frequently delegitimize) the revelations of others. This is a particularly salient facet of Smith's revelatory authority given the concept of "Continuing revelation" Smith established early by revelation that indicated each of the Saints would receive revelations.[19] The question of why, then, Smith was granted greater authority over the affairs of the church found voice in an early follower named Hiram Page, who asked precisely this question when he forwarded a host of revelations acquired through the use of a "seerstone." Smith challenged these revelations by directly interrogating Page's revelatory authority.[20] The incident further prompted Smith to deliver a revelation declaring, "No one shall be appointed to receive…revelations in this church excepting my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., for he receiveth them even as Moses…For I have given him the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed."[21] A similar situation arose a few months later, when "a woman named Hubble…'professed to be a prophetess of the Lord' and wanted to set up as 'a teacher in the church'."[22] This incident also prompted a revelatory response, reaffirming Smith's sole authority over revelation, this time further clarifying "none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through

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[18] Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 174
[19] D&C 43:4
[20] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 121
[21] D&C 28:2, 7
[22] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 151

him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead."[23] In both cases, Smith responded to potential rivals who challenged his uniqueness as revelator through the exercise of his revelatory authority. In both cases, the individual who forwarded the contrary revelations acquiesced to Smith's authority. Finally, in both cases, the revelations emphasized not merely the authority of the earlier revelations Smith had given, but his authority as revelator, indicating that the authority over revelation, although granted by God, was the exclusive purview of Smith himself. In this way, the "spiritual gift"[24] of revelation could be distributed throughout the church, but only Smith possessed authority over revelation.

Applying Bourdieu's work on the symbolic power of language can further illuminate the operation and totality of Smith's revelatory authority. Bourdieu suggests that language and power are co-constitutive: language occurs only in the context of existing power relations, but language also actualizes, or brings forth, those relations itself. This conceptualizes communication as a validation of symbolic exchange characterized by "Relations of symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers…are actualized."[25] The very act of symbolic exchange inherent in language provides the framework by which power relations are articulated and, simultaneously, created anew. Smith's use of revelation to defend exclusive revelatory authority evokes such a formulation. The revelations of both Smith and his rivals are both instances of "performative utterance" that Bourdieu argues are prefigured by existing relations, meaning that a rival revelation to Smith's would be, according to Bourdieu's argument,

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[23] D&C 43:4
[24] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 122
[25] Pierre Bourdieu, trans. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson, ed. John B. Thompson, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 4

"destined to fail each time that it is not pronounced by a person who has the 'power' to pronounce it."[26] Smith had already established his revelatory authority through his translation and production of the Book of Mormon and the earlier, already accepted revelations that had formed the basis of the church (ultimately becoming the Doctrine and Covenants). When challenged, Smith directly invoked his undisputed authority to deliver revelation in order to as justification for his authority to discern revelation throughout the church. In this way, the existing power relations in the church that already placed Smith in a position of authority regarding revelation were actualized through his revelatory speech explicitly establishing his sole authority regarding revelation. This dynamic is especially clear in the case of Hiram Page's "seerstone," for Smith's authority as revelator, as indicated above, is traced exclusively to God. The distinction is quite clear then: while Smith was granted authority revelatory authority as his own medium, a kind of "seerstone" for the entire church, his rival revelator required the use of an external implement, a physical "seerstone," in order to achieve anything approaching Smith's revelatory authority.[27] The fact that following these two challenges to Smith's revelatory authority, no member of the church claimed to possess similar revelatory authority to Smith until his death indicates the degree to which Smith successfully defined his revelatory authority as unique and supreme.

For Smith, revelatory authority constituted the basis of both ritual authority and administrative authority. Neither was truly distinct from Smith's revelatory authority, as both arose through revelations eventually compiled into the Doctrine and Covenants.[28] This emphasis on revelatory authority as the basis of other modes of authority is unique

[26] Ibid. 111
[27] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 19
[28] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 156

to Smith and is the primary point of departure between him and the second church President, Brigham Young.

Smith's ritual authority emerged initially through his creation of the priesthood led my Smith himself. Although D. Michael Quinn notes that early records are extremely vague about when precisely the priesthood is actually organized, by 1835 Smith had organized "the Patriarchal priesthood," organized into two "orders" each given authority over particular domains of church activity.[29] I want to take care to note here that, despite both orders being labeled as separate priesthoods, Smith is clear from the beginning that they constitute two parts of the same priesthood, with the "lower" represented as "an appendage" of the higher, indicating that the higher contains and outranks the lower.[30] The "lower priesthood," usually called the Aaronic Priesthood, "is to hold the keys…in outward ordinances, the letter of the gospel, the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."[31] The "higher priesthood," usually called the Melchizedek Priesthood, "holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things."[32] Smith organized the priesthood in order to lay the groundwork "for the later development of Joseph's temple practices. Once he had reinvigorated a sacral priesthood, he could adopt rituals manifesting that power."[33] The emphasis placed in this passage on Smith's relationship to the priesthood is apt, for both are "restored" through the direct ordination of Smith himself and his assistant, Oliver Cowdery, by corporeal revelations of key Biblical figures including John

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[29] D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 8
[30] D&C 107:5-7
[31] D&C 107:20
[32] D&C 107:8
[33] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 205

the Baptist and Peter.[34] The priesthood thus exists as a direct lineage that can only be communicated through direct ordination (involving the literal "laying on of hands") by an existing member of the priesthood, which for every contemporary member, connected their priestly lineages directly to Smith himself. Furthermore, Quinn sees the development of the priesthoods as a key movement towards a hierarchical church headed by Smith, writing, "Church membership changed from believers who knew nothing about angels restoring authority or 'priesthood keys' to hierarchically-oriented Mormons who regarded such angelic restorations as the foundation of latter-day priesthood."[35] This increase in organizational hierarchy truly begins with the organization of priesthoods, and it was the necessary condition for the complex system of rituals in the Nauvoo period that further institutionalize this ritual authority.

Smith developed a ritual system that created a means of producing and reproducing authority. Each ritual contained a common mechanism, the authorized member of the priesthood who administers the ritual, and a common purpose, the achievement of a higher degree of exaltation in the afterlife which is conditioned upon sufficient attention to ritual activity.[36] Each ritual, including ordination into the Melchizedek priesthood, necessarily had to be performed by an ordained member of the priesthood, guaranteeing that only those remaining within the structures of the church were permitted to perform the basic ritual activity of the priesthood, namely its own reproduction. Each ritual was authorized through the encounter of an ordained member of the Melchizedek priesthood, each himself tracing his authority to his ritual encounter with Smith himself.

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[34] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 20
[35] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 38
[36] Davies, *An Introduction to Mormonism*, 104

Having established the priesthood as a group authorized to conduct initially unspecified rituals, Smith developed a system of rituals in Nauvoo that would ultimately guarantee the reproduction of ritual authority as such. Smith developed this system through conversation with only a few of his closest allies during the Nauvoo period, particularly Brigham Young and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, meaning that secrecy pervaded the whole system. Smith introduced a new soteriological concept he termed exaltation. The state of exaltation refers to the status that God occupies which Smith taught humans could achieve in death through adherence to certain eternal principles embodied in ritual practice in life.[37] The key to achieving this status was ritual practices "binding" or "sealing" authorized Saints to other people. Sealing rituals bound individuals together in eternal family units, and the larger the family unity, the greater the degree of exaltation one could enjoy. These sealings occurred in three main "directions" generationally speaking. First, they occurred "downward" with sealing of a father to his children. Second, they occurred "upward," with "adoption" ceremonies sealing Saints to higher ranking members of the priesthood, guaranteeing a continuous ritual lineage from the Saint to the high priesthood to God. Relatedly, vicarious baptisms for dead people allowed Saints to bind dead relatives who otherwise could not have been baptized properly, meaning by a member of the priesthood, since the priesthood had not been restored.[38] Finally, and most famously, they occurred "horizontally" through the sealing of one man to at least one woman in marriage.[39] Along with the various kinds of sealed relationships, Smith introduced a ritual he called "Endowment" that was variously

[37] Davies, *Introduction*, 5
[38] Ibid., 94
[39] Samuel M. Brown, "Early Mormon Adoption Theology and the Mechanics of Salvation," *Journal of Mormon History* 37 (2011), 38

connected with a variety of terms hinted at earlier in his career including "the fullness of the gospels," "full endowment," and "second endowment."[40] This complex ritual guaranteed Saints the promised exaltation.[41] The ritual itself, lasting a full day, consisted of being cleansed and anointed with water and oil, donning special "temple garments," participation in symbolic reenactments of key events in LDS cosmology (such as the Fall of Adam) and being taught a series of secret oaths and handshakes. Finally, the endowed Saint passes through a veil into the secret room in the temple in which they are told a secret, "celestial" name by which they will be called to exaltation by God.[42] Smith spoke to his closest followers during this period about the process of exaltation through sealings and endowment as a "causal law that direct[s] the nature of all matter."[43] Indeed, as noted, Smith says that God himself is exalted through the very same principles that the Nauvoo ritual system embodies. In this way, the rituals are a reflection and confirmation of the basic forces of existence, and to participate in the ritual is to participate in an affirmation of knowledge of "true" existence.

How, then, did this concept of rituals leading to exaltation inaugurate a system for reproducing a particular kind of authority? First, the Nauvoo rituals naturalized the authority of the priest, not simply as a morally superior individual, but as a part of an eternally existing chain of relationships with power deriving from that chain of relationships to connect others to this chain of relations. The priest's authority is therefore identified as deriving from a natural principle beyond the realm of strictly human understanding, instead deriving from the same "grid" of relations that governs God's

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[40] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 58
[41] Davies, *An Introduction To Mormonism*, 215
[42] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 58-60; Davies, *An Introduction to Mormonism*, 215-6
[43] Davies, *An Introduction to Mormonism*, 104

nature.[44] The figure of the temple, unfinished and closed to the majority of Saints, symbolized dynamics of this authority as the location wherein mysterious, powerful rituals open only to a chosen few took place. The mystery of the temple rituals confirmed the legitimacy of the church hierarchy, as Blythe notes

> While lay members of the Church toiled in anticipation, the hierarchy—those who had already received the ordinances—interpreted the incomplete and therefore inaccessible structure as a symbol of legitimacy. While the temple ultimately offered Mormons a sacred authority founded in Smith's teachings of the afterlife, it also sacralized a physical social hierarchy.[45]

The temple's very presence could function as confirmation of the ritual authority held by those privileged Saints permitted access to the unfinished temple. As the purpose of the temple was the location of mysterious, powerful rituals restored only due to Smith's special role as prophet, its physical presence confirmed the importance of the rituals Smith was teaching them and, consequently, the importance of those Saints themselves. In other words, they were transformed from merely a group of trusted advisors to Smith into specialists granted privileged access to a hidden corpus of powerful rituals only performable in the space of the temple, fundamentally systematizing their own authority beyond their personal connection to Smith. Bourdieu's theorization of the role of "specialists" is illuminating here. He argues "symbolic systems" are recognizable due to the presence of "a body of specialists…lead[ing]…to members of the laity being dispossessed of the instruments of symbolic production."[46] In other words, as specialists develop particular means by which authoritative claims can be articulated, they also eliminate means by which claims made by non-specialists can even be articulated. Thus,

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[44] Ibid., 23

[45] Christine Elyse Blythe, "William Smith's Patriarchal Blessings and Contested Authority in the Post-Martyrdom Church," *Journal of Mormon History*, 39(3), 81

[46] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 168-9

as the Saints constructed a temple to house secret, powerful rituals open only to a privileged few at first, they also gradually eliminated the possibility for alternative authorities to arise outside of the grounds of the temple. If the temple is indeed *the* sacred place of LDS life, as it became during the late Nauvoo period either due to direct participation in rituals or imagined and anticipated future participation in the rituals (for most of the laity), then *no other* place could house equivalent, potentially challenging, claims to authority. Moreover, as the inner circle initially introduced to the temple rituals are given the task of safeguarding those rituals, they are also granted authority over safeguarding the permissible activities within the space of the temple, guaranteeing their own monopoly over the temple as a "means of production" for symbolic capital.

The Nauvoo system also shifted the locus of LDS life permanently from the individual revelatory experience to a central temple constructed and managed under the direction of the priesthood. Although Smith's revelatory authority would always form the basis of his authority – hence even the ritual systems here analyzed arose out of a series of revelations – he was deeply wary of the danger of competing claims to revelation clear in the earliest days of the church. He replaced fleeting rapturous experiences with eternal exaltation as the soteriological focus of LDS life and thus also removed the individual revelatory experience from its primary role in the early church. Instead, the temple became the center of LDS life for only there could the necessary rituals be performed. Of course, building temples was a complex process requiring central direction of resources, which provided the conditions for the growth of administrative authority as well (as I will address later). Even more fundamentally, however, the temple, as a space necessarily managed by ritual specialists of the priesthood, ensures that the proper religious

experiences can only take place in space that is mediated through the authority of the priest himself.

The excommunication of Oliver Cowdery, the other member of the church granted a role in restoring both priesthoods, indicates the interplay between authorization over ritual and ritual as authorizing in the early church. Bushman recounts that, in 1838, Cowdery is officially accused, among other things, of "Insinuating that Joseph had committed adultery" and "virtually denying the faith by declaring that he would not be governed by any ecclesiastical authority."[47] Cowdery's trial operates within the framework of the very ritual authority he rejects by a high council appointed primarily on the basis of such ritual authority. In other words, his rejection of any external ritual authority both prevents him from gaining access to the system of authorizing practices making up the various rituals and, simultaneously, actualizes his lack of ritual authority, which invalidates the basis of his claim. Moreover, his complaint against Smith over adultery is especially interesting because it is a reference to Smith's first plural wife, Fanny Alger.[48] Cowdery's rejection of the authority of the plural marriage (he sees it as adultery, not a marriage) indicates the same interplay between ritual and authority: his rejection of the authority of the sealing ritual (which would become more significant in the Nauvoo period and explode during the Young Administration) also denies him access to the authority conferred through participation in the ritual. In this way, Cowdery's challenge to Smith's ritual authority was eliminated on face: his rejection of Smith's ritual authority also projected his own lack of ritual authority, and once Cowdery was

[47] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 347-8
[48] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 45

removed from the church, the only person guaranteeing the restoration of priesthood at the heart of church rituals remained Smith.

The final element of Smith's authority as President rested on what I have called administrative authority, meaning authority over the Earthly business of the Saints. Historian Leonard Arrington comments regarding the view developed by Smith as President of the church, "Ultimately…the church must usher in the literal and earthly Kingdom of God ("Zion") over which Christ would one day rule…the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth…required equal attention to the temporal and spiritual needs…preaching and production…all were indispensable in the realization of the Kingdom…the religious and economic aspects…were viewed as incapable of disassociation."[49] This unification of what he termed "temporal" life, including economics, politics, and social life, with "religious" life, including beliefs and rituals, was indeed one of Smith's goals toward the end of his life, yet it was also his least exercised form of authority after his ritual and revelatory authority, which the difficulties he faced in exercising this administrative authority indicate.

A key element providing a foundation for Smith's administrative authority is termed "the gathering," in which Saints were called to gather in a particular location in order to literally build a Kingdom of God. This process began early in the church's history with Smith designating Kirtland, Ohio as the church headquarters in 1831 due to growing opposition in New York to his activities. At the same time, Smith sent teams of colonists to Missouri in order to establish the eventual "City of Zion."[50] The dual statuses of Missouri and Kirtland as seats of church governance created confusion, but in both

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[49] Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1958), 5
[50] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 14

cases, plans were pursued for a society holistically combining religion with all elements of life, including the construction of a temple (or temples, in the case of the unfulfilled Missouri plans) that would define the cityscape.[51] Conflict eventually escalated into violence against the Mormons in both Missouri and Kirtland, however, and in 1841, the Saints relocated to Nauvoo, Illinois.

In each of these locations, Smith attempted to organize society around the church in order to create a unified community, particularly oriented towards building temples. In each location, he laid the foundations for ambitious temple construction projects.[52] In order to pay for this construction, Smith instituted a number of schemes for collecting the resources of faithful Saints and directing them towards the ends of the church. Initially, Smith instituted the "Law of Consecration," first in Kirtland and later, in a modified form, in Missouri. This "law" required all converts to the church to give all their property over to the church, specifically to Smith, along with an accounting of what the Saint's family would need to survive. Smith would then redistribute some of the property back to the Saint and keep the rest for the church.[53] This proved impossible to regulate, however, as the vast majority of Saints did not provide accurate representations either of their holdings or their needs, and the law produced massive backlash against Smith's authority as President. Indeed, it prompted a major crisis for Smith's church in Kirtland when a number of disgruntled Saints declared Smith a tyrant and demanded that he cease trying to direct "temporal affairs," instead being only a religious leader.[54] Although Smith resolved the crisis by abandoning Kirtland, ultimately settling on Nauvoo, Illinois, as the

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[51] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 42
[52] Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 17
[53] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 190-1
[54] Ibid.

new location of Zion, he also largely abandoned the Law of Consecration, unable to systematize its collection and fearful of the consequences of revolts. In Nauvoo, Smith instituted a more effective means of acquiring financial resources for the church: tithing. Since the Saints were the primary inhabitants of Nauvoo, unlike in Kirtland where they lived with many non-Saints, Smith was able to institute a system in which each male member of the church donated either ten percent of his income or one day out of ten in labor to the church.[55] This system was far more successful and blunted some of the backlash to Smith's administrative authority, but Smith was never able to exercise the kind of control over the administrative realm that he desired, as many Saints continued to have their own independent sources of wealth in Nauvoo, including the eventual apostates whose actions led to Smith's murder.

In this chapter, I have argued that Joseph Smith, Jr. was the singular figure in Mormonism in 1844 due to his centrality as the sole wielder of revelatory authority. Having established revelatory authority, he used the authority afforded him by his revelatory authority to develop two additional forms of authority: ritual authority and administrative authority. Smith created a complex system of interlocking authorities that distributed his claims to authority broadly across the business of the church. At the same time, each church member was actively involved in supporting Smith's authority in varying degrees, whether through recognition of his revelations, participation in rituals authorized by him, or building up the administrative Kingdom. Thus, authority was simultaneously broadly scattered across the various bodies of the church (five quorums, three priesthoods, dozens of settlements, and innumerable "auxiliary organizations") and the individuals belonging to those bodies and exclusively concentrated, ultimately, in the

[55] Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 15

hands of one man: Joseph Smith, Jr. His murder would seem destined to collapse the church.

Chapter Three: The Succession Crisis

> "Here is President Rigdon, who was counselor to Joseph. I ask, where are Joseph and Hyrum? They are gone beyond the veil; and if Elder Rigdon wants to act as his counselor, he must go beyond the veil where he is…The twelve are appointed by the finger of God. Here is Brigham, have his knees ever faltered? Have his lips ever quivered? Here is Heber and the rest of the Twelve, an independent body who have the keys of the priesthood—the keys of the kingdom of God to deliver to all the world: this is true, so help me God. They stand next to Joseph, and are as the First Presidency of the Church."
>
> Brigham Young, August 8, 1844[56]

Joseph Smith Jr.'s failure to appoint a viable successor before his murder threw the church of which he had acted, in life, as the "keystone"[57] into crisis over the question of who would lead in his absence. Despite having articulated three different forms of authority, Smith retained ultimate authority over each of them. This made the problem of succession even more complex due to the overlapping organizations operating through Smith's authority, from the various elements of the priesthoods to the expanding church bureaucracy managing church finances. The challenge facing any successor to Smith was thus to present oneself as comparable to Smith given that Smith's authority was the only clear authority in the church. In this chapter, I argue that the succession crisis facilitated a case study of various attempts to claim the "Mantle of Joseph,"[58] by emulating his exercise of authority. I argue Smith's martyrdom sealed his uniqueness as a revelatory prophet, meaning that failed successor Sidney Rigdon, who articulated his claims in terms of revelatory authority, were unsuccessful due to his lack of compensating ritual or administrative authority. Further, Brigham Young's ability to marshal ritual authority and administrative authority while eschewing a claim to Smith's unique revelatory authority

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[56] HC 7:233
[57] Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis," 1
[58] Nathan Wright, "The Mantle of Joseph: Divine Revelation and the Charisma of Routinization," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, August 14, 2004, 14-15

enabled him to emerge as Smith's successor. Hence, the construction in the epigraph, drawn from the official LDS account of the event, is fitting: Young did not claim to succeed Smith per se but rather to stand *beside* Smith. This mode of utilizing his own ritual authority and administrative authority while eschewing any "new" revelatory authority, instead opting for a "hermeneutical mode" of revelatory authority, would define Young's exercise of authority throughout his presidency.

Revelatory authority

Smith's martyrdom and sole authority over new revelation ultimately ensured the failure of direct claims to new revelatory authority forwarded by Rigdon. Rigdon forwarded claims in line with the mode of revelatory authority Smith had claimed for himself, clearly seeking to fill the role of Smith and thus harness Smith's symbolic capital over revelatory authority. Young, on the other hand, pursued a strategy claiming what I term "hermeneutical authority" over revelation. Young grounded his claim to revelatory authority in his supposed authority to interpret Smith's revelations. Young thus succeeded in portraying himself as not challenging Smith's still existing revelatory authority while constructing a unique claim to authority no other challenger matched.

Smith's martyrdom made him an even more potent symbol for the Saints following his death. Despite the enormous controversy during his life over his increasing control of administrative affairs in the church, Smith sealed his unique position in Mormonism when murdered "for his faith."[59] The most immediate effect was to silence critics of Smith within the church, as such criticism was predictably recognized by many Saints as partially to blame for Smith's death. This was especially true given the role that

[59] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 69, 164

apostates like William Law had played in Smith's arrest.[60] More broadly, Smith's martyrdom transformed him into a symbol for the Saints rather than a living leader exercising authority.

Sidney Rigdon claimed revelatory authority as the foundation for his own claim to the Presidency. Rigdon was established as a member of the First Presidency, and he reminded Saints that body had been designated by Smith as entitled to receive revelations. This designation, according to Rigdon, applied equally to all members of the First Presidency, placing his claim to revelatory authority on equal footing as the late Smith's claim. He also argued, with reference to the text of the Doctrine and Covenants, that such a role for the counselors of the First Presidency is especially relevant in the case of Smith's "absence," which Rigdon explained as referring to Smith's death.[61] Rigdon claimed to have received a revelation of Smith after Smith's death in which God ordained Rigdon the President of the church.[62] Both of these claims to authority likely made sense to the Saints, who had grown used to Smith's frequent revelations dealing with the realities of governing the church and could simply examine the Doctrine and Covenants to find the relevant passages Rigdon claimed gave him the revelatory authority for the church as a whole. Rigdon thus articulated his claim to revelatory authority clearly seeking to draw upon the same well of symbolic capital, actualized as revelatory authority, that Smith had long relied upon as President of the church, by claiming to exercise the same kind of revelatory authority, having been designated as the "heir" to Smith's symbolic capital.

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[60] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 351
[61] Richard Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 389
[62] Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis," 2

In contrast Brigham Young articulated his claims to succeed Smith's revelatory authority in terms of what I term a "hermeneutical mode" of revelatory authority. I draw this formulation from Talal Asad's discussion of the role of authority in constructing the meaning of religious symbols. Asad critiques Clifford Geertz's definition of religion as, among other things "A system of symbols…which acts to establish, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations."[63] Asad argues that such a definition misses the crucial role of interpretation in such a system because symbols cannnot have essential meaning. Symbols must be given meaning, and the assertion of a particular meaning, an interpretation, is itself the assertion of authority.[64] Asad thus shifts the locus of analysis from the symbols themselves and some imagined essential meaning inextricable from the symbols themselves to the people and systems that assert and enforce particular interpretations of symbols. Interpretation then becomes an act that necessarily asserts a particular kind of authority, which I designate as a hermeneutical *mode* of revelatory authority. The hermeneutical mode is observable in Smith's own revelations as Smith always forwarded interpretations of the symbols he created, but the focus for Smith was always on the act of bringing forth *new* symbols (or, at least, symbols long hidden from the mass of humanity). In contrast, Young would publish a only single revelation in the Doctrine and Covenants (mostly relating to administrative actions he had already been undertaking)[65] and, tellingly, would oversee the publication of over twenty additional revelations by Smith.[66] Instead of offering explicitly new revelations, Young offered new

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[63] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 90
[64] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 45
[65] D&C 136
[66] The 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the first update published after Smith's death, added the following revelations (numbering based on the widely available 1981 edition): 2, 13, 77, 85, 87, 108-

interpretations of Smith's revelations, always characterized as the true intent of the original revelation, justifying his interpretation as divinely inspired through his office as President of the church. Indeed, the publication of additional Smith revelations after Smith's death fits this pattern as well, as Smith generally did not delineate between which of his revelations were to be published and which were not. This means that, for instance, Young's inclusion of Doctrine and Covenants 132, the revelation justifying plural marriage, should be seen as an expression of Young's hermeneutical mode of revelatory authority, exercising his power to interpret the meaning of Smith's revelations in order to appropriate Smith's own words to justify Young's continued authority over the church. Young's reinterpretation of Smith's revelatory authority, and Rigdon's failure to challenge this interpretation, indicates the salience of authority in interpreting symbols in a religion.

While Smith expressed his revelatory authority in terms of explicitly new revelations with new symbols, such as the priesthood, the Book of Mormon, or the temples, Young expressed his revelatory authority as not creating new symbols but simply interpreting the revelations Smith had already delivered. Young still articulated this in terms of revelatory authority in that it was divinely received and that the divine nature of Young's calling empowered him to discern false revelations, but it did not result in the same (explicit) rule by prophetic fiat that characterized Smith's rule. Based on this authority, Young dismissed Rigdon's revelation as illegitimate, declaring that only Smith had been empowered to receive new revelations.[67] Young argued that the Twelve, on the other hand, were empowered to act as guardians of the church in the

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11, 113-18, 120-23, 125, 126, and 129-32, as well as the announcement of Smith's death by Apostle John Taylor, D&C 135, and Young's lone published revelation of D&C 136.

[67] Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 391

absence of a President. Since Smith was dead, the church quorum organized around his person, the First Presidency, was also "disorganized," rendering it irrelevant. This invalidated the source from which Rigdon derived his entire claim to revelatory authority. The Twelve, conversely, remained an organized quorum authorized by Smith's existing revelations to lead the church, obviating any need for new revelations. This argument, although not supported by the corpus of revelations Smith had published in the Doctrine and Covenants, does accord with the arrangement of authority in the church at the time of Smith's death due to the Twelve's accumulation of ritual and administrative authority through their connections to Smith. Thus, Wright argues that "Paradoxically, it was Young's unwillingness to claim receipt of divine revelation (while still claiming to have the "keys" of obtaining divine revelations) that sealed his legitimacy as the rightful heir to Joseph's leadership in the minds of the Saints in Nauvoo."[68] Young used his other forms of authority to justify his claim to revelatory authority, in direct contrast to Rigdon's claim to precisely those other forms of authority via his claim to revelatory authority.[69] In other words, Young's claim to revelatory authority made sense to the Saints precisely because he did not challenge the uniqueness of Smith's revelatory authority, instead reinterpreting the meaning behind Smith's revelatory authority as justifying the government by the Twelve. Young thus articulated a new mode of revelatory authority, operating over the form of revelations already received rather than through the reception of revelations, based on Young's capacity to interpret Smith's existing revelations. Rigdon seemingly could not understand that, although the meaning of Smith's revelations was perfectly clear to Rigdon, he did not possess the authority in

[68] Wright, "The Mantle of Joseph," 12
[69] Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis," 32

the eyes of the Saints to interpret them, an authority that seemed to belong to Young alone.

Administrative authority

The struggle between Rigdon and Young over administrative authority was a question of formal authority opposed to practical authority. Rigdon rested his claims to administrative authority on his personal relationships with key Saints, especially Smith, as well as his formal role in Smith's First Presidency; however, by the time he was forwarding these claims he had largely been stripped of administrative authority in the form of bureaucratic responsibilities. Young's group, conversely, had ascended in importance, having been appointed to manage much of the bureaucracy of the church during the Nauvoo period while Rigdon had fallen out of favor. Therefore, Rigdon rested his claim to administrative authority on an interpretation of his formal role in the church that was contested by Young, who, as noted above, exercised a new kind of hermeneutical revelatory authority, while Young managed the bureaucracies with which he was associated in order to support his claim.

Sidney Rigdon's claim to administrative authority rested on his close relationship to Smith. The most basic element of Rigdon's claim was his position as the last remaining member of Smith's First Presidency, with Smith having excommunicated the Second Counselor, William Law, shortly before Smith's murder. Quinn notes that such a claim to succession was based on "Precedents which were public and on the face seemed more straightforward."[70] In 1835, Smith had reorganized the church bureaucracy into a system of five "quorums" including the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (of which

[70] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 160

Young served as President), the Patriarchal Priesthood (headed by Hyrum Smith), the First Council of Seventy (which included virtually all leading Saints and had significant overlap with the rest of the five quorums), and the Presiding Bishopric (which acted as the leadership of the "lower" priesthood and accordingly had little authority over anything) in addition to the First Presidency.[71] The First Presidency consisted of Smith, as President, and two counselors designated as "Presiding High Priests" who together "form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church."[72] The same revelation that provided the foundation of church organization post-1835 indicated "The Presidency…have a right to officiate in all the offices in the church."[73] Rigdon himself was the only consistent member of the First Presidency throughout Smith's life aside from Smith himself, as the composition of the quorum was "inextricably linked to shifting patterns of favor among Smith and his closest associates."[74] Smith upheld Rigdon's role multiple times in the early Presidency, declaring in one revelation that he would "receive the oracles for the whole church" and "hold the keys" of the priesthoods.[75] Rigdon's case was therefore supported through his close association with Smith through the First Presidency, the governing body of the church; indeed many later scholars would assess that Rigdon's case "on strictly rational principles…probably was stronger than that of anyone else."[76] Rigdon argued the First Presidency presides over the church, and the death of the President should mean that right of succession should pass to his longtime fellow in the body.

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[71] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 7
[72] D&C 107:22
[73] D&C 107:9
[74] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 46
[75] D&C 124:123-126
[76] Danny L. Jorgensen, "Dissent and Schism in the Early Church: Explaining Mormon Fissiparousness," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 28(3), 34

Rigdon's problem was that Smith had never established a consistent administrative authority for Rigdon in his role as a member of the First Presidency, and Rigdon's claims were largely based on a personal relationship to Smith rather than any administrative authority he exercised on his own. While Smith's status as the leader of the church was unchallenged, he rarely delegated much of the church bureaucracy to Rigdon himself, instead deploying Rigdon as a spokesman and orator rather than an administrator.[77] This trend became especially pronounced following Smith's relocation to Nauvoo, as Rigdon fell out of favor due to Smith's belief that Rigdon was attempting to either assassinate Smith or seize control of the church (which Rigdon had already attempted to do in 1830, shortly after joining the church).[78] Without having established any relationships of administrative authority through management of church bureaucracy, Rigdon was forced to utilize published revelations that indicated he was intimately connected to Smith through the First Presidency. These revelations were vague on their faces, however, as they often indicated equal authority for other quorums, especially the Twelve. For instance, Smith follows his designation of Rigdon as "hold[ing] the keys of [the Priesthood]" by declaring "I give unto you my servant Brigham Young to be a president over the Twelve…which Twelve hold the keys to open up the authority of my kingdom upon the four corners of the earth."[79] Indeed, the very same revelations that Rigdon relied upon to prove his succession right also arguably indicated similar rights for the Young and the Twelve, as well as other groups. Rigdon's claim thus rested ultimately on a question of hermeneutics: how should past revelations on the nature of succession be interpreted? On this question, however, Rigdon had little besides the vague text of the

[77] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 160
[78] Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 314
[79] D&C 124:127-8

revelations to prove his case, and his deficit of administrative authority due to his failure to establish any personal role in the bureaucracy of the church stretched the credibility of his claim.

Rigdon had negligible administrative authority outside of his relationship with Smith prior to Smith's death. The only office Rigdon held independently of Smith during the Nauvoo period was the "financially lucrative position of postmaster."[80] Aside from the insignificant role this position played in the administration of the church, even Rigdon's tenure in the post office was controversial, due to pressure from Smith himself, who publicly accused Rigdon of extensive mail fraud, attempting to have himself appointed.[81] The dynamic of the post office controversy is emblematic of Rigdon's dilemma vis-à-vis his relationship with Smith. Without significant independent authority, Rigdon was forced to make reference to his relationship with Smith, but the entire community of Saints knew that the two had had a tumultuous relationship during the Nauvoo period, with many public controversies such as the post office affair.[82] Rigdon's claim to administrative authority thus rested upon simultaneously evoking his connection to Smith without reminding them of his multiple public disputes with Smith.

Rigdon's final possible source of administrative authority came from endorsements of key Saints. Bourdieu's frame of authority as symbolic capital implies that authority can be transferred from one person to another.[83] If true, Rigdon's claims to administrative authority were bolstered by acquisition of symbolic capital from the endorsements of Emma Smith, Joseph's widow, and William Marks, who had presided

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[80] Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 311
[81] Ibid., 315-6
[82] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 162
[83] Pierre Bourdieu, trans. Richard Nice, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 180

over the church temporarily and had significant bureaucratic authority. Emma Smith endorsed Rigdon largely on the basis of his opposition to plural marriage and the fact that her preferred candidate, William Marks himself, opted not to claim leadership of the church.[84] Emma, though likely a potent symbol for Rigdon in connecting himself to the late Smith, nonetheless had little administrative authority herself, as she was not a member of any of the relevant quorums since they were open only to men. William Marks, on the other hand, did have a significant amount of administrative authority as the President of the Nauvoo Stake. He too endorsed Rigdon due to Rigdon's opposition to plural marriage.[85] As President of the "Stake of Zion," Marks administered much of the key Nauvoo bureaucracy surrounding construction of the temple and managing a variety of local organizations, and there is also evidence that Smith intended for the President of the "Stake of Zion" to preside over the church in the event that he could not name a direct successor.[86] Accordingly, Marks was designated trustee-in-trust over all church property for several months following Smith's murder until the succession crisis was resolved.[87] Quinn argues that it was Marks, not Rigdon or Young, who had the strongest claim to administrative authority over the church based on established precedents, existing revelations, and Smith's own words. [88] Clearly, then, Marks's transfer of symbolic capital to Rigdon, who posed enough of a challenge to Young to create a succession crisis, should have strengthened Rigdon's claim substantially according to Bourdieu's formulation. There is no evidence that anyone was swayed to Rigdon's side due to Marks's endorsement. I suggest three possible interpretations, none of which is mutually

[84] Wright, "The Mantle of Joseph," 8
[85] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 164
[86] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 172
[87] Ibid., 150
[88] Ibid., 157

exclusive. First, it is possible that neither Marks, nor Emma, actually commanded much administrative authority, and thus their transfer of symbolic capital did not add much to Rigdon's claim. Alternatively, Rigdon already possessed so little administrative authority that even the symbolic capital of the interim trustee-in-trust of the church and the widow of the beloved prophet were not sufficient. Finally, it is possible that Bourdieu's symbolic capital cannot be so easily transferred. Neither Marks nor Emma were particularly active in pressing Rigdon's claims, despite their endorsements, which suggests that perhaps their symbolic capital could not be transferred through words alone. Regardless of which permutation of these interpretations is correct, Rigdon did not ultimately command much symbolic capital over administrative authority by the time of the succession crisis, in contrast to Brigham Young's strong claims to the same.

Brigham Young's claim to administrative authority was based on an existing bureaucracy organized under the Twelve Apostles, of which Young was the President, making his claim one of continuing to exercise the authority he already had, as opposed to seizing new authority. Quinn writes, "The Twelve were…primarily missionaries, with limited ecclesiastical responsibilities, who could perform baptisms and ordinations," who often traveled as a group to spread the message of the church.[89] Smith expanded the Twelve's mandate during the exodus from Missouri when both Joseph and Hyrum were imprisoned, and Smith delegated responsibility for evacuating the church from Missouri and presiding over the church in Smith's absence to the Twelve.[90] By 1841, Smith "laid the temporal business of the church…upon the hands of the Twelve,"[91] which meant that the expanding bureaucracy of the church was divided amongst the Twelve, many of

[89] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy,* 58
[90] Leonard Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 80
[91] Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 102.

whom were dispatched to handle tasks like collecting tithings and editing the church newspaper. Thus, most of the church would have been acquainted with the Twelve operating the machinery of church bureaucracy by the time of Young's claim because that had already been the case. Young could credibly claim to represent the continuation of the church as it had operated under Smith because he and his quorum had already been doing precisely that.

Young also presided over a significantly more united base of support than Rigdon. The Twelve were probably the most unified body in the church at the time of Smith's murder due to their joint missionary efforts. One historian argues that in particular, their 1841 mission to England "Welded…the Twelve who served into a unit of extraordinary solidarity within the church hierarchy."[92] This solidarity distinguished the Twelve from every other body within the church, especially given the chaos of the constantly rotating cast of friends and enemies that surrounded Smith. When Young made his claim to administrative authority, he did so as the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and in doing so, he also declared himself the leader of the only body in the church still clearly unified after Smith's death. One pertinent example of this is the collusion amongst members of the Twelve to arrive in Nauvoo *en masse* and exclude Rigdon from their discussions on managing the church in Smith's absence.[93] In successfully "circling the wagons," the Twelve created a symbol of and actually existing unity that bolstered their symbolic capital, especially in the realm of administrative authority. Young drew upon not only his own administrative authority, but the

[92] Ibid., 87
[93] Richard Van Wagoner, "The Making of a Mormon Myth: The 1844 Transfiguration of Brigham Young," *Dialogue: a Journal of Mormon Thought* 28(4), 162-3

administrative authority of the entire Twelve, who also constituted a collection of twelve of the most prominent Saints.

The specific mechanism of conversion, the primary role of the Twelve for the entirety of its existence, also helped Young's claims to administrative authority. Bourdieu notes that symbolic capital can be generated through relationships of dependency, writing "Giving is a way of possessing."[94] Aid legitimates the authority of the giver by placing the receiver in a position of "objective" dependency, meaning inferiority, thus "objectifying" the otherwise arbitrary division between the one who exercises authority and the one upon whom authority is exercised.[95] The results of the England mission support this argument. First, the mission solidified the administrative authority of the Twelve in the eyes of many American Saints by adding thousands of new English Saints to the church.[96] At the same time, and more crucially, "More than a third" of the Saints in Nauvoo who had been "converted by Young and his fellow apostles" during their England mission.[97] Conversion in this sense does not simply denote change in beliefs, but the physical immigration from England to Nauvoo, which the Twelve both directed and financed. The Twelve were actively involved in aiding the English converts in settling even after they had arrived in Nauvoo.[98] These converts therefore owed their very livelihoods in Nauvoo to the Twelve, represented by Young himself. The "generosity" of the Twelve, as well as the close personal and bureaucratic relationships between the Twelve and the converts necessarily engendered loyalty to the claims of the Twelve. Thus, while these English converts may not have been the decisive factor on their own,

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[94] Bourdieu, *Outline*, 195
[95] Ibid., 192
[96] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 66
[97] Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 340
[98] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 66

their support conferred significant administrative authority upon Young and his Twelve from the very beginning that Rigdon could not have possibly matched with his inferior command of church bureaucracy.

Ritual authority

Rigdon had no connection to the extensive system of Nauvoo rituals although he exercised some ritual authority due to his longstanding membership in the church. Indeed, he explicitly disavowed the Nauvoo rituals, especially plural marriage. In contrast, Young had been one of the leading members of Smith's inner circle in receiving and performing the various rituals, and he therefore exercised significant ritual authority at the time of his claim. Thus, Young's ritual authority came from two sources: performance of the rituals themselves won him symbolic capital amongst key Saints, while the secrecy of the content of the rituals paradoxically enabled Young to claim even greater authority amongst those who had no direct experience with the rituals. Rigdon's fall from Smith's favor was not merely a personal squabble: it meant that Rigdon had no access to the well of symbolic capital from which Young drew in making his claim to ritual authority. I will first discuss the three dynamics to ritual authority in the Nauvoo period upon which I base my arguments: the secrecy surrounding the rituals, and ritual system as a space for generating symbolic capital.

The temple rituals that Smith proliferated amongst his inner circle during the Nauvoo period were founded on secrecy as a key basis of their symbolic weight. Hugh Urban argues that secrecy, "Transforms knowledge into a scare resource…a deliberate and self-imposed censorship, which functions to maximize the scarcity, value, and

desirability of a given piece of knowledge."[99] The form of secrecy creates the conditions for the scarcity of itself, where by definition only a privileged, and therefore worthy, few can access a given knowledge. Those who can access this knowledge, and are recognized as having accessed this knowledge, thus possess a form of symbolic capital that is necessarily valuable due to its scarcity compared to other forms of symbolic capital. Urban notes that this form of symbolic capital is unique because it is not exchanged in public, which means that it constitutes what he terms a "black market" of symbolic capital, which of course only makes it more scarce and therefore more valuable.[100] I suggest that Urban is correct about the symbolic power of secrets to their holders, yet Urban glosses over the fact that in a system of secrets, even those who do not have access to the secrets can know that there is a form of secret knowledge. This was the case in Nauvoo: while only a privileged few had access to Smith's secret temple rituals, everyone knew that there *were* secret temple rituals, and everyone had some idea of who was part of them.[101] Even though the vast majority of Saints did not have access to the temple rituals, the notion that particular people, in particular Brigham Young and his allies, were the privileged holders of secrets created a sense of mystique that conferred a unique form of symbolic capital that those outside Smith's "Quorum of the Anointed" (a group of people who had participated in the temple rituals) still recognized because of the knowledge they desired but could not have.

The extensive system of rituals also provided a space for generating symbolic capital. Bell argues that ritualization, by which she means a process of accumulating rituals and participants in ritual, produces and objectifies constructions of power by

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[99] Hugh Urban, "The Torment of Secrecy," *History of Religions* 37 (1998), 220
[100] Ibid., 221
[101] Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 492-7

classifying certain activities and the people who perform them as responses to an underlying "real" condition of the world.[102] This is a straightforward interpretation of the Bourdieu concept of "misrecognition," in which a precondition for authority is that one fails to recognize the arbitrariness of authority, instead seeing authority as natural. In this way, the priest who performs a given ritual is authorized to do so because of a natural condition of superiority, such as being appointed by God. Ritual therefore obscures arbitrariness and facilitates in the misrecognition of authority as arbitrary, generating symbolic capital that undergirds "legitimate" authority. Bell provides a useful addendum, however, when she writes "the power relations constituted by ritualization also empower those who may at first appear to be controlled by them…integral to the processes of objectification…are concomitant processes of consent…and negotiated appropriation."[103] Bell draws here from Foucault's notions of power as operating bottom-up as well as top-down, where it is necessary in order for ritual to function that one consents and appropriates the ritual for one's own ends. In other words, ritual cannot generate authority for the person authorizing the ritual without also generating authority for the person authorized by the ritual, meaning that being subject to a ritual also necessarily implies a form of "negotiated appropriation" by which one consents to the authority of another but also accrues authority for oneself. This is clearly evident in the Nauvoo rites, which are intended to confer exaltation upon the Saint receiving them, as well as further authority to perform the same ritual for other individuals. Thus, participation in rituals generates symbolic capital for both the subject and object of a given ritual and created the conditions for the reproduction of that symbolic capital.

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[102] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 206
[103] Ibid., 207

Finally, the centrality of lineage in the Nauvoo system of rituals also generated symbolic capital. In the context of Chan Buddhism, McRae argues that lineage charts create authority by emphasizing the "Encounter between teacher and student" rather than any particular teaching.[104] Rather than conferring a particular object or knowledge upon the student, the teacher authorizes the student simply by virtue of associating with the student, and conversely the student is authorized due to the encounter with the teacher rather than simply having achieved enlightenment. McRae further argues that this understanding of lineage is "reiterative" because it is intended to be repeated in future teacher-student relationships.[105] I argue a similar process acts in Smith's Nauvoo rituals, which have the common characteristic of involving an encounter between Smith and the individual receiving the ritual, after which that person is empowered in some manner. Thus, the system of secret Nauvoo rituals generated unique and plentiful symbolic capital for the privileged few participating by conferring access to necessarily scarce knowledge, through participation in complex systems of ritualization that (re)produce symbolic capital amongst participants, and strengthening the perceived connection between Smith and his inner circle by emphasizing a lineage relationship in which the primary significance is one of proximity and encounter between Smith and the Quorum of the Anointed. Such a framework illuminates the consequences of Young's participation in the rituals and Rigdon's lack thereof.

Young's role as President of the Twelve accorded him a special connection to the Nauvoo rituals, bolstering his ritual authority. The various practices were introduced over the course of 1841 and 1842, and it was the Twelve that Smith selected to first receive

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[104] John McRae, *Seeing Through Zen: Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 7
[105] Ibid., 8

them.[106] Smith explained them in relation to a new doctrine of "Exaltation" in heaven that was to be accessed through the accumulation of family members "sealed" to oneself through "vicarious baptism," often for dead relatives and plural marriage, ensuring even larger sealed families.[107] Marking participation in this path to "exaltation" was a "full endowment" ritual involving ritual cleansing and anointment followed by participation in a dramatic reenactment of the cosmological process of exaltation.[108] This "full endowment" marked the receiver of the ritual as a member of Smith's "Quorum of the Anointed," which increasingly superseded any other group in the church in ritual authority due to its proximate connection to Smith's secret teachings.[109]

Rigdon did not participate in Smith's development of the Nauvoo system of rituals, meaning that he had not been admitted to Smith's "Quorum of the Anointed" until shortly before Smith's murder. This new quorum was exclusively reserved for participants in Smith's system of rituals, and Rigdon was not admitted until shortly before Smith's death. Even then, as several apostles noted during the succession crisis, Rigdon was "endowed" but he had not received the "full endowment" marking him as a member of the elite Quorum of the Anointed.[110]

Rigdon's decision not to participate in the Nauvoo rituals (until shortly before Smith's death) placed him outside the newly established system of ritual authority, and for most of the Nauvoo period he was a harsh critic of the various rituals. Quinn notes, "During the Nauvoo period, Sidney Rigdon was largely displaced by Smith's Quorum of

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[106] Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 100
[107] Davies, *An Introduction to Mormonism*, 142
[108] Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 103
[109] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 176
[110] Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 353

the Anointed."[111] The most public element of this displacement came over plural marriage, which Rigdon found repugnant. Although he may have been able to keep his discontent private, Smith forced the matter into the public eye when he proposed a plural marriage between himself and Rigdon's daughter in 1842. Nancy Rigdon angrily rejected his advances and informed her family and friends of Smith's behavior, which led to a major feud between the Rigdons and the church as Smith's supporters defamed Nancy Rigdon's character and that of her father in public.[112] Although church leaders including Smith denied any participation in plural marriage, the small size of the Nauvoo community and the publicity the controversies over "spiritual wifery" generated makes it very likely that ordinary Saints knew that plural marriage, in some form, was being practiced by key members of the Nauvoo leadership. Rigdon's public falling out with Smith over the practice would have thus clearly marked him as external to any system of new rituals developing that included plural marriage. Moreover, this certainly diminished Rigdon's ritual authority in the eyes of those who practiced plural marriage: while his opposition to the practice earned him the endorsements of Emma Smith and William Marks, it also spurred the leading Mormon polygamists to return quickly to Nauvoo, panicked that a leader would arise who did not possess the inclination, and therefore authority, to continue plural marriages, a key element of the exaltation they believed they had discovered.[113] Even without the feud over Nancy Rigdon, the proximate cause of Smith's arrest had been his ordering the destruction of a newspaper written by Mormon apostates criticizing Smith for having introduced, among other rituals, plural marriage.[114]

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[111] Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis," 3
[112] Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 295-6
[113] Van Wagoner, "The Making of a Mormon Myth," 163
[114] Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 112

Rigdon's opposition to plural marriage would have thus aligned him with the very apostates responsible for Smith's murder. Rigdon's situation was difficult: either the Saints could join him in condemning plural marriage, although that would necessitate denying that Smith participated in it, or they would tacitly endorse the practice, in which case Rigdon would have a decisive disadvantage in claiming ritual authority.

Reading the Nauvoo rituals as systems for the reproduction of symbolic capital, as I have above, illuminates why this choice, necessarily posed by Rigdon's candidacy, was so problematic for the Saints. Smith had accrued significant symbolic capital by instituting the Nauvoo rituals both amongst those who were privy to the rituals, for whom the rituals (including plural marriage) offered a new means for reproducing their own symbolic capital through ritual practice, *and* amongst those who were not part of Smith's inner circle but nevertheless understood that secret ritual practices existed in some form as the latest expression of Smith's capacity as God's prophet. The inner circle could only jettison plural marriage by divesting themselves of this new form of symbolic capital accrued through ritual practice. The entire body of Saints could only condemn plural marriage insofar as they denied Smith participated in it, denying his most potent stock of symbolic capital during the Nauvoo period *due to* the secrecy of the acts. Finally, should the Saints endorse plural marriage, as eventually became the case, it would undercut Rigdon's most explicit source of support, placing him out of step with the body of Saints. Rigdon's problem conceptualized through the lens of symbolic capital *qua* ritual authority is thus not a problem of quantity but of kind. Rigdon's position either opposing or standing outside the Nauvoo system was necessary in order to acquire the support of Emma Smith and William Marks, but it locked him out of any credible claim to the

Nauvoo rituals which had become a far more potent source of symbolic capital than Rigdon anticipated.

Brigham Young's ability to dispatch Rigdon's challenge through appeal to his unique forms of authority returns us to the problem of Weber's model for routinizing charisma. O'Dea, the chief proponent of the theory that the LDS Church epitomizes the routinization of charisma, writes "Charisma is alien to the established institutions of society…charismatic phenomena…can prolong their existence only by becoming routinized—that is, by becoming transformed or incorporating themselves into the routine institutionalized structures of society." Further, charisma is "fundamentally creative" as opposed to the routinized bureaucracies that arise to maintain that charisma.[115] The juxtaposition between the bureaucratic and the creative appears particularly inapt in describing Young's foundational claims to authority. Yes, Young emerges as leader of the church due to his command over administrative and ritual bureaucracies and due to his capacity to "contain" the revelations of Smith in a way that prevented further schisms, but the claim that Young's process in doing so was anything by wildly creative is to simply accept his own claim to authority. That is to say, it is of course Young's claim, especially in light of his hermeneutical exercise of revelatory authority, that he did not exercise any new kind of authority and merely institutionalized those practices that Smith had already set down, but at every stage of his seizure of leadership, Young pursued a strategy of remaking the church to conform to his own claims to authority. This will become especially apparent as he oversaw the remaking of the church in Utah, but it is already apparent in his creative articulation of the claim of the Twelve in such a way as to frame out any alternative successors such as Rigdon.

[115] Thomas O'Dea, *The Sociology of Religion* (Englewood-Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1966), 23

Young was no successor to Smith, he was just as much a creative prophet; his acts of *fiat* were simply more grounded in institutions that, due to his creative acts of interpretation, appeared legitimized by Smith's continuing presence in the church.

Chapter Four: The Church in Utah

"There's no limit to
What we can do
Me, and you,
But mostly me."

Elder Price, "You and Me," *The Book of Mormon*[116]

Brigham Young presided over the LDS Church from the day the general conference of Saints sustained the Twelve until his death in Utah in 1877. Young seized control of the church during the succession crisis following the martyrdom through asserting his ritual and administrative authority as President of the Twelve while introducing a hermeneutical mode of revelatory authority in contrast to Smith's creative mode of revelatory authority. Young had reorganized the First Presidency by 1847 with himself as President of the Church although he initially presided over the church simply as President of the Twelve to emphasize deference to Smith's lingering authority. Young would preside over a period of tremendous creative growth for the church, including a massive expansion of the Nauvoo rituals and the final realization of Smith's dream of a administrative Kingdom of God in Utah, yet throughout this period Young generally adhered to the pattern he established during the martyrdom of emphasizing and expanding ritual and administrative authority while justifying it as merely extending and interpreting Smith's revelations. In this chapter, I argue that this expansion of ritual and administrative authority as co-constitutive defined Young's authority, ultimately supplanting the concept of Smith's creative revelatory authority. I first examine Young's emphasis upon rapid proliferation of rituals while organizing the exodus to Utah, indicating the importance of ritualized connections to Young's nascent authority. Second,

[116] Trey Parker, Robert Lopez, and Matt Stone, *The Book of Mormon*, perf. Andrew Rannells, Ghostlight, B004X1M4DS, Cast Recording, 2011

I will discuss the exodus and initial settlement of Utah, which constitutes a massive expansion of administrative authority under Young. Finally, I will discuss Young's emphasis in Utah upon interlocking patterns of ritual and administrative authority constructing a society which merged ritualized and administrative connections, creating a new kind of church different in scope and focus from any over which Smith had presided. It is this latter point that makes clear that Young was himself similarly charismatic even through his utilization of 'bureaucratic" kinds of authority.

Pre-Exodus

Young's immediate priority following the sustaining vote of the conference was ensuring the continuity of Smith's Nauvoo rituals. Despite anti-Mormon violence continuing to intensify following Smith's murder, Young delayed departure of the Saints from Nauvoo until the temple itself could be finished. In the meantime, Young oversaw the expansion of the Nauvoo rituals from the elite Quorum of the Anointed to the entire body of Saints. In doing so, Young expanded ritual authority overall and concentrated it in himself as the arbiter and guarantor of such authority.

Young indicated the importance of the Nauvoo rituals in his immediate priorities following seizure of authority, all of which focused on the completion of the Nauvoo temple so that the main body of Saints could begin the process of exaltation. Young decided very early in his Presidency that the Saints would have to abandon Nauvoo and began preparations for another exodus; it is revealing that despite Young's decision to abandon Nauvoo, he did not begin the exodus until 1846, only after the Nauvoo temple had been completed.[117] The temple itself was significantly more complex and expensive than the abandoned Kirtland temple, and the Saints "labored feverishly" even as hordes

[117] Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 123-6

of armed vigilantes terrorized Nauvoo.[118] Before Smith's death, the number of Saints who had participated in Smith's Nauvoo rituals numbered in the dozens; between the completion of the temple in late November 1845 and the beginning of the exodus in February 1846, over 5000 Saints received the Nauvoo rituals as Young worked "night and day, without interruption," to administer the rites before the Saints were again deprived of a temple structure, a key precondition for performance of the rituals.[119] Young's attention to completing the temple and entering the rest of the Saints into the Nauvoo rituals indicates the degree to which his authority was connected to the rituals themselves. Having established himself on the basis of his authority over rituals and Sidney Rigdon's lack thereof, Young ensured that all the Saints were part of the system before they journeyed west.

This prompts a problematic question, however: why bother bringing the Saints into the Nauvoo system? If Young's authority derived from participation in and eventual control over a system of rituals whose defining characteristic for the majority of Saints was *secrecy*, why open the secret to all Saints? Even more problematic, how could Young maintain the authority of the rituals if they were no longer secret and therefore privileged knowledge? Young's decision to bring the entire body of the Saints into the system of Nauvoo rituals indicates their potency on their own terms as systems for producing and reproducing a particular kind of authority (ritual authority). The Nauvoo rituals posit a soteriology of exaltation to be achieved through progress through a series of states mediated by priests. The role of the priest is essential for this process as every stage of the Nauvoo rituals requires a Saint to be baptized, ordained, sealed, or endowed *by* a

[118] Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 128
[119] Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 126

priest, or several priests, which also entails a particular classification as the outcome of a ritual: following the ritual, a relationship between Saints *is* sealed. Bourdieu emphasizes the importance of such patterns of classification in the objectification of relations of authority when he writes, "Every established order tends to produce…the naturalization of its arbitrariness [through] systems of classification which reproduce…the objective classes…make their specific contribution to the power relations of which they are the product by securing the misrecognition…of the arbitrariness of which they are born."[120] The classification of the Nauvoo rituals produced authority for the priests administering them, primarily Brigham Young and other members of the Twelve, by securing an external basis for their position of authority. The priesthood would thus not be an arbitrary relationship between Young and the church, it is rather a relationship authorized in the classifications it produces – sealer and sealed. This ensures the misrecognition of the arbitrariness of authority that Bourdieu identifies as necessary for authority: Young is not authorized to lead the church merely because he happened to be the next in line when Smith died; he is authorized because he can perform the rituals that embody the principles of exaltation.

For Young, the Nauvoo rituals did not simply produce authority by elevating certain privileged individuals within the logic of the rituals; they also expanded the reach of the Nauvoo rituals' authority by including all Saints in some capacity, compelling believing Saints to participate in a system that reproduced its own authority. Much like Smith's earlier move to establish a priesthood comprised of all men in the church, Young moved to create a ritual system that included all Saints within the system of ritual authority, universalizing such authority in the church through compelled consent to his

[120] Bourdieu, *Outline*, 164

ritual authority. In other words, once a Saint had, through ordination into the Nauvoo ritual system, identified exaltation as the goal of LDS life and started on the path to such exaltation by participating in the initial rituals, only continuing to participate in the rituals could further progression towards exaltation. Such participation necessarily involved acquiescence to Young's ritual authority through the form of the rituals, yet the Saint also had to choose to affirm that acquiescence. The degree of choice entailed in the rituals is what truly makes the ritual system "closed" in the sense that it can continue to reproduce its own relations of production of symbolic capital, a necessary condition for Bourdieu.[121] Bell's focus on the necessity of consent and empowerment in ritual frames this dynamic particularly well. While she agrees that this form of ritual produces and sustains hierarchical relations (as articulated above), she also notes that it "empower[s] those who may at first appear to be controlled…integral to the processes…are concomitant processes of consent…and negotiated appropriations."[122] This illustrates particularly well the reason Saints would consent to such power relations: in consenting to authority within the space of ritual, Saints themselves become empowered by participating in the ritual. Saints could access exaltation themselves in return for submitting to systems of reproducing ritual authority. Of course, as Bell implies, such empowerment can be limited, and in the case of the Nauvoo rituals, was a highly effective method for authorizing Young's presidency as a whole. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital can illustrate the persistence of inequality even given negotiated appropriation, for while Saints themselves acquire symbolic capital through participation in the rituals (they receive ordinances, authorities, exaltation above all else), Young and those at the top of

[121] Bourdieu, *Outline*, 190
[122] Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 207

the hierarchical priesthood will always maintain greater symbolic capital. This is because those priests must necessarily participate in more rituals, given the limited number of specialists who can administer the rituals, and because the symbolic capital gained in the ritual system by the person who performs it is always greater than that gained by the person who receives the ritual. Young was thus able to produce an even more effective means of control through ritual authority early in his presidency through the integration of all saints into the Nauvoo ritual system.

I have still not addressed the problem of declining secrecy in rituals that once were powerful symbols of authority due, in large part, to their secrecy. Here, Young effected a key change in the role of secrecy that lasted throughout his presidency. Young transformed the secrecy surrounding the rituals from a mechanism for guaranteeing his own ritual authority against uninitiated Saints (as in the case of Rigdon during the succession crisis) to a mechanism uniting the entire community of Saints against the "outside world." In part, this change in the role of secrecy indicated a change in Young's conditions: he no longer needed to secure his place in a dynamic church hierarchy; instead he needed to maintain a unified body of Saints against increasing persecution.[123] The proliferation of secret rituals permitted the Saints as a whole to imagine themselves as a group united against outside society. Such an outlook came easy for most Saints having suffered violent persecution for over a decade. Introducing the Nauvoo rituals as a secret shared amongst the entire body of Saints gave the Saints a form of collective symbolic capital that promoted unity. This shared secrecy creates, as Urban remarks, "An alternative kind of distinction, communal identity, and symbolic capital, particularly for those groups who are marginalized or deprived of actual capital in mainstream

[123] Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 128-9

society."[124] Although the Saints had long derived communal identity from a shared sense of persecution, secret rituals provided a new "coin" of symbolic capital shared amongst all Saints, recognized and reproduced each time the Saint participated in the ritual system.

Exodus and Settlement

While initiating the Saints into the Nauvoo system of rituals, Young also directed the exodus of the church from Nauvoo to a new location in Utah. The difficulty of the passage to and settlement of Utah required the Saints to move fully to a collective pattern of living. Young exercised control over such collective endeavors as President of the Twelve and ultimately through a reorganized First Presidency. As he did so, he established wide-ranging administrative authority in his own authority over the collective property of the Saints, first as President of the Twelve and later as overall President of the Church in Utah.

Young faced two challenges that he used to centralize administrative authority: finishing construction of the Nauvoo temple despite rising anti-Mormon violence and directing the mass migration of Saints to a new Zion in the West. Both of these objectives stemmed from Young's focus on maintaining and furthering the centralization of church authority, as the former was necessary to begin entering the entire body of Saints in the Nauvoo ritual system and the latter was necessary to later restore the ritual system as Young knew the Saints could not remain in Illinois. As the overriding source of anti-Mormon sentiment since Kirtland had been distrust of the Mormons' centralized

[124] Urban, "The Torment of Secrecy," 242

community built through the "Gathering,"[125] it is telling that Young never even considered abandoning the practice following Smith's death but rather sought to accelerate it. This very fact would prompt Joseph Smith III, son of Joseph Smith Jr., to forbid his followers from gathering in a single location when he formed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) out of Saints who had not followed Young to Utah nearly twenty years later, indicating the pervasiveness of and danger posed by anti-Mormon sentiment. Such a policy would have necessarily involved abandoning the centralization of temple rituals, however, an impossible option for Young given their importance for his claims to authority as well as for the Saints as a whole who saw themselves as finally experiencing the "fullness of the gospel" that Smith had promised when he organized the church. The fact that the RLDS never developed, and indeed explicitly disavowed, anything like the Nauvoo system of rituals indicates the connection developed between the "gathering" and the rituals themselves.

Both of these objectives also required significant financial expenditures, which Young financed through a massive increasing in tithing and collectivization of property. In the short term, work on the temple took over the focus of the Saints tithing practices.[126] In the medium term, Young sent scouting expeditions to prepare the Salt Lake Valley to receive the Saints. As the temple neared completion, Young delivered two commands based on the impending exodus: first, the Saints were to make a complete report of their property and provide whatever was needed to the church; second, they were to immediately begin selling anything that would not be useful for the journey west.[127] As it became clear that the church was unlikely to receive much compensation for the property

[125] O'Dea, *The Mormons*, 64, 72
[126] Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 119
[127] Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 18

they were about to leave behind given their dire circumstances and the surrounding communities' hostility, Young moved to "make up through superior organization what they lacked in economic assets."[128] This superior organization necessarily depended upon central control of what assets there were, which caused Young to accelerate the mass consecration of property in late 1845. This bold assertion of administrative authority in the central apparatus of the church, officially in the care of Young himself as the President of the church, ensured that when the Saints departed in early 1846, that property which was not left behind was understood to belong to the church as a whole under the direction of Brigham Young.[129] Thus, even as the Saints left behind the temple, which housed the temple rituals that formed the strongest initial foundation for Young's presidency, they entered a new era in which the central church hierarchy directed first the movement to Utah and subsequently the economics of settlement in Utah.

From the moment the Saints arrived in Utah, the church was the primary basis of the burgeoning society in the Great Salt Lake Valley. Young divided the Saints into units called the "Camps of Israel." Each camp was organized into units of roughly ten, fifty, and one hundred, with a "captain" at each administrative level overseeing the unit and the captains of one hundred, often members of the Twelve, directly managed by Young. Groups of ten were generally individual families captained by a father, with groups of fifty and one hundred consisting of larger collections of families each headed by higher ranking Saints.[130] This directed movement institutionalized the church hierarchy on a basic level: having personally conducted a census of the Saints in Nauvoo, Young

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[128] Ibid., 19
[129] Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy*, 245
[130] Ernest H. Taves, *This Is The Place: Brigham Young and the New Zion* (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1990), 55

distributed the collective resources for each camp unit, down to the level of the family, strictly according to the project needs of the various Saints, who received their subsistence directly from their proximate captain on the authority of Young.[131] I want to note that, although the body of Saints migrating was by no means small, the migration forced close quarters, and Brigham Young was no aloof administrator governing the Saints from afar. The Saints knew from where their food came: Young's careful management. In this way, the collective wealth of the Saints that permitted their survival as a community also actualized Young's leadership over the church rather than prompting a democratic or anti-authoritarian tendency against Young, for even if such a sentiment had developed, dissenters would have had no way to provide for themselves or any followers along the harsh trail.

Young's management of the trail furthered this notion of a collective centered on "Brother Brigham." The Camps of Israel moved at different rates along the trail, with Young generally in the vanguard. At his direction, the Saints frequently set up temporary settlements along the trail. These "temporary" settlements were temporary in the sense that the camp generally departed from the settlement soon thereafter, but the settlements themselves remained for the next camp to occupy. This meant that as later companies of Saints progressed along the trail, they found housing, cultivated fields, and basic material needs already provided through the largesse of the collective.[132] These temporary settlements fostered the sense of community even further by establishing that even physical separation from each other could not separate the Saints from their community. Despite their isolation on the trail, the Saints therefore were constantly aware of the

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[131] Claudia Lauper Bushman and Richard Lyman Bushman, *Building the Kingdom: A History of Mormons in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 38
[132] Bushman and Bushman, *Building the Kingdom*, 39

broader body of Saints both ahead of and behind them through the material markers they left and received, yet, once again, this sense of collective struggle simultaneously affirmed the administrative authority of the church hierarchy for having successfully managed the trail. After all, without the direction of a central church hierarchy, particularly Brigham Young, the Saints could not have known how or where to place such settlements. This meant that even before they had reached the Salt Lake Valley, a journey that lasted for years for most families, the Saints grew used to depending upon the church hierarchy to guarantee their subsistence on the harsh trail through direction of collective wealth and labor, conditions that Young replicated in Utah proper.

Young ensured that from the moment the Saints arrived in Utah, none of the collective dependence on the church hierarchy evaporated in the new Zion. Young sent an advance party ahead of the main body of Saints to quickly make for the Salt Lake Valley. This advance party constructed houses, irrigation networks, and roads and began subdividing land into individual plots.[133] The advance party planned the arrangement of the city, with the very first plot going to the planned temple, intended to dwarf the Nauvoo and Kirtland temples.[134] Young thus ensured that when the settlers arrived from the trail the church immediately assigned them land, housing, and basic supplies mediated through the already planned space of a city organized by Young and the church. Settlers had little capacity from the start to pursue independence in the "New Zion," and Young ensured that they had little incentive to refuse church planning down to the basic facts of where they lived. This replicated the trail organization even after the Saints had passed over the trail.

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[133] Bushman and Bushman, *Building the Kingdom*, 48
[134] Taves, *This Is the Place*, 69

Kingdom of Rituals

The definitive task of Young's Presidency lay in his merging of administrative and ritual authority once having established the church in Utah. Having expanded the Nauvoo rituals to the rest of the church prior to and during the exodus, and having concentrated total administrative authority under himself during the exodus, Young merged these two authorities in Utah, creating a system in which ritualized relationships between all of the Saints and under Young himself guaranteed an economic system dominated by the church's monopoly over collective resources. In this way, Young created a system capable of producing and reproducing its, and his, authority by ritualizing economic relations and introducing a collective economy that maintained the ritual system (especially the construction of temples).

The performance and maintenance of the Nauvoo rituals guided Young's development his New Zion. It is no accident that when the advance party prepared Salt Lake City for the arrival of the Saints, the very first plot was laid aside for the eventual construction of the Salt Lake Temple.[135] The "Temple Square" itself was the center of the new city, with the rest of the city planned around it. Furthermore, as the Saints labored on the massive and elaborate temple, Young also directed the construction of an "Endowment House" for the performance of most the Nauvoo rituals until the temple was finished.[136] Both of these were financed primarily through tithing, which Young ensured was practiced universally. Young required each male Saint to tithe ten percent of his income and dedicate each tenth day to church labor. Young organized a system in which each ward had a "tithing house" managed by the ward bishop. The ward tithing offices

[135] Taves, *This is the Place*, 69
[136] Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 193

were overseen by district tithing houses overseen by a specially appointed presiding bishop, which were, in turn, overseen by the Presiding Bishop of the church from his office in Salt Lake City, which cataloged and managed the property, legally owned by Brigham Young himself as trustee of the church.[137] The extensive organization of tithing, mediated at each level through the church hierarchy and all officially the property of Young himself, amounted to nearly the entire financial structure of the church.[138] The proceeds of this extensive financial system went to constructing the temple in Salt Lake, as well as the various other temples that began construction, and supporting the families of the Saints in settling throughout the Great Basin.

The harsh conditions of the "New Zion" furthered Young's consolidation of administrative authority over the Saints in Utah. Unlike the lush farmland of the Midwest, Salt Lake City required extensive management and collective labor for the Saints to even survive. Irrigation was a key concern, and the first major public works program the church directed was the damming of various mountain streams in order to creative a sustainable source of fresh water in the valley.[139] The church managed control over irrigation, ensuring sufficient water for each plot, an arrangement that persisted for decades. Church control over the water rights in the valley was so complete that Young created an ecclesiastical position called "Watermaster,"[140] and directed bishops to act as Watermasters in their own stakes, with church courts directed to resolving disputes over water rights.[141] This direct control over the basic livelihoods of the Saints, the vast

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[137] Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 133
[138] Ibid., 134
[139] Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May, *Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation Among the Mormons* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 50
[140] Ibid., 51
[141] Ibid., 55

majority of whom were farmers in some regard, meant that the church hierarchy was directly responsible for both material life and spiritual life, constructing administrative and ritual authority within the same body as an everyday occurrence for Saints in Utah.

These examples indicate the degree to which the church controlled and managed the material lives of the Saints and secured Young's administrative authority, but they also manifested the connection between ritual and administrative authority for Young. Had Young been strictly interested in ensuring the prosperity of the Saints, the Salt Lake Valley surely would have been abandoned as many of the Saints urged during the calamitous first years.[142] What made the inhospitable Great Basin attractive for Young and the Saints was its separation, the only way to guarantee the practice of the Nauvoo rituals. The entire administrative organization that Young developed in the Great Basin must be seen through this lens: in order to perform the rituals that guaranteed exaltation, the Saints needed physical seclusion and elaborate temples. That seclusion necessitated migration to a space in which no existing authority threatened the Saints, in contrast to Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, and New York. In order to survive, and indeed thrive sufficiently to build temples, Young and the Saints needed to establish patterns of economic behavior where no such collective organization existed, which produced the extensive blending of church hierarchy in administrative and "spiritual" (for lack of a better term) affairs.[143] Despite this blending, throughout Young's presidency the church never ceased its emphasis upon the religious nature of its work. The church was therefore a administrative organization that financed, and thus facilitated, the performance of distinctive ritual life, not exclusively, or even primarily, a materially focused administrative organization.

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[142] Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 61
[143] Bushman and Bushman, *Building the Kingdom*, 50

The distinctive contours of LDS communities during this period indicates the pervasiveness of rituals, and therefore ritual authority, within the "Great Basin Kingdom." Young made plural marriage a public practice and emphasized it as the ideal organization for LDS families.[144] This conviction arose out of belief in the importance of exaltation to be obtained from the Nauvoo rituals, of which plural marriage emerged as a key practice. The realities of living in plural marriages, however, lent themselves to the development of cooperative living in the Great Basin, as families grew up bound together by parallel marriages, permitting cooperative sharing of resources.[145] The cooperation, however, was a function of the rituals themselves, or at least the ideal of the rituals, as settlements were organized and organized themselves to facilitate living in plural marriages, with property held in common and collective labor critical for survival. The work of building the settlements was administrative, but the fact that it was carried out through the church hierarchy and through forms of organization that encouraged the ideal of plural marriage indicates the symbiotic nature of these forms of authority.

Young's project of colonizing the Great Basin further indicates the co-constitutive nature of administrative and ritual authority in his presidency. Soon after arriving in Salt Lake City, Young began dispatching teams of settlers to new locations within the Great Basin to build new cities.[146] Young directed the movements of these settlers according to the strategic imperatives of protecting the New Zion in Salt Lake City from any possible encroachment as well as supplying the burgeoning Mormon realm with resources from all over the Great Basin. These settlers never were intended to acquire independent spirits

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[144] B. Carmon Hardy, *Doing the Work of Abraham* (Norman, Oklahoma: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2007), 75
[145] Arrington, Fox, and May, *Building the City of God*, 71
[146] Armand Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 12-13

from the main church in Salt Lake City, however. Initially, these settlements occurred only through temporary appointments Young announced himself during worship services in Salt Lake City, and settlers would return to the plots nearer to church headquarters in a matter of years.[147] The headquarters in Utah also supplied the settlements with resources, including material goods, money, and labor, while also mandating the construction of tithing houses alongside worship houses so that there was a constant pattern of exchange between Salt Lake City and the outlying settlements.[148] Finally, with the only Endowment House located in Salt Lake City, settlers had to return to Salt Lake City frequently in order to perform the rituals that granted them exaltation in the first place.[149] The best representation of Young's manner of colonization in the Great Basin is thus the universality of the tithing house contrasted with the singularity of the Endowment House. Settlers emerging from the fold of Salt Lake City thus were constantly reminded of their role as strengthening the church center, providing the means for the church to perform the crucial rituals while themselves still beholden to those very rituals.

Similar patterns of administrative-ritual authority constructed through dependency existed in the relationship between the church and converts. Despite the move to secluded Utah, the church continued successful missionary activities particularly in Western Europe.[150] With exaltation only possible through the rituals that could only be performed in Utah, these European Saints continued to gather to the central church location. Many of them depending on the church's "Perpetual Emigration Fund," established through tithing proceeds that subsidized the journey and settlement of these Saints by granting

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[147] Ronald W. Walker, *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 1
[148] Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 133
[149] Arrington, Fox, and May, *Building the City of God*, 60
[150] Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*,

them loans.[151] The church hierarchy also aided these Saints through the maintenance of the original trail from the Missouri River to Salt Lake City, dispatching settlers to ensure that migrating Saints received necessary resources to make the overland journey. This was further institutionalized with the development of wagon trains in the 1860s which Young dispatched on a regular schedule to transport Saints from the Missouri to Salt Lake City.[152] These Saints thus arrived in Salt Lake City entirely through the care of the church, and, having arrived, continued to owe their subsistence to the church as it provided them land, shelter, and food, as well as necessary tools for settlement. The requirements of the rituals therefore caused even these foreign Saints, representing an entirely different set of experiences from the original colonists, to integrate themselves into the church's administrative structure. Having arrived, the repayment of the loans compelled them to continue tying themselves to the church hierarchy.

Given the Saints' constant migration, whether from Europe, Illinois, or Salt Lake City, it is perhaps puzzling that the Saints remained such a unitary community under Young's leadership. The answer to this problem lies in the relationships between the migration and the central church structure, as in each case, the migrating Saints faced two key conditions tying them to Young's leadership. The first is that in every case, they were surrounded by other Saints integrated into precisely the same organizational hierarchy. No matter how far colonists traveled from Salt Lake City, they were always proximate to a tithing house that regularly delivered and received goods from Young's central leadership. The second is that the common purpose of each movement was the "building up of the Kingdom" meaning that the Saints drew common purpose in ensuring the

[151] Arrington, Fox, and May, *Building the City of God*, 43
[152] Bushman and Bushman, *Building the Kingdom*, 46

continuation of the rituals despite the array of tasks they may see other Saints performing. Both of these elements of movement meant that the diffusion of the Saints somewhat paradoxically strengthened their connection to the central church hierarchy. Benedict Anderson describes a similar phenomenon in the context of the massive administrative districts that developed into self-conscious nations throughout the European colonies. Anderson argues that the pattern of movements that the citizen of a district undergoes is structured by the confines of the proto-nation. Like the pilgrims of medieval Christianity and Islam to sacred destinations made central "by the constant flow of pilgrims moving towards them from remote and *otherwise unrelated* localities," administrators developed a sense of commonality based on the locus of the travel.[153] The Saints' travel follows a similar pattern, as hordes of Saints crossed into new and unforgiving locations at the behest of the church hierarchy in order to fulfill the promise of the Nauvoo rituals. In these new locations, they encountered other Saints with whom they had nothing but their common Sainthood in common. On the one hand, this unity expands even beyond the specific situation Anderson describes, as their sense of common purpose was magnified by the necessity of collective labor in the Great Basin in order to survive. On the other hand, the sense of authority over this commonality was also magnified by the ever present church hierarchy directing, financing, and authorizing, based on the necessity of conducting rituals in Salt Lake City, their movements.

Young further combined administrative and ritual authority in the enormous church charity programs. Also funded through tithing, the church loaned to prospective migrants through the Perpetual Emigration Fund and redistributed tithing income to poor

[153] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 53-56

Saints in response to difficulties encountered by many Saints in the New Zion.[154] Both cases indicated pervasive control over the conditions of these Saints. The Perpetual Emigration Fund loans were rarely paid back and the church cancelled all debts on them frequently, while tithing is a simple case of charity.[155] Both cases, however, indicate a transfer of material in exchange for loyal participation in the ritual activities of the church. Saints could only hope for the debts to be forgiven and their expenses covered through charity if they were diligent in their adherence to church doctrines, especially in the participation in rituals. As noted above, the impetus for immigrants to even journey to Utah was the performance of the rituals. The fact that their debts could be forgiven after a period living in Utah indicates that Young's main concern was ensuring their continued loyalty to the church after their resettlement in Utah, which would be established following years of participation in the authority-generating systems of the Nauvoo rituals. Bourdieu articulates a similar dynamic at work in describing patterns of "consecration cycles," noting that "Giving is a way of possessing" in hierarchical societies.[156] Bourdieu argues these consecration cycles perform the necessary social alchemy for generating symbolic capital through economic capital, as individuals receiving the "gifts" of charity actually pay for them in symbolic capital that is granted to the giver. In the case of the various social service provisions Young directed, this performance of social alchemy is clear: any Saint will be taken care of by the church provided that that individual integrate into the social structures authorized through the Nauvoo rituals. Thus, the impetus for participating in rituals, exaltation, compelled Saints to integrate into a patterns of

[154] Bushman and Bushman, *Building the Kingdom*, 52
[155] Arrington, Fox, and May, *Building the City of God*, 45
[156] Bourdieu, *Outline*, 195

administrative authority that themselves were authorized through the Saints participations in rituals, which produced ritual authority.

Young presided over the transformation of the church from primarily authorized through Smith's form of revelatory authority to one in which a mutually constitutive pattern of administrative and ritual authority authorized the church hierarchy, headed by Young himself. It is thus fitting that his final actions as President in 1877 consisted of dedicating the first temple, albeit in St. George, Utah, rather than the incomplete Salt Lake Temple, and laying the foundations of two additional temples.[157] The temple is a fitting metaphor for Young's presidency, and the construction of temples dominated his activities as President, beginning with the finishing of the temple in Nauvoo and concluding with the dedication of a whole new group of prospective temples. The temple represents the administrative-ritual system of authority that Young developed: construction of the temple depended on an extensive system of church-directed economic activity directed towards tithing, and the temple itself is the necessary precondition for the performance of the rituals that Young designated as the goal of LDS life. I have argued that Young presided primarily using this system of ritual and administrative authority to organize the LDS church as a ritual and administrative organization during his tenure. This form of authority was distinct from Smith's primarily revelatory authority, yet it seems clearly misleading to reduce the differences in their authorities to "charismatic" and "routine." Young's authority should not be seen as simply routinizing the patterns that Smith began; rather, Young inaugurated a system of authority all his own which, consequently, did not outlive the President himself by many years, as plural marriage and the administrative authority of the church were in rapid decline within a few

[157] Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 387-392

years of Young's death in 1877.[158] The fact that Young himself was the only President to truly exercise authority over this system indicates its uniqueness to him. It is thus far more accurate to say that Smith *and* Young forged creative forms of authority that successor presidents labored to routinize.

[158] Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth*, 1

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Joseph Smith, Jr., and Brigham Young were the first two Presidents of the LDS Church, but this simplistic reduction misses the important ways in which their exercises of authority were distinct. Smith's tenure was largely characterized by Smith's bringing forth of explicitly new revelations. These justified his authority as revelator, and from these revelations, he also established distinct exercises of ritual and administrative authority. Following his death, no clear heir existed for any of his various strands of authority.

Brigham Young's rise to leadership over the church was characterized by an inversion of Smith's formula: while Young exercised revelatory authority in a distinctly hermeneutical mode in order to interpret Smith's existing revelations, he primarily justified his claim through his participation in the Nauvoo rituals and his status as the administrative head of the Twelve Apostles. These two designations meant that he possessed significant symbolic capital unavailable to his prime challenger, Sidney Rigdon, who was shut out of the systems that produced Young's symbolic capital. While Young characterized his elevation to President in terms of extending Smith's established church institutions, his claim to authority was significantly different from Smith's in kind.

Young's presidency continued this pattern by ultimately building a church in Utah vastly different from any that Smith had ever seen. Rather than a collection of believers defined by a general belief in Smith's prophethood, Young presided over a community tightly linked by codependent administratively and ritually defined relationships.

Young's authority was thus qualitatively different from Smith's, marking him as similarly charismatic, albeit through his management of "bureaucratic" institutions.

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