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**Bakalářská práce**

**THE PUBLIC FACE AND SELF-PRESENTATION OF  
SELECTED MINORITY RELIGIONS IN THE USA:  
THE AMISH, SCIENTOLOGY AND MORMONS**

**Adéla Sládková**

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**Západočeská univerzita v Plzni**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

*Plzeň, duben 2015*

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor thesis called *The Public face and self-presentation of selected minority religions in the United States: The Amish, Scientology and Mormons* deals with the image and self-promotion of these religious minorities. The objective of the thesis is to introduce the reader into the issues of these religious groups by description of their characteristic features and to find out how they promote themselves and how they are perceived by American society and finally if their efforts correspond to the results. To depict the differences between these three groups, the thesis will be written by a comparative and descriptive methods.

The thesis will be divided into four chapters. The first three chapters, which are structured similarly, treat each religious group individually. The chapters begin with a brief general overview, which is followed by the subchapter about historical background, to set the topic in historical context. Right after comes the part concerning characteristic features, where the author highlights the most significant hallmarks, which more or less contribute to the self-promotion and public face of the groups. The self-promotion and public face are discussed afterwards. All these three chapters are completed with pictorial supplements, put in the Appendices, to illustrate the text.

The last chapter summarizes and compares all of these minority religions from different points of view, such as appearance, media image, proselytizing actions or accessibility.

The work will be based on the use of printed monographs and internet sources as well as on other types of sources such as e-mail correspondence, interview, documentaries and videos. The monographs are the cornerstone of the thesis, since they are very complex. The internet sources are represented mainly by the official websites of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Church of Scientology, to get as authentic and official information as possible. In pursuit of first-hand information, the author has also established contact with both former and active members of selected religious groups.

To get in touch with the Amish, the contact was made through the blog of the ex-Amish Emma Gingerich, and her ex-Amish friend, who wishes to remain

anonymous, thus her own pseudonym Rachel Hershberger will be used. Both of them belonged to the Old Order Amish group called the Swartzentruber Amish. To be more precise about the group membership, it must be pointed out that the Amish, about whom the author writes, are the Old Order Amish, the most conservative group of this Christian denomination. The specification is needed, because the Amish church is divided within and the rules of each group might differ as it will be told in the second chapter.

To gain an unbiased information about the Church of Scientology, it was necessary to ask both an active and a former member of the Church. The information provided Jefferson Hawkins, a onetime senior marketing executive of the Church of Scientology, and the active Scientologist Lukáš Bechyně, a chief executive and manager of the project *Say No to Drugs*.

And finally, in the chapter about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be used the information from Jiří Ambrož, a Mormon working as a branch manager of the LDS Church office in České Budějovice.

## 2 THE AMISH

The Amish are a Christian denomination named after its founder Jakob Ammann, who established this denomination by the end of the 17th century in Switzerland. [1]

The Amish are divided into four main groups two main groups the Old Order, the New Order, the Beachy Amish and Amish Mennonites in the United States. These categories are further divided into many subgroups which have different rules. For example, the Beachy Amish and Amish Mennonites support and use modern devices unlike the Old Order. [2] The two largest Old Order Amish communities are situated in Lancaster County in Pennsylvania and Holmes County in Ohio. [3]

According to 2010 U.S. Religious Census, "approximately 241,000 Amish adherents were spread across 28 states in 2010. Ohio had the highest number of Amish (59,103), followed by Pennsylvania (58,009) and Indiana (45,144)." [4]

### 2.1 Historical background

During the 16th century, the position of the Church was endangered by the Protestant Reformation originated in the then Germany and spread to Switzerland. A new radical movement, the Radical Reformation, emerged as another branch of the Protestant Reformation and was initiated by illegal rebaptisms of Reformation supporters in 1525. These radical reformers were scurrilously nicknamed Anabaptists, meaning *rebaptizers*, because the first generation of them had already been baptized as infants in the Catholic Church [5]. They refused to baptize infants, because it was believed that a person should be baptized when he or she is able to realize the seriousness and importance of the act. [6]

The Anabaptists dissociated themselves from the Catholic Church practices and soon after the persecutions started and during the next two centuries, thousands of Anabaptists were executed. Forced by the persecution and religious fervour, the Anabaptist movement spread into Northern Europe. One of the most influential advocate of Anabaptism in the Netherlands was Menno Simons who introduced new interpretations of Scripture and left the Catholic Church. He became a strong leader of Anabaptists, thus his Anabaptists followers were eventually called *Mennists* or



*Mennonites*. Jakob Ammann, who originally followed the teachings of Menno Simons, later proposed the renewal in church life according to Swiss Anabaptist pattern, for example holding the communion twice a year, shunning in daily life or banning expelled members from holy communion. [7]

Shunning and expulsion of wayward members was a key issue. Some of the Swiss Anabaptists only banished disobedient members whereas Ammann's followers were forced to exclude them socially as well by shunning. These different attitudes separated lenient Swiss and strict Alsatian Anabaptists at the end of the 17th century, in 1693. Even though both of these branches trace their ancestry to Swiss Anabaptism of 1525, since the division they have followed different ways. [8]

By the persecution and instability, the Mennonites and the Amish were spurred to leave their homelands and resettle in the New World. In the 1737, fifty-four years after Mennonite pioneers, the first larger group of the Amish had arrived to Philadelphia on the ship called *The Charming Nancy*. The Amish founded two new settlements in the Lancaster area, but despite the efforts it was impossible to keep them because of Indian attacks, droughts, crop failures, threatening evangelization and other factors. Thus the Amish settlers from both of these colonies migrated and joined new Amish immigrants. During the years, the Amish had been purchasing more and more fertile soil of Lancaster County which was transformed with hard work of farmers and kindly climate into agriculturally rich and prosperous area. Through centuries, Amish communities spread to other states and their number has been continuously increasing up to the present. [9]

## **2.2 Hallmarks of the Amish**

The hallmarks of the Amish culture fully contribute to their self-presentation. The recognition of the Amish is very easy from the first sight due to the characteristic features of their culture as clothing, hairstyling or transport. Cardinal values of the Amish culture are tradition, simplicity, humility and austerity. [10] The more they honour these values, the more satisfied they are. All of their values and attitudes are in stark contrast to individualism of modern culture.

### 2.2.1 Rules and values

The Amish are particular about observing the rules of the so called *Gelassenheit* that plays the role of law. All about the rituals, interaction with the outside world, values, personal qualities, allowed colours, clothes material, style of dress and their length, how to comb one's hair, trimming beard and the like is expressed in this German word which bears the meaning of *submitting to a higher authority*. The rules of *Gelassenheit* might seem repressive to modern society, but they have redemptive character and symbolic meaning for the Amish. [11]

This principle of obedience set out for the right way, permeates the whole Amish life. "Obedience to the will of God tops the hierarchy of Amish values" [12], thus every Amish member has to be obedient. Children to their parents, a wife to her husband, all families to the deacons, ministers and bishops. And every member must be obedient to the will of God. To disobey *His will* is considered as a resistance and will result in shunning or later excommunication. The bishop is entitled to expel this person, but "in hopes of winning him back". [13]

As a behavioural pattern, the Amish follow the so called *Ordnung*. Behind this term the prescriptions and proscriptions touching all spheres of Amish lives are hidden. It is not written down, but every Amish knows it naturally. Little children learn it from early age by observing the adults. The *Ordnung* adherence is different family by family or church district by church district and according to the behaviour of Amish individuals it is possible to find out how much someone is yielded and submissive to God. [14]

### 2.2.2 Clothing

As for clothing, the Amish follow unambiguous rules. The dress is a key tenet that joins the community together and marks it off the rest of the world. Amish garb has several functions: it keeps the tradition, shows the submission to the collective order, builds symbolical boundaries of their culture, creates common consciousness, promotes equality [15] or signals stages of mourning [16]. Amish attire is based on simplicity and modesty and these principles have not changed since the times of Jakob Ammann.

It is prohibited to wear jewellery, wedding rings and wrist watches are no exception, also using makeup, wearing latest fads, ostentatious hairstyling, commercial

clothing and so on. All of this is rejected by the Amish, because it could reveal a proud heart and self-exaltation and that is not in accordance with the principles of *Ordnung* and *Gelassenheit*. [17]

Amish women, little girls and even baby girls wear a bonnet to cover their hair in braids fastened around the back of the head, to express their inferior position to men and the God. The colour, style and the size of the bonnet are changing according to the age of the girl and marital status. Amish female dress length depends on the age of its wearer. Girls and younger women wear them below their knees, older women wear longer. Only solid colours are allowed - grey, blue, green, purple, wine and black, which is worn to religious services and funerals. Since the age of eight, Amish women wear aprons over their dress at all times and capes to cover the top half of their dresses at dress-up occasions. An essential part of the women's garb are black stockings that are worn by all females except babies who wear white and more progressive women who wear the nylons. [18]

As women have to plait their hair in braids, men have to abide by hair rules. The appendix n. 1 shows as well that men's unparted hair must be cut by the earlobe and the bang is cut in the middle of the forehead. Unmarried men shave all their beard until marriage. Since the marriage, an Amish husband shaves his upper lip, but his beard rests untrimmed. The full beard functions symbolically as a wedding ring which is forbidden to wear just as other jewellery (see appendix n.1). [19]

Men's wardrobe is simpler than the women's. Typical sign of Amish men is a wide-brimmed hat made of black wool for winter season and of straw for the summer. Amish males wear *broadfall* trousers held by suspenders since wearing belts is prohibited, shirts, vests and different types of coats for different purposes. Sack coat for work and a frock coat for special and church occasions. Allowed shirt colours are typically blue, green, purple or wine, but main colour of men's clothing is black by contrast to white - the colour of death - in which all Amish are buried. [20]

All these rules might seem complicated, but they help to prevent the Amish religious and ethnic identity from fading away. For example, the Amish garb may seem to be restrictive and actually it really is individuality restrictive, "but it frees them [the

Amish] from the burden of choice" [21], because they do not have to waste their precious time in shops stressed by the latest trends (see appendix n.2).

### **2.2.3. Transportation**

One of the most peculiar symbols of the Amish is a horse-drawn buggy (see appendix n.3) which has been little bit transformed to get along with modern regulations. Although the Amish use different types of carriages, the grey buggy is the most famous. The buggy serves the Amish as the car serves the modern society, but with a little difference. The car expresses the inequality of people whereas the buggy expresses the equality of the Amish. [22]

The horse and the buggy are very important to keep the tradition and play the role of time determiners and the Amish do not want to give up their buggies, because it would mean the submission to fast pace of modern society.

The buggy has not changed since the early 20th century [23], but today it is equipped with facilities ordered by law such as large triangle reflector, battery-operated front lights, turn indicators and flashing tail lights. This equipment, according to the Amish, makes the buggy look worldly, too resembling cars, but the safety concerns prevailed and the Amish had adapted to this regulation. As the Amish profit from the modern society, the fully enclosed buggy (including the windscreen and sliding doors) is permitted since the 1960s [24] but if it is allowed or not, it depends on the district conservativeness.

### **2.2.4 Deitsch**

Another quintessential feature of the Amish is their language. It might seem that the Amish are strictly separated from the "outside" world by restrictive rules, but actually they are not isolated absolutely. A tool of particular integration as well as separation is their language. All Amish speak German dialect known as *Pennsylvania Dutch* or *Pennsylvania German*, called *Deitsch* among the Amish, as their mother tongue and English as the business language. They start to learn English at the Amish schools. Rather than English they use *Deitsch* to preserve their 'ethnic identity', thus they speak English with a slight accent and are sometimes searching for English words. [25]

### 2.2.5 Technology

In the Amish order, there exist many taboos concerning any sphere of Amish life. Strict rules of the *Gelassenheit* and the *Ordnung* have the aim to avoid the high-mindedness and worldliness, because these qualities could be fatal for the community. The acceptance of modern amenities depends on following factors: the novelties that generate economic benefit and moreover are unseeable are more acceptable, in addition the novelties must be tied to their ethnic identity and adaptable to the *Ordnung*. [26]

The conjecture that the Amish defy all of the technology and live like hundreds of years ago is completely false. Generally, the Amish are not against technology, they are just careful about what they permit to penetrate to their lives. For their willingness to adopt some of new progressive technologies, the Amish are sometimes seen as hypocrites by the outsiders. [27] The decision whether to adopt the technological features that facilitate the Amish lives is made after careful consideration with regard to the impact on traditional living.

The Old Order Amish distinguish the difference between ownership and use, so they strictly reject owning telephones, cars, television, computers, (video)cameras and everything electrically-powered while using car as a fellow-passenger is allowed. It must be also said that the bans on automobiles or telephones vary district to district. [28]

For illustration of the Amish willingness to make compromises, a scooter should be mentioned. The scooter is neither car nor bicycle, so it is allowed to use them for local travelling. Regarding public transportation, the Amish have no problems with buses, trains or boats, the only exception are the airplanes. [29]

The Amish are not allowed to own driving license, to own a car, to drive it or finance it. On the other hand, they can share a drive in the car with non-Amish drivers or hire the drivers. Despite the fact that the car ban is very flexible, its ownership and its use will never be permitted. It would mean the loss of control from the Church side. [30]

An objection could be raised - the Amish own the tractors and other kinds of field machinery. The reason why not to ban this agriculture equipment is that they

support the agriculture in an adequate way and it is not used too often. The equipment that is self-propelled is banned unlike the machinery, like balers or harvesters, that could be horse- or mule-drawn. Like that the Amish life will not lose its slow and balanced pace and will not become fast and stressed. [31]

#### **2.2.5.1 Telephone**

The telephone, as a modern communication tool was banned mainly because it avoids face-to-face communication. The communication via telephone is unclear and one cannot be sure how the things that the caller says are thought, due to the impersonality of this kind of messages and the lack of the context and body language. If we compare the English and the Amish in the question of using telephones, modern society is very dependent on it, whereas the Amish did not let the telephone dominate their society. [32]

Telephones, that are sometimes shared by families or whole communities, are placed in barns, shops or in the "telephone shanties" (see appendix n.4) staying apart of Amish houses. Despite the telephone ban in homes, the Amish are allowed to use outside telephone in case of emergency, if they need to call veterinary surgeons, to order supplies or to contact family members living far away. [33]

#### **2.2.5.2 Electricity**

Electricity lies off limits in the Amish homes as well, because of the fear of the distraction that comes with it. It may cause serious consequences as total dependence on electrically-powered appliances or bringing other equipment to Amish homes. [34] For this reason, another symbol of the Amish culture is the lantern that replaces electrical lightning. Because of the electricity ban, all kinds of gadgets like freezers, dishwashers, blenders, televisions, DVD players, video games and other modern home comforts cannot be found in the Amish house.

Nevertheless, the electricity is not banned from the Amish homes absolutely. The Amish can use it, again within limits. The use of electricity is employed only in necessary cases - for example for flashing red lights on their buggies, electric fences are powered also by electricity or the bulk tanks are set in motion by electric motors, etc. [35]

### 2.3 Public relations and self-presentation

The Amish had found three ways how to deal with the participation in or the separation from larger society. Firstly they adapted and struck a compromise between their values and modernity, like in the case of buggy lights, telephone shanties, acceptance of synthetic materials, flush toilets, gas fridges and so on. Secondly they fought for their convictions in the case of school attendance and hard hat regulation. Thirdly they banned progressive features, because they could bring other facilities that would destroy the Amish identity.

Against the separation of Amish communities from the outside world, mutual dependence increased. The Amish need gas cylinders, fertilizers, to know forecast and a many other services of doctors, veterinarians or real estate agents while the non-Amish depend on the Amish goods and tourism resulting from their unusual lifestyle. [36]

Although the gap between the Amish and the outsiders has widened, there are many common features to both sides. The Amish obey the law despite having their own in the *Gelassenheit* and *Ordnung* and they pay taxes as the English do and vote if they want to. [37]

Actually, the Amish do not have elaborated self-presentation strategy (unlike Scientologists or Mormons) and do not make any effort to establish and develop it. A part of their non-intended self-presentation is their clothing style as it was discussed above, but they are mostly represented by their deeds. They do not seek any kind of popularity, that is the reason why they do not use their names if they publish their works. [38]

The Amish represent themselves as naturally forgiving and hardworking people.[39] They are well-known for their handmade quilts and gazebos that are being sold to non-Amish. A lot of Amish families own shops, usually in close proximity to their homes, where they sell everything from furniture to shoes, thus the communities are self-reliant and saved from the outside influence.

Despite their self-reliance, without the university diploma the Amish do not have any chance to occupy specialised posts. The Amish try to work on their own farms or in

their businesses. If they are employed, they try to work as close as possible to their homes. Amish men do not work only in agricultural sector, they hold positions in non-agricultural jobs, they work as plumbers, painters, masons or in mobile work crews and so forth. [40]

#### **2.4 Public face**

The Amish are seen as hardworking and decent people known for their mutual aid and supportiveness that is not limited by the faith boundaries. "The American society perceives them as people who are forgiving and prefer to be living a simple lifestyle." [40]

The Amish are viewed generally in a positive light yet the US society has prejudice against them. "In recent years there was some prejudice against the Amish when they refused to use "slow moving" triangle on their buggies, because they refused to honor the "English" authorities request because it [was] against the Amish religious beliefs to use any bright colors. Some Amish men even went to jail for it. There also has been prejudice against the Amish faith, school, family, etc." [42]

There is nothing hidden about the Amish, everything was said or written but still "there should be more truth out about how they get away with illegal things because they are viewed as perfect people." To be fair, it must be mentioned that even within such close-knit and isolated communities, several controversies occur as well. The crime is not common at all "as they keep the principle of non-violence" (mail!), but sometimes the newspaper headlines talk about drug dealing, drying-out cell sobering or shooting. [43]

The Amish lifestyle has become very profitable as a tourist attraction paradoxically thanks to the Amish insubordination to modern life. The tourists regard the Amish as people from the past in a good way. The Amish are seen as isolated and self-sufficient people who deserve to be respected for their economic and farming skills, hard work and at last but not least for well-behaved and good children. [44] The tourism creates high number of jobs and a selling market for Amish goods and provides another income source. The negative side of tourism in Amish settlements is that brings so many people at the same moment to normally calm and peaceful places. [45]



The Amish are also seen as old-fashioned people from a different century and represent very attractive topic for media producers and writers. Media try to be authentic and original, whereas "most books make it look the Amish have the best world ever." [46] And this results in very frequent cultural exploitation of the Amish in TV shows, films and books. As for many seasons of reality shows like *Breaking the Amish*, *Amish Mafia*, *Meet the Amish* and so forth they enjoy great popularity in the United States, viewers are interested in this 'unexplored' field of American culture. The TV show makers picture the Amish 'genuinely', but in the opinions of two former Amish girls is diametric difference. According to Emma Gingerich, "all of these reality shows are not real", on the other side by Rachel Hershberger (pseudonym) "these TV series are pretty much real".

To make a documentary about the Amish is a different issue. The Amish who participate on filmmaking risk shunning or worse the expulsion from the church. To be posing, recorded and photographed is strictly forbidden, so if they agree on their participation, they must have really good reason for that. [47] Although the Amish culture is exploited by the English, they resist to modernity with keeping their traditional lifestyle.

### 3 THE CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

Scientology is a quite new religion, which was established in the United States in 1954 and developed by Lafayette Ron Hubbard and nowadays led by David Miscavige. The headquarters of the Church resides in Clearwater, Florida and the Church claims more than 11,000 Organizations, so called *Orgs* where the *Sea Org* is the elite, spread worldwide. [48] Scientology, like other religions, is also involved in a variety of social betterment programs in service to the larger, secular society. [49]

"The word *scientology* was created by compounding two loanwords : Latin *scio* that means *study of* and Greek *logos* that means *knowing*." Thus it could be said that Scientology is a study of knowledge. [50]

"Scientology is a religion that offers a precise path leading to a complete and certain understanding of one's true spiritual nature and one's relationship to self, family, groups, Mankind, all life forms, the material universe, the spiritual universe and the Supreme Being. Scientology addresses the spirit—not the body or mind—and believes that a person is far more than a product of his environment, or his genes." [51]

Nevertheless if a precise definition is given, it would be a little bit difficult to define Scientology. It is seen from different perspectives as a religion, a philosophy that could be applied on everyday life or as a dangerous cult. [52]

The Church of Scientology declares that its biggest struggle is the betterment and improvement of human society that is possible only by making people *Clear* and help them develop their scientology skills what will finally result in improvement of memory and communication prowesses or work and many other aspects of human life. [53]

Within the Church of Scientology, "they put the accent on personal ethics, because Scientology is only for honest people". The Scientologists claim that they improve their lives by solving problems from past lives. What is solved will not have to be taken in consideration in future lives, all the bad is gone. [54] On the other hand, former members speak differently. According to them, its goal is not the best society,

their efforts are aimed at people in difficulties and willing to give all of their property to the Church for its own preservation. [55]

As for the number of active members of the Church, it must be said that there exist more statistics which differ - the statistics presented by Scientology itself and results of official surveys. To quote official Scientology data, "Scientology is represented in more than 150 countries and has circa 10 million members". [56]

On the other side, former scientologists claim these statements are false. According to the graphics exposed on the blog of Mike Rinder (a onetime spokesperson of the Church of Scientology), the truth is that the Church of Scientology has no more than 40,000 members (only 25,000 in the United States). [57] This information was confirmed by Jefferson Hawkins, a former top marketing executive of the Church, who had the access to scientology actual membership statistics. In his opinion "Scientology simply invents figures, because there were never more than about 40,000 of Scientologists worldwide and it is possible that it had been reduced to 25,000 members." [58]

### **3.1 The founder of Scientology**

To get the picture about Scientology, it is necessary to present its founder Lafayette Ron Hubbard (see appendix n.5). He was born in 1911 in Nebraska and died in 1986. By the Church he is nearly idolised, said in promoted scientology statements he was a brilliant storyteller, explorer, philosopher, writer, sailor and war hero, who wrote "more than 5,000 writings and recorded 3,000 lectures" on the human mind and spirit. [59]

However, the investigations of several authors show L. Ron Hubbard in a different light. Mr. Hubbard was not a good student, he left the college without a degree and even his career in the navy was not that impressive. He tried his luck in journalism as a freelancer, but he soon got tired of writing adventure stories and discovered the science fiction genre. He became very prolific author, published several books and his most famous piece called *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* saw the light of the day in 1950. [60]

Soon after its publication, Dianetics became a bestseller and remained in this position during next years. That time, Dianetics was seen as something revolutionary thanks to the mood of society in 1950s and 1960s. In fifties, the society was traumatized by the World War II and was looking for affordable mental health care thus the interest in Dianetics was booming. In sixties, the mood was rather experimental so people were searching something new and spiritual and Dianetics met these requirements very well. [61]

Thanks to the success of Dianetics, a set of thoughts and methods on the metaphysical relationship between the body and mind whose aim is to heal, were evolved and L. Ron Hubbard founded the Church of Scientology. Besides all the principles and rules of the Church, Hubbard invented also a special terminology of Dianetics and Scientology, that sounds very scientific and logic to laymen.

### **3.2 Dianetics**

Dianetics is considered forerunner of Scientology. On the one hand Dianetics handles the human mind and deals with the influence of mind on the body. On the other hand, Scientology is a science which deals with the rehabilitation of someone's personality and helps to develop its potentials - to be less easily influenced. [62]

Since that time Dianetics was published, it has been translated into many languages and adapted to modern technologies, thus it is also distributed on DVDs and is downloadable online, but the main ideas remained the same. Dianetics and later Scientology are based on the conviction that human mind is divided into two types - analytical and reactive mind. [63]

Analytical mind is used consciously and is to be kept while the reactive mind is better to leave. It is believed that the reactive mind is full of negative *engrams* (translated as a memory/flashback) a source of all problems. When we talk about the reactive mind, we talk about the place of all painful experience, stresses, the source of psychosomatic illnesses, doubts and irrational behaviour. [64]

The goal of Dianetics is to get rid of the reactive mind, heal the soul and get to the so called stage of *Clear* (see 3.3.4). Hubbard originated several methods how to reach the Clear stage and the most important one is so called *auditing*. [65]

### **3.3 Hallmarks of Scientology**

#### **3.3.1 Auditing**

"*Auditing session* is a kind of therapeutic process enacted between the auditor, who leads it, and so called *Preclear*, the audited person who needs help. The process can last several hours and its aim is to find the *basic-basic engram* from which all harmful *engrams* unwind. By removal of the *basic-basic* the soul is rehabilitated from all negative thoughts and other *engrams*. The sense of auditing lies in repetitive recalling of negative experience, the *engrams*, until they have no influence on the audited person and become harmless." [66]

#### **3.3.2 E-meter**

An *electropsychometer* (see appendix n.6), *E-meter* for short, is a device working on similar principle as a lie detector and catching "the tiny electrical fluctuations under the surface of the skin that occur at moments of excitement, stress or physical pain." [67] Thanks to the E-meter it is possible to detect negative memories that are to erase from the reactive mind by *auditing* during which the e-meter could be used.

#### **3.3.3 Purification programme**

The Purification programme is a stage that every new member must go through obeying the rules that are: buying and using ordered vitamins produced by the Church at best, physical exercises and taking sauna to purge the body from harmful substances. The purification programme opens the way to spiritual development and free the body from drugs and toxins, poisons from the past, pesticides. All of these substances will be excreted by sweating in sauna and the member will be feeling livelier than ever before. Everything happens under the surveillance of a supervisor, another Church member. After the purification process, it is usually advised to the new member to pay for auditing sessions to go step by step on the *Bridge* to the stage of *Clear*. [68]

#### **3.3.4 The Bridge to Total Freedom**

*The Bridge to Total Freedom*, or *The Bridge* in short, plays very important role in Scientology. The Bridge is a *Scientology classification, gradation and awareness*

*chart of levels and certificates* (named by Hubbard), elaborated and detailed table (see appendix n.7). It is divided into two parallel parts, *Training* on the left side and *Processing* on the right side. Between them lies the scale of awareness level. The membership in the Church of Scientology starts with the Purification program which is situated at the bottom of the Processing part. A Scientologist advances step by step to the stage of Clear until which he or she is audited by an auditor. The stage of Clear means that the member is freed from any damaging influence on his or her mind and body. [69]

After the *Clear* stage ensue *OT levels*, when a member is able to practice auditing on himself or herself. The abbreviation *OT* stands for *operating thetan*. Theta, the eighth letter of Greek alphabet, means *a soul* for Scientologists so *operating thetan* means a spiritual being. (L. Ron Hubbard created the word *thetan* by adding a consonant -n to refer to infinity of these souls.) [70]

Those, who had reached all of *OT levels* move to the left side of the *Bridge* to become an auditing person of other members. The auditors are "masters of communication and seen as angels in Christianity, because they help people to dismiss all the bad from their minds. Ideally every Scientologist would finally become an auditor. After all of these levels, the member reaches *Total Freedom* with all this adoption of auditing techniques and teachings on every aspect of life. [71]

### **3.4 Self-promotion**

The Church of Scientology describes itself as a religious organization with millions of believers. As a complex organization it provides education, sport activities, arts and improvement in any aspect of members' lives. Scientology simply helps to achieve their goals by teaching them how to overcome unwanted influences slowing them down. The image of healthy, nice, educated and happy people who profit from everyday life is fostered by every single statement of the Church. They seem to have no problems and if they do so, auditors are there to give succour.

"The Church of Scientology tries to present itself in a positive light, as a benign organization that helps people." [72] As it was mentioned before, the goal of Scientology is an all-embracing betterment of the World. The Church of Scientology

claims that through dianetic and scientology methods people can improve their memory and communication skills, it also teaches people how to deal with everyday struggles easier and find the most effective way of living.

The first impression of meeting Scientologists is evaluated by former members as very positive. At the beginning, the Scientologists are nice, caring, helpful and listening. This is called *love bombing* - a newcomer feels very well, safe in a homely atmosphere. Above all Scientologists are ready to talk enthusiastically with a potential member about anything concerning L. Ron Hubbard, Dianetics and Scientology, thus it is easy to get grabbed by their convincing arguments. [73]

The first touch with the Church of Scientology takes place very often by promotional events providing all necessary information about its teachings and also offering *free stress/personality tests*. Using the E-meter, they ask questions and do not stop short of personal ones to find negative *engrams* which will be shown on the E-meter. Their methods usually appear reliable, because in majority of cases, there is hidden something sore in the mind of a potential member that must be cured. [74]

### **3.4.1 Promotional materials and welfare organizations involvement**

To attract and gain new members, The Church depicts itself as a religion from which the newcomers will only benefit. The Church produces masses of promotional materials, from free colourful leaflets, for example *The way to happiness* (see appendix n. 8), to bulletins and instructional videos that are available on the internet in shortened versions. By other means of self-promotion could be considered promotional events such as openings of new scientology centres, operating language schools or helping after natural catastrophes and raising of public awareness, for example by campaigns against drugs, helping programmes, etc. For instance three programmes mentioned below are best known.

The Church adverts to their links to an organization called Narconon that supports Hubbardian theories to help drug-addicted people to recover from their addiction. [75] Through this organization Scientology achieves very good results and gets new members.

Criminon is another example of programme to help people change their lives. It aids criminals to restore their lives by teaching them how to improve their skills, to this day is available in 200 prisons over the US. [76]

Volunteer Ministers, also called the Yellow Angels, whose watchword is "Something can be done about it", is a programme that had been found by L. Ron Hubbard in 1970s. Within this programme, volunteers are gathered and sent to the mission where they are needed. It touches mostly natural catastrophes or political disasters like terrorist attacks. [77]

### **3.4.2 Celebrity membership**

The Church is fond of pointing out their connections to the world of famous people, who are very important for the world-wide promotion. Keeping celebrity membership is a very elaborated PR strategy, useful for the Church and profitable as well. Apart from being representing faces of the Church doctrines, celebrities are very generous donors. Another reason for celebrity endorsement is taking focus away from controversies of the Church.

At the beginning of the Church, Hubbard wrote a list of celebrities to attract and recruit, among those were for example Ernest Hemingway, Pablo Picasso, Marlene Dietrich and many others. To lure celebrities, Hubbard characterized them in his book *The Science of Survival* as "higher being(s) who build new world" and Scientologists were instructed to bring them and many others to the auditing. [78]

Celebrity recruiting is applied for obvious reasons. As celebrities are high-profiled, they can easily propagate the ideas of the Church and it is sure they will be listened to. They could also spread the religion among their celebrity fellows and like that the influence of Scientology increases, making the Hollywood world reachable for ordinary people who would be proud of the same membership as their famous colleagues. Celebrities embody results of scientology teachings and it gives everyone a chance to be successful as they are.

Celebrities represent the upper class of believers, thus they deserve and can afford a preferential treatment within the Church. For this reason the Celebrity centres are built (appendix n.9), where the best auditors are employed, the atmosphere is more



informal and special services and advantages are provided, such as private and immediate auditing session wherever the celebrity is, special curative techniques or private driver. [79]

The Church uses the method of *love bombing* to keep in touch with ordinary people, as for celebrities a method of *admiration bombing* is used and is targeted to two major groups of celebrities. Firstly to young and naive actors, who want to make a career whose insecurity and doubts are considered as a result of reactive mind. One of this-kind-celebrities was John Travolta in 1970s. He was inexperienced and susceptible to depression. He joined the Church which helped him to achieve success in his professional life. Second cluster to be caught are well-known languished stars who want to refresh their reputation. The most famous Scientologist that belongs to this group of stars is Tom Cruise, the most ardent celebrity disseminator of the scientology faith (see appendix n. 10). [80]

Among other celebrity members more or less willing to talk about the Church are actresses Kirstie Alley, Juliette Lewis (both of them entered the Church through Narconon to give up their addiction), Anne Archer and others.

### **3.5 Public face**

"Despite the fact that Scientology tries to present itself in a positive light, as a benign organization that helps people, the public perception of Scientology is overwhelmingly negative in the United States." [81] "The public mostly perceives the Church of Scientology as a cult. The organization is very aggressive in trying to discredit anyone who criticizes it." [82] The Church refuses any accusation of being a dangerous cult and fiercely refers to its success in various fields, e.g. Narconon, Yellow Angels, etc.

The negative perception of the Church has got worse as more and more onetime members are speaking out about techniques and practices used by the Church. [83] The ex-Scientologists talk about facing humiliating treatment, psychological abuse and even about brainwashing. The scientology methods are developed with the aim to make the member obedient and able to perform any task for the Church. Anyone who stays against and doubts about the Church is considered a *suppressive person* (see 5.5).

### 3.5.1 Controversies

More than for its teachings and principles, the Church of Scientology is known for the controversies that is associated with.

#### 3.5.1.1 Money

The very first sight Church betrays a great fortune of the Church. Thanks to contributions from generous donors as well from ordinary members, the Church can afford anything. Official scientology sources claim that every contribution to the Church is voluntary and any event or programme is sponsored from these contributions. Nevertheless Scientology is a faith where money is really needed, because the charges are imposed on everything from books to vitamins or auditing sessions. [84]

There are two sorts of people who come to the church, but both of them have at the beginning the money to spend them on scientology products. Firstly those people are attracted by logical arguments of the faith and want to know something new. Secondly people who are vulnerable, being in troubled waters.

Former members identically confirm that Scientology is very expensive religion. Most of them run into debt since the prices for auditing sessions were unpredictably high. If it happens that the member has no money to afford auditing sessions, the Church will 'mercifully' offer him or her a loan which could be paid back when his or her situation gets better. [85] Thus a member of trusting nature will receive the loan and pledge more tightly to the church and run into debt again and again.

The intention of Scientology is to keep the member within the church as long as possible, because members bring money. The goal is to give the impression that a member need more auditing sessions to be finally clear enough to be happy. The longer the member stays inside, the more auditing sessions he or she needs and the more money he or she spends as going up on *the Bridge to Total Freedom*. Then it happens very often, that people flee out of the church without any money or property and in debt to the Church in additional.

### 3.5.1.2 Purification programme

Another controversial issue is the Purification programme. There is nothing peculiar about sauna and running, but what can really pose problems are the vitamins that must be taken over a period of the purification process. People are told that they can excrete harmful substances from their bodies by taking sauna and exercising and by taking vitamins. By purifying their body, they purify their souls, that is the point.

The member who runs the purification programme is ordered to use many kinds of vitamins which are produced by Clearwater scientology laboratory. This would not be shocking except that the dosage of those vitamins is exorbitant. For example Niacin (vitamin B3) - normally, its recommended dosage reaches to 35 milligrams a day while within the Church it must be taken from 100 to 5,000 milligrams per day. This amount of vitamins is suitable for drug-addicts or alcoholics, not for health people. Using these amounts of pills could result in injury to the kidneys. [86]

### 3.5.1.3 Fight against psychological medicine

Scientology is known for its relentless fight against psychiatry and psychology. Scientologists proudly say that they "are the only world organization that goes against psychological medicine even with an active investigation. It is proved by Hubbard's experiments since 1930s that ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and other mental disturbances are lies invented by psychiatrists." [87] Scientologists fight against psychological medicine and medicaments used to heal or at least deaden mental illnesses, not only by active investigation. Besides that they campaign, create educational programmes, record films, organize expositions and have even built a museum called *Psychiatry: An Industry of Death*. [88]

When speaking about psychological medicine, one of the main reasons why Scientologists hate psychiatrists and psychologists is the imputation of blame that the psychiatrists were responsible for sending people to concentration camps during the World War II and decided who was to die or survive. According to scientology doctrines, the Church helps all people to develop their personalities to be the best at anything they want to. And this, said by Scientologists, is unwanted for the

establishment which must keep people under control with the assistance of psychological medicine not to improve their skills and lives. [89]

#### **3.5.1.4 Former members harassment**

"Leaving the Church is voluntary, only honest people stay in and those who made a mistake want to quit the Church, because they are aware of their faults. Then we try to bring them back to the Church, to help them." [90] By the Church members people leave because they incur troubles by their unethical behaviour and they do not know how to deal with, they decide to go away and finally slander the church unjustly.

In fact, the members who decide to leave the Church, do that on the base of their own sobering. They escape from the Church secretly, very often in debt and leaving family inside. The main motive is that they cannot stand the abuse and psychological pressure often described as brainwashing. After some time they realize that everything was a scam that dispossessed them. [91]

What is considered by former members as harassment, is called *Fair Game* and defended by the Church as an effort to show them again the right way of living. Scientologists do not pursue the defectors, they just want to remind them their debts to the Church or their only place to live. [92]

#### **3.5.1.5 Lisa McPherson**

The most serious scientology controversy that tarnished the image of the Church was the case of Lisa McPherson that happened in 1995 in Florida. In this case the Church was charged with two felonies: abuse of a disabled adult and practicing medicine without a license. Finally after long legal proceedings, her death was claimed accidental. [93]

Lisa McPherson was a devoted Scientologist who died of pulmonary embolism after being in the care of the Church members in Clearwater. She was involved in a minor traffic accident after which she was transported to the hospital for psychiatric evaluation. As the Scientologists oppose psychiatric treatments, they took McPherson to Scientology's Hotel and cared for her for next 17 days. [94]

McPherson had been healed there on the basis of scientology principles and techniques and her condition had deteriorated rapidly. When it was decided that it would be better to drive her to the hospital, she did not survive the transportation. According to official scientology statement, the death of Lisa McPherson was a result of sudden illness. [95]

All of the controversies are part of Scientology's public face and the list mentioned above is not complete. A new film from the HBO production called *Going Clear* reveals other controversies such as torturing of wayward members, wiretapping of members or about the existence of prison camps. [96]

## 4 THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a religion established 6th April 1830 in upstate New York by an American prophet Joseph Smith [97] and is informally called the Mormon Church. The rules of naming this Church are given on the official website of the Church and the tendencies are rather to avoid the *Mormon* designation, despite the fact that 'Mormon Church' is considered and its nickname. If a shortened version of the Church name is needed, it is recommended to use the versions of *The Church* or *The Church of Jesus Christ* to stress their crucial figure. To refer to the members of the Church, the uses of "Latter-day Saints" and "Mormons" are both officially acceptable. [98]

The Latter-day Saints are a significant religious minority in the United States today [99]. According to the Mormon latest official statistical report for the General Conference in April 2015, the Church of Jesus Christ has 15,372,337 members worldwide, thus it may be called the fastest growing religion. [100] The Mormons form the fourth largest religious denomination of the United States. [101]

The headquarters of the Church is situated in Salt Lake City, Utah. Mormon temples are built around the world, actually they are 144 temples in operation and the Church contributes to its dissemination by sending missionaries, currently 85,147 of them, all over the world. [102]

### 4.1 Historical background

The birth of this very American religion is set to the times of Second Great Awakening in the United States, the period of religious transformation. During that time, the religion was separated from the state control thus it resulted in the possibility to revival and set up new different religious denominations. [103]

Joseph Smith, the founder and the first prophet of The Church of Jesus Christ was born in 1805. Since the age of fourteen, Joseph had series of visions. The most significant was the revelation of God and his son Jesus Christ. Once when Joseph was praying, he saw Jesus and his father above him. Joseph asked Jesus which religion is the right one to join and Jesus answered him that all established churches are wrong and for that reason Jesus commanded Joseph to set up a new Church. Thus the Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in 1830 by Joseph Smith determined by God as a prophet who speaks for Jesus and must be obeyed by Church followers. [104]

The declaration of The Church was controversial, because it set the United States to biblical context and saw itself superordinate to other religious denominations. All that resulted in hostility and hatred of non-members who considered its tenets too bizarre to believe.

## **4.2 Hallmarks of the Church of Jesus Christ**

### **4.2.1 The structure of the Church**

The Church of Latter-day Saints has its specific structure. The Church is divided into geographic areas (such as Europe, Caribbean, Asia North, etc.) which are divided into stakes consisting from five to twelve larger congregations called wards or smaller ones, the so called branches. [105]

The authority structure is strictly hierarchical and is dominated by men. Women members are primarily responsible for the care, socialization, teaching of children and social welfare programmes. Their activities are traditionally associated with their roles of wives and mothers, because the family presents a core value of the Church of Jesus Christ. [106]

The highest authority holds the First Presidency chaired by President, currently Thomas S. Monson as the 16th President of The Church, and his First and Second Counsellors. Together with Quorum of the Twelve Apostles they are the most important governing bodies of The Church. Other authorities are namely: Presidency of the Seventy, First and Second Quorum of the Seventy, Presiding Bishopric, Relief Society General Presidency, Young Women General Presidency, Primary General Presidency, Sunday School General Presidency and Young Men General Presidency. [107]

### **4.2.2 Beliefs and rules**

The beliefs of Mormon faith are based on volumes of holy scriptures called the *Standard Works*. The Mormons believe in the *Bible*, the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the *Pearl of Great Price* and the *Book of Mormon*, which is the most important. The *Bible* represents the word of God, *Doctrine and Covenants* contains principles of Mormon

teachings, *Pearl of Great Price* collects selected revelations and writings of Joseph Smith. [108] Besides these four scriptures, the Mormons follow the Articles of Faith that summarize the fundamental believes. [109]

*The Book of Mormon*, subtitled *Another Testament of Jesus Christ*, is believed to be written by Joseph Smith. Actually, Joseph Smith was translator who miraculously translated to English golden plates, on which the story of the Book of Mormon was engraved, from the language unknown today to us. Smith was led in 1820s to those golden plates buried near to his house in the then state of New York by the angel Moroni. The Book of Mormon contains the story how Jesus went to America after his resurrection as well as writings of several prophets that deal with the teachings of Mormonism. [110]

Apart from the family, the virtuousness is the cornerstone of Mormon values and rules. Obeying the rules is unquestionable, because it was God who commanded them. There exist many rules organized in detailed manuals, serving very well for the development of self control, following from the *Word of Wisdom*, a part of *Doctrine and Covenants*, generally covering lifestyle issues of the Mormons. [111]

By following their rules the Mormons contribute to their self-presentation. To stay virtuous, Mormons for example cannot take and use harmful and addictive substances like drugs, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages and hot drinks (tea and coffee). Additionally it is recommended to eat healthy and adjust one's diet - to reduce the meat as the main part of food, to eat a lot of fruit and vegetable, legumes or cereals, etc. [112]

The body is protected by the law of chastity, the members are ordered to dress chastely (no plunging necklines or short skirts and shorts, etc.) Tattoos and body piercings, except one pair of modest earrings for women, are banned. [113]

As for sexual discipline, members must be sexually pure before entering into marriage. Sexual intercourse out of marriage is regarded sinful as well as pornography and homosexuality. [114]

The rules encompass even the language of members. In another manual is said "Profane, vulgar, or crude language or gestures, as well as jokes about immoral actions,



are offensive to the Lord and to others. Foul language harms your spirit and degrades you." [115]

### **4.3 Self-presentation**

The members of the Church of Jesus Christ are representing themselves by their moderate lifestyle. They promote their teachings in an easy manner and do not try to impose their faith on anyone who does not want it. The Mormons consider themselves Christians, because they follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, who is the pivot of the Church. [116]

#### **4.3.1 Missionary work**

The missionary work plays very important role in the Church's self-presentation. Many of young men and women are sent to the world to serve their mission that is to become an ambassadors of God and spread their faith (see appendix n. 11). To become a full-time missionary means to quit almost completely previous life and submit to new and even stricter set of rules and concentrate entirely on the mission. [117]

Before leaving to serve the mission, these missionaries have to go through the Missionary Training Centre to make sure that they all will disseminate the same and unchanged doctrines. Therefore the teachings of the Church are identical throughout the world. In these centres they acquire the language of the country they will be sent to and are taught to establish the contact with possible converts and explicate them their faith. They learn how to address people dealing with any kind of difficulty and help them to find the right way to solve it. As the representatives of Jesus Christ they are instructed to share the Gospel with everyone. [118]

During the two year mission, missionaries give up their first names, boys are called Elders and girls Sisters [119]. The missionaries are working unpaid all two years long and never get whole day off. They work in pairs and spend all the time together to prevent each other from temptations and straying. They cannot even try to be alone, they do simply have to stay in sight of each other. [120]

### **4.3.2 Tithing**

The Church of Jesus Christ is one of the richest religions in the World. [121] Every member has to devote the tithing, one tenth of member's income, to The Church. Thanks to the law of tithing, The Church is not dependent on the state and funds itself, it can afford building temples, funding missionary programs, provide education or distribute help wherever it is needed. [122]

### **4.3.3 Temples**

Thanks to the law of tithing, the Church can afford building spectacular temples (see appendix n. 12), which have a special significance for The Church. "Temples are houses of the Lord, the most sacred structures on the earth." [123] After the dedication, temples are accessible only to baptized Church members. The most crucial ceremonies, both for the living and dead, as baptisms or weddings, take place right there. Entering into marriage is sacred for the Mormons as "couples swear to be together even after their death." [124] The Church accepts solely a faithful opposite-sex marriage, the homosexuality is regarded as a serious sin. [125] A happy family life is another of the core values of The Church therefore the Church establishes Family History Centres, which help members and non-members to learn about their ancestry. [126]

### **4.3.4 Abortion**

To the family, a question of abortion is related. The Church is strictly against abortions, because "human life is a sacred gift from God. Elective abortion for personal or social convenience is contrary to the will and the commandments of God [and] Church members who submit to, perform, encourage, pay for, or arrange for such abortions may lose their membership in the Church." In the case that pregnancy stems from the incest or rape or health circumstances of mother or child are not favourable, abortion should be considered only after a consultation with local Church leaders. If a woman becomes pregnant out of marriage, it will be recommended to marry with the father of the child. Nevertheless if it is impossible to establish family like that, the baby should be placed for adoption. [127]

#### 4.3.5 The Fast

Moreover, the Mormons respect the law of the fast. Once a month they observe the fast for 24 hours and the means that are saved up are given to a special fund from which they take money to provide help to anyone that needs it, even non-members. [128] This issue mingles with the humanitarian aid they participate.

Following Joseph Smith's verses as "We are "to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to provide for the widow, to dry up the tear of the orphan, to comfort the afflicted, whether in this church, or in any other, or in no church at all...", the Church realizes its potential by organizing and participating humanitarian aid programs concerning various realms such as eye care, clean water access, providing wheelchairs and so forth. [129]

#### 4.3.6 The Mormon Tabernacle Choir

In the artistic world, the Mormons are represented by the 360-member volunteer Mormon Tabernacle Choir through which they dispense their faith and integrate to the society (see appendix n. 13). Thanks to its popularity and high standard, the chorus is called the *America's Choir* and has won some of prestigious awards like Grammy or Emmy. [130]

#### 4.4 Public face

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is very anxious about its public image. The Mormons themselves are aware of their public perception, in their opinion they are seen as a *strange lot*, because people do not know exactly who the Mormons are and what they do [131]. The majority of Mormons themselves say that American people as a whole are unformed about Mormonism, but they also claim that the acceptance of Mormonism as a part of mainstream is on the rise [132] despite the fact that people keep their prejudices and it is very difficult for the Mormons to break them.

The Mormon public face has changed over times. From the very beginning, they were feared as unknown and mysterious religious movement. Then their reputation ameliorated paradoxically thanks to the Great Depression, "when articles about the self-sufficiency of the Saints in additional picturing them as good citizens doing ordinary

things" were published. [133] Since that time, the perception of "The Church has moved from negative to positive, from being a population of dangerous and alien people to being 100 percent patriotic Americans." [134] To sum up, the Church of Jesus Christ's image has changed from outcast to mainstream accepted by the majority. [135]

What damaged Mormons' reputation the most, was the rule of polygamy to which they are still associated however they try to get rid of it. In the past, they were even persecuted for it. It is true, Mormon society had practised plural marriage according to God's commandment since its establishment, but this order was about to cease after a revelation to quondam president of the Church Wilford Woodruff in 1890. [136] The matter of polygamy lays still in front of the Church despite the fact that with polygamy is associated with another denomination of the Church. Plural marriage is practised by the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which detached itself from the LDS Church in 1890 when plural marriage was banned. [137]

The public face of the Mormons is mostly made up by neat missionaries (appendix n.--) with nice behaviour, who walk door to door to spread their religion and look for souls to save. Obeying the rules, The Mormons are very particular about their appearance, because they know that it would be easier to attract possible converts. All members of the Church are always neat and elegant, because it is believed that their bodies are physical frame that must be taken care of. [138]

The public face of The Church depends largely on media. Whatever is published is also accepted by the society as an unshakeable truth. Unfortunately in the past, published information was not accurate and led to misinterpretation of the Church's beliefs and practices. Today, the media have much more influence and could be dangerous for The Church due to general ignorance of their teachings and rules. In general terms, people know only few features without any context of Mormon lifestyle and it results in distorted information. For the sake of these misinterpretations, the Mormons are sometimes mocked for some of their rituals. For illustration, it refers to the underwear temple garment, symbolism within The Church and mysterious rituals. [139]

The Church members are active in public relations. An impressive number of American Saints have or do serve as leaders at every governmental level, including

federal cabinet secretaries, presidential advisors, legislators, ambassadors, national party officials, and mayors. [140]

An important role in the public face of the Mormons plays the presidential campaign of the first Mormon presidential candidate Mitt Romney, which was organized in 2012. During his presidential campaign, the Mormon topic was propagated in television advertisements and even a musical about Mormons was played on Broadway. All of this has been dubbed by the media a *Mormon moment* and contributed to make the Mormon public face more accessible. [141]

The public face of the Mormons is rather positive than negative as it follows from the survey of Pew Research Centre. When the indicators were asked to give a one word definition, more people stated positive expressions, for example "good people", "dedicated" and "honest", but the public knowledge about Mormon religion has not increased very much. [142] Thus the Mormon faith remains in a shroud of secrecy, because of their unwillingness to talk about inner issues of their Church.

## **5 COMPARISON OF SELECTED MINORITY RELIGIONS IN DIFFERENT ASPECTS**

In this chapter, the Amish, Scientologists and Mormons are compared from different points of view that contribute to their public face and self-presentation. These aspects are namely: appearance as an important aspect of self-presentation; media as a powerful means of improving or destroying their image; proselytizing actions and accessibility through which the contact with non-members is established and terminology used to describe non-members and the attitudes to them.

### **5.1 Appearance**

The appearance is the main part of the Amish self-presentation. They are apparent from the very first sight with their typical clothing style and transportation means as it was described in detail in the second chapter. Observing the clothing rules, they express and keep their religious and ethnic identity.

The Mormons also have their own rules expressed in the *Doctrine and Covenants* concerning clothing style and even language. They are always neat and tidy, men in suits, women in elegant skirt or trouser suits and the youth not in provocative clothes. From the first sight, it is possible to recognize the Mormon missionaries when they are wearing name tags.

Within the Church of Scientology there is no special dress code for ordinary members. But the members holding higher posts are dressed more formally and the *Sea Org* members wear navy uniforms.

### **5.2 Media image**

As it was mentioned in the chapter about the Amish, they represent very attractive topic for media despite the ban on getting photographed or talking to camera under the threat of shunning or excommunication. The Amish are frequented by documentarians as well as film or reality show makers, writers and investigators. The Amish are portrayed as people, who are fully devoted to God, live simply, but having their own problems as other people. Their media representation is rather positive than

negative although sometimes there appear news about scandalous behaviour of the Amish that is appealing for the non-members.

The Mormon faith is also a catchy topic depicted in many films, books, theatre performances and so on. Especially during the *Mormon moment*, the Mormonism has been portrayed by various means such as musical or TV advertisements.

The Church of Scientology is mentioned in the media mainly in a controversial context. Despite its efforts to represent their faith in a positive light, they are perceived negatively, in addition as America's most secretive religion, because of their two-level teachings that is revealed only to chosen members. [143]

### **5.3 Proselytizing actions**

In proselytizing, the eagerest are the Scientologists. They seek for being a mainstream religion, trying to impose their religion on anyone. A person can meet the Scientologists on public places offering *free stress/ personality tests*. With the use of the *E-meter* and persuasive arguments, the Scientologists will always discover something in one's mind that is needed to be removed by their procedures. At the beginning, they only recommend to buy L. Ron Hubbard's books and study them. When a person shows interest in Scientology, the Scientologists start to practise *love bombing*, but sooner or later they will become fiercer and pressure possible converts. [144]

Contrary to the Scientology, the Amish are not active in the proselytizing at all, because they have no intention to become a mainstream religion. To be the Amish, a person must be born inside the community, or it is possible to convert to the Amish by living according to their rules for a year and like that prove his or her seriousness of the intention to become an Amish. The only people the Amish want to persuade about the rightness of their faith are the ex-members in pursuit of winning them back to the community and let them realize the right way of living. [145]

The Mormon way how to disseminate their faith among non-members lays in the middle of the two ways mentioned above. The Mormons spread their religion especially through missionaries, who try to establish contact with non-members and talk to them about Mormonism. Their method of proselytizing is not aggressive at all, so if people are not interested in, they just let them be without any pressure.

## 5.4 Accessibility

To establish a contact with the Old Order Amish is difficult. As it was said, they do not use telephones or the internet, so generally the only possibility how to get in touch with them is by regular mail or to contact former members. On the other hand, some of the Amish are progressive and have their own webpage where they offer their services or write blogs on the Amish topic.

On the other side, to contact the Mormons is easy. They are modern people, who use both as face-to-face contact and electronic means. They are active on social media propagating their faith in a virtual way and their interrelated websites are updated every day. Generally, they are seen as neat, friendly and nice people without ulterior motives to recruit member at any cost. Their intentions are the best to help others.

To come into contact with the Church of Scientology is nothing unattainable. A person can join the Church easily for example through direct recruiting or the dianetic centres that are spread over the world. The Scientologists have also adapted to the modern world, thus their online promotion is very elaborated and offers for example online free personality tests, Hubbard's books or online courses.

## 5.5 Terminology and attitudes to non-members

The attitudes are reflected in the terms used to describe the non-members. The Amish distinguish their own Amish world and the world outside the community, the so called *English* world. As it was written, the Amish do not strictly isolate themselves, but cooperate with the *English* within allowed limits on business. [146]

The Mormons call themselves the *Saints* and others are officially described as *non-members*, *non-Mormons* or *Gentiles*. [147] The *non-members* are not seen as enemies, to the Mormons they represent possible souls to save.

L. Ron Hubbard invented a special terminology for Scientology and the terms referring to non-members are rather pejorative. For example an expression *wog* means the non-Scientologist, to be *declared* as a *suppressive person (SP)* signifies someone wicked who is expelled from the Church and not allowed to speak with members anymore. A phrase *potential trouble source (PTS)* stands for someone who is in contact



with the *suppressive person* and who is considered sick, because that could be the only reason of *PTSness*. [148]

## 6 CONCLUSION

As it was stated in the introduction of this thesis, the key objective is to discover and describe, how three chosen minority religions, the *Amish*, *Scientologists* and *Mormons*, represent themselves and how they are seen in the United States. The reader has been introduced to the culture of each minority religion to get the picture about it.

The United States is a very religious country, thus it looks suspiciously on anything that is not mainstream, especially if it concerns religion. It was discovered, that the means of the self-presentation of these three religious groups are different as their public faces despite the fact they have something in common.

It was found out that the self-promotion efforts of these churches do not correspond much to their the public faces. Thanks to the development of technologies, the means of self presentation have changed as the public face as well. Whereas the Amish resist the progress, the Mormons and Scientologists have adapted very quickly. Nevertheless the Amish are indifferent and careless to their self-presentation and public face, their culture has become very attractive and popular topic for non-members thanks to its mysteriousness. By the American society, the Amish people are seen as people living perfect lives at a slower pace in contrast to modern people. Thus the Amish are perceived the most positively, also because they have no mainstream intentions and do not try to impose their religion on anyone.

On the other hand, the Church of Scientology gives its all to the self-promotion and is wary about its image. The self-promotion efforts of Scientologists are viewed as aggressive and are perceived negatively. The Church of Scientology is more and more often designated as a dangerous cult, which deprives a person of everything. The image of Scientology is also tarnished by the controversies that accompany it.

The Mormons stay somewhere in between the Amish and Scientologists. They are seen as a secretive sect, because they are still considered connected to polygamy practising Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and strange temple rituals. The Latter-day Saints honestly try to make the best impression, but their teachings are often misinterpreted and the Mormons feel misunderstood, thus they try to avoid this unfavourable association.

Very interesting was the recognition that the churches have the influence on former members even after they left. Two ex-Amish girls, who contributed to this bachelor thesis, remain believers despite feeling restricted inside the Amish community. Contrary to Scientology where former members do not follow scientology teachings anymore and do not hide their grudge towards the Church.

It was little bit difficult to analyze the Amish self-presentation and public face, because of no possibility to contact active members. Fortunately ex-members were willing to share their experience. As was the active Scientologist, who was the most convinced believer that the author has ever seen.

It was also surprising that it was found only negative information about Scientology, thus it was difficult to remain objective. As there were many positive things about the Amish and Mormons, about the Church of Scientology were far more negative.

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## **9 ABSTRACT**

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to find out how selected minority religions present themselves in the United States and how they are perceived by American society.

The work contains four main chapters, in which mingle the theoretical part and the results of a practical research. The first three chapters deal with each of religious groups individually. The structure of these three chapters is almost the same - the chapters are divided into subchapters discussing the historical background of religious minorities, their specific features, self-promotion and finally their public image. The fourth chapter concerns with the comparison of religious groups from different points of view. From the thesis it is deduced that the self-presentation efforts do not always have to correspond the public face.

## 10 RESUMÉ

Cílem této bakalářské práce je zjistit, jak se vybrané náboženské skupiny ve Spojených Státech prezentují a jak jsou americkou společností vnímány.

Práce se skládá ze čtyř kapitol, ve kterých se prolíná teoretická část s praktickým výzkumem. První tři kapitoly se věnují každé náboženské skupině jednotlivě. Struktura těchto tří kapitol je téměř stejná - kapitoly jsou rozděleny do několika částí, které pojednávají o historickém kontextu náboženských skupin, jejich specifických vlastnostech, sebeprezentaci a nakonec o jejich image na veřejnosti. Ve čtvrté kapitole autorka práce srovnává náboženské skupiny v různých aspektech. Z práce je možné vyvodit závěr, že snahy těchto náboženských skupin nemusí vždy odpovídat kýženému výsledku.

## 11 APPENDICES

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Available from: <http://www.ign.com/boards/threads/how-is-david-miscavige-shorter-than-tom-cruise.454397791/> [Retrieved 13 April 2015]

### 11.11 The Mormon missionaries with the Book of Mormon

Available from: <http://religionandpolitics.org/2012/05/17/the-long-approach-to-the-mormon-moment/> [Retrieved 13 April 2015]

### 11.12 The Mormon Temple in Salt Lake City with a statue of Angel Moroni on its top

Available from: <http://www.ldschurchtemples.com/saltlake/> [Retrieved 13 April 2015]

### 11.13 The Mormon Tabernacle Choir

Available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/facebook/9369477/Mormons-turn-to-Facebook-evangelism.html> [Retrieved 13 April 2015]

Appendix n. 1, The Amish couple with a traditional hairstyles and garb



Appendix n. 2, Amish girls and unmarried man in traditional clothes





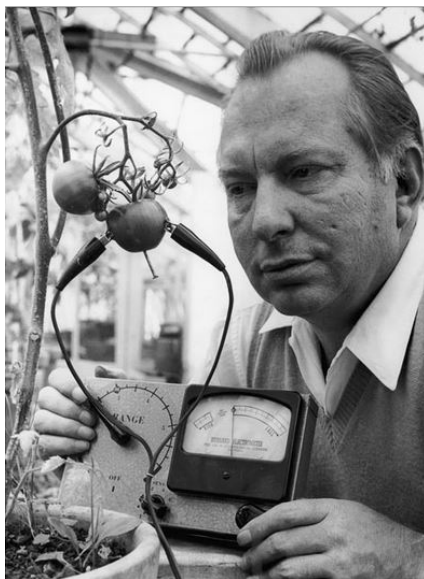
Appendix n. 3, The horse-drawn buggy and an Amish house with the barn



Appendix n. 4, The telephone shanty



Appendix n. 5, The founder of Scientology Lafayette Ron Hubbard during his experiments



Appendix n. 6, The E-meter





Appendix n. 7, The Bridge to Total Freedom

# THE BRIDGE TO TOTAL FREEDOM

SCIENTOLOGY CLASSIFICATION GRADATION AND AWARENESS CHART  
OF LEVELS AND CERTIFICATES

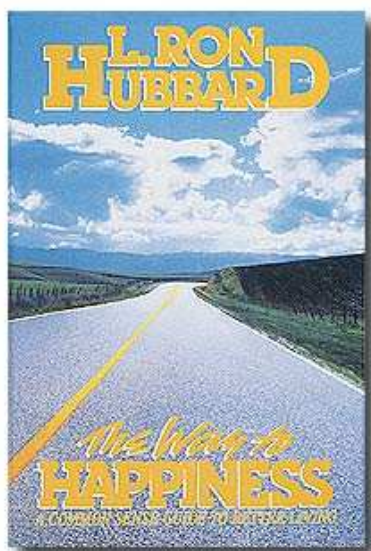
**TRAINING**

**PROCESSING**

**DIANETICS AND SCIENTOLOGY INTRODUCTORY SERVICES**

**DEFINITIONS**

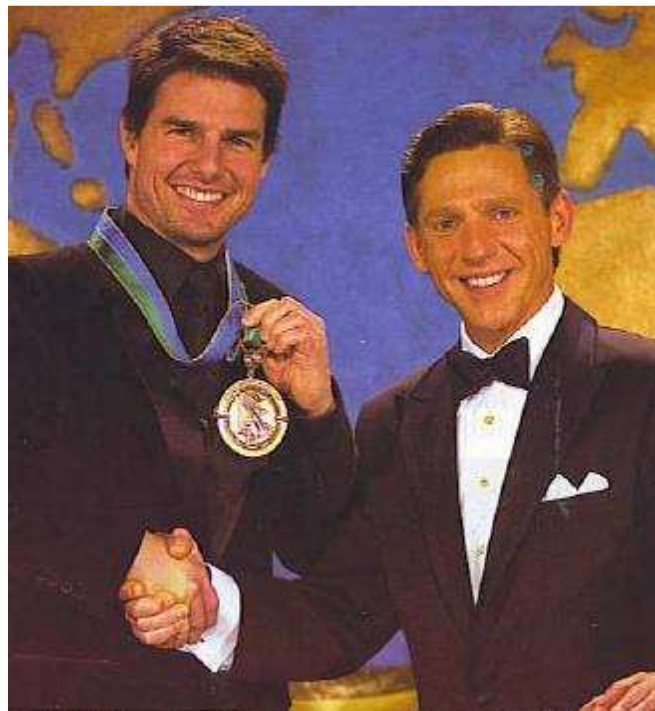
Appendix n. 8, The way to happiness



Appendix n. 9, The Scientology Celebrity Centre in Hollywood



Appendix n. 10, Tom Cruise and David Miscavige





Appendix n. 11, The Mormon missionaries with the Book of Mormon



Appendix n. 12, The Mormon Temple in Salt Lake City with a statue of Angel Moroni on its top



## Appendix n. 13, The Mormon Tabernacle Choir

