

JOURNAL OF UNIFICATION STUDIES

VOLUME III

1999-2000

40TH ANNIVERSARY FORUM: THE UNIFICATION CHURCH IN AMERICA

Turning Points: Ten Defining Moments
in the History of the Unification Tradition
in America *MICHAEL L. MICKLER*

Dynamics of Messianism *ROBERT M. PRICE*

The Unification Church:
Theory vs. Practice / Ideal vs. Reality *FREDERICK SONTAG*

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and the Concept of Unity in Unification Thought

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The *Journal of Unification Studies*, a journal of the Unification Theological Seminary, is a forum for committed engagement with Unification theology and practice, addressing concerns of the theological community and the professional ministry. To clarify foundational issues in Unification theology, the *Journal of Unification Studies* welcomes commentary and critical studies of texts and doctrines, as well as historical studies of the Unification Church and the life of its founder. To promote dialogue and understanding, it invites papers from diverse viewpoints which engage Unificationist themes, as well as papers which build bridges to other communities of faith. To foster living spirituality, it welcomes essays discussing the relationship between theology and practice. To address contemporary social, cultural, political, scientific and economic issues from a Unificationist perspective, the journal solicits social commentaries and reviews of current books, films, and media.

The *Journal of Unification Studies* is published annually by the Unification Theological Seminary, 30 Seminary Drive, Barrytown, New York, 12507. Annual subscription rates are \$10 in the United States, \$14 overseas, and \$15 for institutions; discounts are available for multiple issues. Make checks payable to the Unification Theological Seminary. To order call 845-752-3012. Submissions and inquiries may be sent to the editor by mail at the above address, by fax to 845-752-3014, or by e-mail at awilsn@valstar.net.

ISSN: 1097-1769

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40th Anniversary Forum: *The Unification Church in America*

Forty years have passed since the first Unification missionaries landed on American soil: Dr. Young Oon Kim on January 4, 1959, David S.C. Kim on September 18, 1959, and Col. Bo Hi Pak on March 14, 1961. The movement that these notable Korean elders planted in America has grown and developed, recording notable accomplishments and worrisome setbacks as it responded to the challenging leadership of its founder. Whether willingly or not, it has had to adjust to demographic changes in its membership and to the circumstances of an American culture alien to its Korean origins.

It is appropriate that this issue of the *Journal of Unification Studies* features four articles addressing this theme. Each of them raises questions about how the movement has fared in America's past and recommends how it may better adjust to an American future. Michael L. Mickler engages the historian's task of putting the 40 years of the movement's history in America into a meaningful perspective. He offers a framework with which to understand its twists and turns, sifting out the most essential "turning points" from other events.

The other three papers each raise the question, "Whither the Unification Church?" from different vantage points. Robert M. Price applies his wide knowledge of historical messianic movements to examine the dynamics that inevitably accompany a messiah's passing and his movement's accommodation to stubborn worldly realities. While judging the Unification Church, due to the strength of its theology and its thoroughly modern approach, to be better prepared than most to weather these changes, he lays out several choices that will inevitably confront the Church in years to come.

Federick Sontag has been an observer of the Unification Church for longer than most. He raises important questions about how the movement can hope to expand in the United States without accommodating to American culture and transcending the sometimes-constricting cultural attitudes of its Korean leadership. His critical yet sympathetic assessment ends with a heart-felt call for reform.

While some might dismiss Prof. Sontag's remarks as the "unspiritual" opinion of an outsider, the same cannot be said for Tyler Hendricks, former President of the Unification Church. Yet, echoing Sontag, Hendricks also

suggests new approaches for the sake of church growth—central to which is relating with the religious spirit of Protestant America. He looks at the history of America's most vital Christian movements and the practices of its most successful Protestant churches for background, and then notes that some of their best practices have already been utilized by the Unification movement's most successful ventures, past and present, and are in fact implementations of Rev. Moon's teachings.

All in all, the papers in this 40th anniversary forum paint the picture of a living movement that is confronting tensions in the twin desiderata of remaining faithful to its original founding impulse and working effectively in the surrounding culture. In the midst of these tensions, the church can be expected to spawn creative new initiatives for years to come.

—*The Editor*

TURNING POINTS: TEN DEFINING MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNIFICATION TRADITION IN AMERICA

Michael L. Mickler

Mark A. Noll's *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* offers an intriguing model for assessing the development of the Unification tradition in the United States. What Noll, a widely published Protestant evangelical church historian, essentially does is to survey two millennia of Christian history through the lenses of twelve "critical turning points." He admits this is a "subjective exercise" but suggests that it affords the opportunity "to bring some order into a massively complicated subject." He also argues that it enables one "to linger over specific moments so as to display the humanity, the complexity, and the uncertainties that constitute the actual history of the church, but which are often obscured in trying to recount the sweep of centuries." In addition, he maintains that it allows for a more focused interpretation of events, actions, or incidents.¹

If Noll is bold enough to encapsulate nearly two thousand years of Christian history within the confines of a dozen decisive turning points, it should not be an insurmountable task to specify ten defining moments in the forty-year history of the Unification Church and Movement in America (1959-99). Yet even this more limited undertaking poses significant challenges. In

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his account, Noll traverses well-worn paths and has the benefit of hindsight and accumulated perspectives. Hence, he writes confidently of “decisive moments” and critical turning points. The Unification tradition presents an entirely different set of circumstances. As a first generation religious movement, its path is less deeply grooved, and the historical record from which it can draw is only in the earliest stages of development. Therefore, it is more instructive to write of “defining” rather than “decisive” moments. To this end, I have selected events that exerted a formative influence and contributed in fundamental ways to the movement’s emerging sense of identity. Second, I have attempted to select events that crystallized previous trends and related occurrences. Finally, I chose those events that provided focus and direction for future development. In each instance, I specify the historical context, rationale for inclusion, and each event’s significance not only for developments in America but also for the Unification tradition as a whole.

1. Establishment of HSA-UWC, September 18, 1961

Four missionaries planted the Unification tradition in the United States during the 1960s. Young Oon Kim, a former professor of New Testament and Comparative Religion at Ewha Women’s University, Seoul, Korea, arrived on January 4, 1959. David S. C. Kim, a former government official and one of five members with whom Rev. Moon established the Unification Church in 1954, arrived later that year on September 18th. Col. Bo Hi Pak, a military officer and diplomat who served as a military attaché at the Korean Embassy in Washington, D.C., arrived on March 14, 1961. Sang Ik Choi, a former Holiness minister who successfully brought the church to Japan between 1958-64, arrived on November 12, 1965.

Each of the four missionaries created separate organizations as vehicles for their work. Young Oon Kim led a network of “centers” across the country known as the “Unified Family.” David S. C. Kim led the “Northwest Family” whose members set up “chapels” and eventually incorporated as United Faith, Inc. Bo Hi Pak, in addition to his missionary outreach, established the Korean Cultural and Freedom Foundation (KCF) and Radio of Free Asia (ROFA). Sang Ik “Papasan” Choi set up a plethora of communitarian-based organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area which culminated in the creation of the International Re-Education Foundation.

The missionaries also published translations or adaptations of *Wolli Haesul*, later *Wolli Kangron*, the movement’s core doctrinal and sacred text.² Young Oon Kim published nine editions of *The Divine Principles* (later titled *The Divine Principle and Its Application*) between 1960-72. David Kim published two editions of *Individual Preparation for His Coming Kingdom* (1964,

1968). Bo Hi Pak published *Outline of Study: The Divine Principles* (circa. 1964), and Sang Ik Choi published several booklets and two volumes of *The Principles of Education*, beginning in 1969. In addition, three of the four missionary groups published newsletters that documented their community life and sense of mission. Young Oon Kim's group published the *New Age Frontiers* (1960-72). David Kim's group published the *United Temple Bulletin* (1961-72). Choi's group published *The Epoch Maker* (1969-72) and the *Universal Voice* (1968-73).

All of these activities were foundational and fed into the movement's subsequent development. In particular, the missionaries established strong emotional bonds with members who joined during this period. Nevertheless, none of the initiatives mentioned above survived. All of the missionary groups have been defunct for nearly thirty years. No missionary translations of the Principle are presently in use or in print, and most of the newsletters have been lost. In fact, few among the movement's current membership and fewer still among the movement's second generation have much awareness of the labors undertaken by these earliest pioneers. However, there was one initiative which not only did survive but which made a lasting contribution and formed the legal basis for the Unification tradition in America. This was the establishment of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity or HSA-UWC on September 18, 1961.

Ironically, HSA-UWC emerged almost by accident and was a source of friction during the 1960s. Young Oon Kim, like all the missionaries, struggled to maintain her legal status in the country. Her primary motivation in establishing HSA-UWC was to stabilize her visa situation. However, she also recognized that for tax exemption purposes and legal protection, it was necessary for her group to be recognized by the government and receive legal status as a religion. There were some hard feelings among the other missionaries about Kim's efforts to establish a national organization, and this was one reason why no unified national movement emerged during the 1960s. Instead, what emerged was a complex set of missionary jurisdictions, competing alliances, rival incorporations and general grievances.

Despite these problems, the filing of papers of incorporation of HSA-UWC on September 18, 1961 was a defining moment in the history of the Unification Church and Movement in America. As noted, it established the legal basis for the tradition and served as a point of reference for the church's interaction with and at certain points protection from the government and wider public. During the 1990s, Rev. Moon announced his intention of dissolving HSA-UWC and replacing it with the Family Federation For World Peace and Unification (FFWPU). However, given the substantial legal and corporate reality associated with HSA-UWC, this proved difficult to implement and the two organizations now exist alongside one another.

The incorporation of HSA-UWC had a significance for the tradition that extended beyond America. Of all the organizational initiatives undertaken during the 1960s, it connected most directly to in Korea, as it used the name under which the church had been organized there in 1954. However, it is noteworthy that legal recognition of HSA-UWC in the United States preceded the legalization of the church in either Korea or Japan and may have provided a model for the movement to attain legal standing in its countries of origin. It also is important to recognize that the decision to incorporate meant that the Unification movement was no longer wholly inspirational and charismatic. Incorporation, and the maintenance of the church's corporate identity, meant that bureaucratic dynamics would have a continuing place in the tradition. In other words, HSA-UWC would be accountable not only to Heaven but to the norms and legalities of its various host societies.

2. Rev. Moon's First and Second World Tours, 1965, 1969

Rev. Moon undertook two world tours during the 1960s. The first was from January through October 1965, and included a nearly five-month stay in the United States (February 12-July 1). Rev. Moon undertook his second world tour in 1969 and spent thirty-nine days in the U.S. between February 4 and March 15. Within the church's tradition, the first world tour is remembered primarily as an occasion for Rev. Moon to bless "holy grounds" throughout the world, including fifty-five in the U.S. He also had audiences with former U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the American trance medium Arthur Ford, who included "The Sun Myung Moon Sitzings" as a chapter of his book *Unknown But Known*.³ The second tour is generally remembered for the Blessing in marriage of forty-three couples worldwide, the first such blessing performed outside of Korea and the first to include couples from the West.

The establishment of holy grounds and the extension of the blessing to senior American couples were important. However, the world tours were defining moments for different reasons. The significance of the first world tour was that it changed the primary focus of the American movement from the West to the East coast. During most of his visit to the United States, Rev. Moon stayed in Washington, D.C. He convened a 21-day training session there, and Washington members began referring to their center as headquarters. This situation, along with Bo Hi Pak's responsibilities for the newly formed KCF and "The Little Angels" Korean dance troupe which pulled him away from direct involvement with the church, induced Young Oon Kim to relocate from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. She arrived, California HSA-UWC corporation papers in hand, on December 12, 1965. In 1968 she maintained that the "Washington Center serves as the headquarters of our movement as well as the nerve center of the entire Western world."⁴

Shifting its primary focus from the West to the East coast had both symbolic and practical implications for the movement in America. Symbolically, it signaled the tradition's intention to move from the periphery and seek engagement with mainstream culture. The movement had limited resources to effect this during the 1960s. Nevertheless, its determination to do so distinguished it from any number of groups that were content to remain within the more congenial environs of California. Practically, the move led to certain organizational top-heaviness. In 1966, for example, while the movement was very small, HSA headquarters included five newly-created departments: Administration, Publications, Public Relations, Business Enterprises, and Field Operations, plus a full slate of national officers. This looked impressive on paper but had little relation to concrete results, which were minimal. The shift also opened up a fissure within the movement's East and West coast branches. Whereas the East coast branch tended to be formal and bureaucratic, the movement's West coast branch was informal and communal, retaining strongly utopian, even countercultural tendencies.⁵

Rev. Moon's second world tour in 1969 also changed the orientation of the church. Prior to the tour, the focus of the movement in America was almost exclusively religious. The content of *Master Speaks*, a series of edited, in-house transcriptions of question-and-answer sessions with Rev. Moon taped at various centers across the country in 1965, reflected the strongly spiritual orientation of the membership. However, in 1969, members in the United States heard for the first time about an active student group in Korea and Japan known as the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP). They also learned of the movement-sponsored International Federation for Victory Over Communism (IFVOC) and of numerous businesses. In fact, Rev. Moon spent a significant amount of time during his 39-day stay touring machine shops in New York City.

All of this led the tradition in America to take on characteristics of a social movement. This especially influenced the thrust of Sang Ik Choi's activities in the San Francisco Bay area. However, it also affected Young Oon Kim's Unified Family. Edwin Ang, who led the Berkeley Center at that time, wrote of a "full scale advance along four major lines of attack; through spiritual activities, through business, through education, and through political involvement."⁶ Incorporating a social dimension broadened the tradition's appeal and altered its membership profile. During the early 1960s, the movement appealed to older, spiritually-oriented and often spiritually-open seekers. With business, education, and social action initiatives, the movement became more exciting, relevant and appealing to younger people, both students and urban professionals.

3. *The Day of Hope Speaking Tours, 1972-74*

Rev. Moon conducted four separate “Day of Hope” speaking tours in America between 1972-74: an initial 7-city tour which opened at Lincoln Center in New York City on February 3, 1972 and concluded in Berkeley, California on March 11th; a 21-city tour under the banner “Christianity in Crisis: New Hope” which began at New York’s Carnegie Hall on October 1, 1973 and concluded on January 29, 1974 in Los Angeles; a 32-city tour under the theme “The New Future of Christianity” which ran from February to April, 1974; and a concluding 8-city tour which opened at New York’s Madison Square Garden on September 18, 1974 and finished in Los Angeles in late December.

There are at least six reasons why the Day of Hope speaking tours were a defining moment for the Unification tradition in America. First, they marked the beginning of a unified national movement. Prior to this, the movement consisted of regional jurisdictions and independent missionary groupings. Although Young Oon Kim claimed to have a national headquarters in Washington, D.C., this was not recognized by David Kim’s or Sang Ik Choi’s groups. In reality, the American movement was factionalized with disagreements over fundamental issues of organization, strategy and even doctrine. The Day of Hope campaigns were the first undertaking of the entire movement. In many ways, they signified the birth of the Unification Church in America. They played a unitive role parallel to that of the First Great Awakening in American history, which served to knit the disparate colonies together and to solidify a common identity.

Second, the Day of Hope tours indicated the central role Rev. Moon would play in the American movement. He was the only one with enough authority to meld the conflicting missionary groups together. He also provided a central focus and direction. There was still organization, perhaps, even more than before as Rev. Moon instituted state representatives, Itinerant Workers (IWs), mobile unit commanders and the like in addition to existing center directors. However, this was an integrated, task and goal-oriented organization that focused on results.

Third, the Day of Hope tours altered the nature of the movement. Previously, members had been sporadically active and at times rather immobilized. Many held jobs and devoted only off-hours to the movement. The Day of Hope tours changed all this. The Unification Church became an energetic, high-demand, action-oriented movement that required full-time commitment. This stimulated numerical growth. A ready supply of alienated youth disillusioned both with American society and with the counterculture of the 1960s also enhanced membership and solidarity. In July 1973, the *Director’s Newsletter* reported that the number of new members who joined to date was four times that for the same period the previous year. In December 1974, at

the close of the Day of Hope era in the United States, HSA-UWC President Neil Salonen reported that from “a handful of members—less than 300” three years previously, the movement had “multiplied ten times, reaching almost three thousand by the end of this month.”⁷ The Day of Hope tours also spawned new organizations and initiatives. The most important of these were the One World Crusade (OWC)—later the International One World Crusade (IOWC), which fueled the movement’s evangelistic advance during the period, and mobile fundraising teams (MFT), which became a major means of financial support.

Fourth, the Day of Hope tours helped catapult the movement into the public limelight. During the 1960s, the movement went unnoticed, and there was the danger of it never becoming noticed if it continued to proceed in the same way. The Day of Hope changed all that. Publicity that the movement garnered wasn’t so much due to the content of its tour message, which, apart from the speech on “The New Future of Christianity,” was relatively conventional. It rather was due to the movement’s aggressiveness. The movement actively sought proclamations of welcome and keys to cities, going straight to government elites. Many of the nation’s top scientists were invited to an annual International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) beginning in 1972. High-profile land purchases in Tarrytown, New York and the financial cost of the Day of Hope Tours that church spokespersons released (\$400,000 for the 21-city tour, \$200,000 for the 32-city tour, \$1,000,000 for the 8-city tour) attracted notice, as did the seemingly ubiquitous presence of members on the streets.

Fifth, the Day of Hope tours contributed to the development of the worldwide movement. Just as with the incorporation of HSA-UWC, this was another “first.” Rev. Moon had never spoken publicly in either Korea or Japan. Thus, the birth of the U.S. movement coincided with a new phase in his worldwide ministry. Up to that point, much of the movement’s development had been internal. In the United States, through the Day of Hope tours, Rev. Moon began the external, public development of the movement. The tour also demonstrated the power and influence of the U.S. and by extension of the American movement. It was on the foundation of success of the Day of Hope tours in America and the initial receptivity of the general public that Rev. Moon conducted the same tours in Korea and Japan. In other words, success in the U.S. provided credibility and leverage for activities there. Films and testimonies showing acceptance in the U.S. had an important effect on Asian audiences.

Sixth, the Day of Hope tours brought overseas missionaries and money to the U.S. There was a sense that the American movement could not pull off the campaigns on its own. Therefore, Rev. Moon called in significant numbers of Japanese and European members, who would play important roles. The

intermingling of foreign and domestic members would become an ongoing feature of the Unification tradition in America. Rev. Moon referred to this as a “new Pilgrim movement.” On occasion, there were competitions among different national groupings. At times, cross-cultural misunderstandings and tension among the nationalities during the 1970s and beyond hindered development much as friction among the pioneer missionary groups had done during the 1960s.

4. National Prayer and Fast for the Watergate Crisis, 1973-74

The National Prayer and Fast for the Watergate Crisis added a prophetic dimension to the Unification tradition, i.e., a willingness to risk censure and unpopularity to convey its understanding of God’s word. The Day of Hope tours, by and large, sought to establish a common base with the American public. There were some unconventional interpretations of Jesus’ mission, but on the whole, members came across as being wholesome Christians. However, to come to the defense of Richard Nixon was almost unthinkable. In this regard, the National Prayer and Fast for the Watergate Crisis was the one action of the Unification Church which won it the undying enmity of the U.S. liberal establishment and made it a lightning rod for negativity. In addition, to speak of God’s will in politics or public life was to cross the church-state divide for many Americans. From this point, many began to consider the movement a threat to American society, accusing it of being theocratic or a tool of the KCIA.

This assured that the church would not only be unpopular, but also that it would be scrutinized and investigated. Its position on Watergate led the media to look into all aspects of the movement. This, in turn, led to negative publicity which affected the families of members. Eventually “deprogrammers” exploited their fears and forcefully abducted scores of members, making the church’s work much more difficult. Widespread negativity also sparked government agencies and officials to action. The INS denied missionary visas and moved against the church’s foreign nationals. New York City denied the church tax-exempt status. Senator Robert Dole (R-Kansas) convened two informal “information” sessions, and Congressman Donald Fraser (D-Minnesota) relentlessly pursued the “Moon Organization” in a U.S. Congressional probe of Korean-American relations. These investigations helped instigate Rev. Moon’s indictment on tax evasion charges some years later. Some of these negative results, particularly the kidnapping and “deprogramming” of members, may have occurred anyway since they happened to other movements which did not have the same public profile. Nonetheless, opposition was especially pronounced in the case of the church.

From the movement’s standpoint, openness and obedience to God’s

direction regardless of the inconvenience or consequences was fundamental to its identity. Rev. Moon later stated that he knew Nixon was a flawed leader and probably guilty. Nevertheless, he contended that support of the presidency was in accordance with God's will. Having interrupted the 21-city Day of Hope tour in November 1973, Rev. Moon traveled back to Japan and Korea where, following a period of prayer and meditation, he concluded that "God's command at this crossroads in American history" was to "Forgive, Love and Unite." The movement subsequently launched a forty-day National Prayer and Fast for the Watergate Crisis (NPFWC) on December 1, 1973, and Rev. Moon's "Answer To Watergate" statement appeared in full-page advertisements purchased in leading newspapers throughout the nation, including the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Members organized vigils, rallies, letter writing, and leafleting in all fifty states to publicize its theme and to obtain signatures of people promising to pray and fast for the Watergate crisis. Some 1,200 pennant-waving, banner-carrying members mobilized to Washington, D.C. for the 1973 Christmas tree lighting, and 610 participated in a three-day fast and vigil on the steps of the Capitol Building at the height of the crisis in late July 1974.

Although its stance on Watergate introduced a prophetic dimension as an ongoing component of the Unification tradition in America, the movement's position on church-state relations is as yet unresolved. Some view the democratic pattern, including the separation of church and state, as being inherently flawed. Others see the U.S. pattern of political polity as being the right model. Therefore, this is a potentially divisive issue within the tradition. There also is the matter of prophetic inspiration. If a prophetic dimension is a permanent legacy of the church tradition, the question of discerning authentic prophecy remains. This has only been a minor problem given the unifying presence of Rev. Moon. However, it could present difficulties in the future unless there is a strong mainstream tradition and clear criteria for determining legitimate prophetic inspiration.

5. Establishment of Unification Theological Seminary, September 20, 1975

The Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) was the first school Rev. Moon established. In this respect, it represented another "first" within the tradition. This, in itself, would not be significant apart from the new direction and commitments it brought. The first of these was a commitment to ecumenical and interreligious engagement.

The core mission of the Unification Church, as the name HSA-UWC indicated, was "the Unification of World Christianity." However, the ability

of the church to relate ecumenically to Christian churches was quite limited prior to creation of UTS. Most of Korea's Christian churches rejected the UC as heretical, a position that has not changed until the present. The Day of Hope tours in America made helpful religious contacts, but these were not pursued in any real depth. In short, the unification of world Christianity was something of an ideal. The movement had made little meaningful progress toward its actualization.

In this regard, the establishment of UTS marked a turning point in the UC's ability to relate constructively to the wider religious community. Rev. Moon installed a fully ecumenical faculty, and the Seminary gave birth to a whole range of ecumenical and interfaith organizations. These led to breakthroughs in the area of interreligious harmony and, in some cases, to recognition of Rev. Moon's role and identity.

Apart from this, UTS represented a commitment to self-reflection, research and scholarship, and the beginnings of an intellectual tradition. The church, in general, had limited opportunities to think through issues deeply or to develop ideas about how its teachings related to other faiths. UTS afforded that opportunity and provided the context for the beginning of a theological tradition within the church. Young Oon Kim, in particular, was widely regarded as a resident Unification theologian, and the Seminary was a site for numerous "theologians' conferences." It also generated a substantial corpus of publications that explored unification theology.⁸ The establishment of UTS indicated that the tradition was willing to tackle contemporary intellectual challenges rather than separate intellectual endeavor from faith or retreat into a ghetto of religious fundamentalism.

The Seminary also represented a commitment to long-term thinking, as well as to educated and indigenous leadership. The Unification movement has been criticized for short-term thinking and planning. However, the establishment of UTS indicated a commitment to the long-term. As Rev. Moon noted, the creation of UTS meant the sacrifice of immediate movement needs. Many of the movement's most elite members left their field positions to study for two or three years and prepare themselves for the needs of long-term ministry. Finally, the Seminary represented a commitment to an educated and indigenous church leadership. This was apparent in Rev. Moon's mandate that the church's leadership be seminary-educated. Here, the movement seemed to conclude that while educated leadership makes mistakes, uneducated leadership makes more mistakes. For most of its history, UTS also represented Rev. Moon's commitment to develop indigenous American leadership. Given the preponderance of Korean and Japanese leaders in the movement, this has proved to be an elusive goal. Nevertheless, the Seminary has operated in accordance with the norms of American higher education.

Despite these commitments, a certain tension remained between the competing demands of faith and intellectual life. On occasion, just as within the wider Christian tradition, the church was suspicious of the Seminary, and on other occasions the Seminary looked down upon the church. This sort of unhealthy separation insulated the two from one another and hindered the development of a unified and strategic field of vision. This, in turn, detracted from the American movement's ability to attract new membership and, in many cases, to retain the commitment of existing members.

6. Home Church and Ocean Church, 1978-82

All of the turning points considered thus far, though they may have introduced new complexities or problems, represented positive breakthroughs. Even the movement's stance on Watergate, which sparked widespread negativity, resulted from what members regarded as positive obedience to God's will. Home Church and Ocean Church were different in that they were less than successes by the movement's own definition and expectations. Many members worked extremely hard in these undertakings. However, the Home Church and Ocean Church providences represented a failure of the movement to break through at the grassroots level.

Rev. Moon emphasized during the 1970s that the American church needed to gain 30,000 core members to influence society and to provide protection against attack. Initially, he proposed a witnessing strategy whereby each member each month gained one new member. He referred to this as "1-1-1" and expected members to win eighty-four "spiritual children" over seven years. However, even with as strong a rate of numerical growth as there was during the 1970s, few could maintain this pace. The movement as a whole was beginning to have some success with societal elites. It also demonstrated that it could mobilize large numbers for one-time events, as it did for Yankee Stadium and Washington Monument bicentennial observances in 1976. But it lacked the means to sustain their involvement.

Home Church and Ocean Church were strategies undertaken to address these problems and attain the movement's membership goals. They also were a response to public negativity which made street witnessing, high intensity workshops, and the demand for full-time membership more difficult. Rev. Moon spoke at length about these two providences between 1978-82.

The concept of Home Church was simple. Rather than have guests attend successive workshops with the idea of moving them into a center, the approach was to establish home churches and to nurture home members in their own environment. This promised to reduce negativity while at the same time increasing numerical growth. Under such mottos as "Home Church Is My Kingdom of God," members chose or were assigned areas of 360 households

to cultivate. Rev. Moon declared that Home Church was the movement's final frontier and destiny.

Many members worked assiduously to set up home churches. In New York City, there were home church associations, home church banquets and even conventions, service projects, and widely-distributed educational materials. Nevertheless, the promise of Home Church was not realized. There were two main reasons for this. First, members, in general, lacked the spiritual maturity and skills necessary to lead large numbers of people. Many were relatively new members themselves and, minus the support structure of center life, did not have the strength to scale the mountain of Home Church. Second, the movement was going in so many directions and undertaking so many new projects that there was a continual drain on personnel. Members were siphoned off to newspaper and media projects which were beginning, to mobile fundraising teams which still were needed for financial support, to the Seminary, to oceanic enterprises, and to work on college campuses. There also was ambivalence about home membership.

Consequently, the movement re-instituted lengthy 120-day training programs in 1981 and afterwards gave up local work entirely in favor of mobile IOWC teams, which became the movement's chief evangelistic outlet during a three year period of "total mobilization" between 1983-85.

Rev. Moon inaugurated Ocean Church on October 1, 1980. Initially, he chose two dozen UTS graduates and sixty members to pioneer twenty-four port cities on the East, West and Gulf coasts of the United States. The vision was for each Ocean Church site to build a foundation of sixty members, at which point they were to order ten fiberglass boats and one large stern trawler from the movement's shipbuilding yards. These boats were to be their churches. Rev. Moon advised Ocean Church pioneers to visit the Coast Guard chief, the police chief and the local mayor. He spoke continually about the depressed state of the American fishing industry and the need for youth to be exposed to the challenges and excitement of sea-going life. He also attempted to kick-start the effort through sponsoring a large-purse "World Tuna Tournament" in Gloucester, Massachusetts and numerous "Ocean Challenge" training programs.

Unfortunately, not unlike the movement's inland efforts, Ocean Church did not meet Rev. Moon's expectation. In 1982, he declared himself "deeply disappointed," and in 1984, he stated that his expectations had been "somewhat betrayed." Boats intended for ocean cities were sitting in storage and he detected a surprising "disillusionment." Some of the problems that undermined the Home Church providence also affected Ocean Church. However, the larger issue was economic. Between 1976-81, the movement purchased shipbuilding yards and fish processing plants in Norfolk, Virginia; Bayou La Batre, Alabama; Gloucester, Massachusetts; and Kodiak, Alaska. During and

after this period, it invested significantly more in building several hundred ocean-going vessels and in setting up a distribution network of wholesale and retail fish companies, restaurants, markets and groceries. In reality, the movement's financial undertakings swamped Ocean Church. Ocean Church members were unable to sustain the spiritual emphases and the movement's oceanic enterprises became primarily businesses.

The inability of the Home Church and Ocean Church providences to achieve success at the grassroots level had important ramifications. For one thing, it meant that the movement would have to find alternative means to influence society. This led to a heavy investment in media enterprises, in particular, to the founding of *The Washington Times*. It also led Rev. Moon to emphasize a "top-down" rather than a "bottom-up" approach. During the 1980s, the movement created a variety of organizations and funded innumerable conferences intended to influence societal elites and opinion-makers. In addition, the lack of a broad membership base left the movement and Rev. Moon vulnerable to attacks from the wider society.

7. *The 2075 Couple Madison Square Garden Blessing, July 1, 1982*

The 2075 Couple Blessing at Madison Square Garden on July 1, 1982 was the first mass or joint marriage to involve significant numbers of American members, and it changed the character of the movement. Simply put, the Unification Church went from being a movement of primarily single people to married people virtually overnight. The net effect of this was to introduce new complexities into member's lives. These included matters of spousal relationships and the presence of children. Within a surprisingly short period of time, members became concerned about the financial support of their families and education of their children. This, in turn, led to the challenge of balancing family development and church mission.

A large percentage of the American movement, 4150 persons in all, participated in the record-setting wedding. This number eclipsed the previous record of 1800 couples married by Rev. Moon in 1975, which was listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the largest mass wedding in history. Engagement ceremonies of 705 couples in 1979, 843 couples in 1980, and 653 couples in 1982 led up the ceremony. The church attempted to minimize disruptions and integrate newly-formed couples through lengthy engagement periods prior to the ceremony or separation periods afterwards, by setting standards for consummating unions, and by mobilizing one or another of the spouses, usually wives, for witnessing conditions. It also set up twenty-four hour daycare facilities at several locations throughout the country.

Despite these measures, married life and children were a distraction for many. Unification couples understood that they were engrafted into the new humanity through participation in marriage blessings presided over by Rev. and Mrs. Moon. Nevertheless, some rejected their spouses. This precipitated crises of faith and even disaffiliation for previously committed members. However, the vast majority of members accepted their partners. Still, since sixty-three percent of the couples were either inter-racially or cross-culturally mixed, spousal relationships required attention and work that otherwise could have been dedicated to outreach. Other couples who affirmed their Blessing redefined their church commitments. Some took conventional jobs and seemed to take on conventional lives. Therefore, at this stage, the movement tended to see family and mission as competing entities. It did not yet comprehend how Unification families might provide new avenues of entrance into American life, mitigate the movement's more threatening aspects, and lead to substantial numerical growth through high fertility rates and education.

The Unification tradition still struggles with ways to creatively balance family life and religious vocation. Various suggestions and experiments have been tried, such as couples living together and sharing responsibilities. Also, grassroots Unification schools, summer camps, service-learning projects, religious education programs and the like have arisen in many places. Some movement leaders attempt to be family-friendly. Others take a hard line, urging members to sacrifice family time. The tradition as a whole has yet to fully translate its theology of the family into consistent policies and practices.

8. *The Danbury Course, 1982-85*

The dominant fact that the general public recalls about the Unification Church during the 1980s was the incarceration of Rev. Moon on tax evasion charges. Rev. Moon spent thirteen months at Danbury, Connecticut Correctional Institution in 1984-85. However, the Danbury Course was broader than that. It also included the death of Rev. Moon's second eldest son, Heung Jin Nim, who was highly regarded within the movement, and the many initiatives that flowed out of the course. The episode was a defining moment for the tradition in America because it demonstrated the movement's fundamental attitude and response toward what it understood to be unfair treatment at the hands of its enemies.

The church won a series of court cases in 1982. After several years of struggle, it gained unambiguous legal recognition as a *bona fide* religion with full tax-emption privileges, public solicitation rights, and access to missionary visas. It also was able to extend civil rights protections to members and successfully press for damages against deprogrammers. However, the church

lost the one case that was the most highly publicized, most costly, and that mattered to it the most. The *United States v. Sun Myung Moon* had an air of inevitability about it. Tax convictions have been a time-honored way to root out undesirables, and although the review process makes this more difficult to do within the American legal system, there has been a tendency for the politically ambitious to go after unpopular figures. In Rev. Moon's case, a letter from U.S. Senator Robert Dole to the IRS Commissioner which called for an audit of the church led to what Carleton Sherwood termed "the most intensive and extensive criminal tax investigation of any religious figure in U.S. history."⁹ According to Sherwood, "a squad of IRS agents" took "permanent offices in the Unification Church's downtown New York Offices, while a team of field agents began round-the-clock surveillance of selected church members and their telephones." After two years of investigations, the IRS was not able to find anything that compromised the church's tax-exempt status but turned over to the New York District Attorney's Office "certain anomalies" in Rev. Moon's tax returns for the years 1973-75.

The odd thing about Rev. Moon's case was that it continued to move forward in the face of so many obstacles. First, the audit of Rev. Moon's tax returns for 1973-75 showed a total liability of \$7,300, less than the \$2,500 per year required by IRS guidelines for criminal prosecution. Second, three career attorneys from the U.S. Justice Department questioned whether there was any liability at all and signed off on a written memorandum that prosecution was not warranted. Third, the prosecuting attorney had to convene three grand juries before gaining the necessary indictments. Fourth, jury members whom the trial judge described as people who "don't read much, don't talk much, and don't know much" had to sift through over 2,000 documentary exhibits and technical argumentation that was glazing over the eyes of even trained legal observers. Fifth, the U.S. Solicitor General and Supreme Court had to ignore briefs from most of the country's mainstream religious groups that maintained in holding funds for the church in his name, Rev. Moon had no tax liability but was exercising an accepted and widely-practiced trustee role known as *corporation sole*.

In the end, neither Rev. Moon nor the movement was able to stem the government's determination to gain a conviction. But they could control their own response and thereby set a standard for how the tradition responded to what it took to be unfair and selective prosecution. Rev. Moon's attitude and actions were especially instructive. The government indicted him while he was in Korea, a country with which the U.S. did not have an extradition treaty. Therefore, there was some thought or, perhaps, hope on the part of prosecutors that he would not return. However, Rev. Moon returned publicly and dramatically, convening a large rally outside the Foley Square Courthouse in New York City where he denounced the indictment as an example of religious

and racial prejudice and announced his intention of mounting a vigorous defense. Although the government later used his speech to block his defense counsel's motion for a bench trial, Rev. Moon set an important precedent by forthrightly facing his accusers and charges rather than avoiding them.

Another important precedent set by Rev. Moon during the Danbury course was that he was not to be deterred from his commitment to mission. On January 2, 1984, amidst the appeal process, Rev. Moon's second son died at age seventeen as a result of injuries sustained when his car was struck by a tractor-trailer that jack-knifed on an icy stretch of road. As an inmate at Danbury Correctional Facility, Rev. Moon performed a variety of menial tasks in the dining room, setting up for breakfast every day, mopping, wiping tables, etc. However, none of this interfered with his conviction that "the Unification sunrise" was coming to the world. In fact, while under indictment, in trial, during the appeal process and while in prison, Rev. Moon launched numerous initiatives. These included an endowment of \$2,000,000 for the creation of a Minorities Alliance International (MAI); massive marriage Blessings for 6,500 couples in Seoul in addition to the 2075 couples in New York; the founding of CAUSA-USA, the Youth Seminar on World Religions, and most importantly, *The Washington Times*. In addition, he sent a "Letter From Danbury" with videotapes on Unification theology to 300,000 U.S. clergy and religious leaders and donated 250 large trucks to the movement-funded National Council for the Church and Social Action.

The movement and Rev. Moon absorbed some of the worst American society in the 1970s and 1980s could offer: continual derision and harassment, religious kidnapping and deprogramming, investigations from virtually every Federal enforcement agency, discriminatory legislation at local levels of government, indictment, prosecution and imprisonment. Rev. Moon likely would have been deported had it not been for his trial judge's "binding recommendation" to the U.S. Attorney General which concluded that deportation, in addition to the jail sentence he had imposed, would have constituted "excessive punishment." Ironically, in spite of all this, the movement emerged from the Danbury course on more solid ground than it had been before. The reason for this was that American public opinion changed. It wasn't that Rev. Moon and the movement suddenly became chic, lovable, or even acceptable. Rather, a substantial number of influential Americans, including many of a libertarian persuasion, concluded that Rev. Moon had gotten a raw deal. The movement deftly organized some of this sentiment into a series of "Rallies for Religious Freedom" and *amicus curiae* briefs supporting Rev. Moon's appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. However, the spontaneous support that emerged in op-ed pieces was more effective and consequential. More than any other sequence of events, the Danbury course was the fulcrum around which the history of the Unification movement in America turned.

9. Interdenominational Conferences for Clergy, 1985-87; *CAUSA Signature Drive, 1986*

The movement achieved a number of breakthroughs following the Danbury course. Earlier than most, Rev. Moon realized that communism was tottering toward collapse and committed major portions of the movement's resources in the middle and late 1980s not only toward hastening its demise but also toward development in a post-communist world. *The Washington Times*, CAUSA USA, the American Leadership Conference (ALC), the American Constitutional Committee (ACC), the American Freedom Coalition (AFC), the World Media Association, the Summit Council for World Peace, and substantial financial investments in China were all important. By 1990, Rev. Moon's strategy of pursuing a "victory over communism" line while at the same time assiduously cultivating contacts within the communist world and pointing out "confusion in the Western system of values" resulted in an invitation to hold several conferences in Moscow and a private audience with Mikhail Gorbachev.

Rev. Moon also achieved breakthroughs in his native Korea, where he committed significant resources during the late 1980s. In 1987 he established the Citizens' Federation for the Unification of the Homeland, and in 1988 the movement sponsored several officially sanctioned cultural events at The Little Angels Performing Arts Center in conjunction with the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Earlier, the Nampyung Moon Clan Tribal Association named Rev. Moon "Tribal Chief," and in 1989 the Korean Root-Finding Association, a national organization of all Korean traditional clans, asked him to be chairman. That same year, the movement gained approval to start a major daily newspaper, the *Segye Ilbo*, Sung Hwa (later Sun Moon) University, and the movement's Il Hwa Cheon-ma (Heavenly Horse) soccer team won a franchise in Korea's top professional soccer league. Finally, on December 6, 1991, Rev. Moon gained an audience with North Korean Premier Kim Il Sung, marking the first time he had set foot in the land of his birth in four decades.

The Interdenominational Conferences for Clergy (ICC) and the CAUSA Signature Drive were turning points because they underlay many of the breakthroughs noted above. Basically, they represented the first time the American movement had met Rev. Moon's goals for outreach. As such, they gave the American movement confidence to support overseas work. Even before his release from Danbury, Rev. Moon was concerned to connect support he had received from American Christianity to Korea. This was the basis for his request that the American movement send 7,000 U.S. ministers to Japan and Korea. Under the theme, "Rev. Moon and Korea in the Providence of God," the movement feted 64 ministers from 21 denominations in its first ICC from April 10-19, 1985. Between 1985-88, it sponsored 38 separate and increas-

ingly large ICC conferences for 7,069 American clergy and religious leaders. Many participants signed proclamations of support. From the movement's perspective, the ICC providence was an indispensable condition for substantial accomplishments in its homeland.

On September 1, 1986, Rev. Moon launched the CAUSA Signature Drive. The goal was to obtain 10 million signatures, including names and addresses, on a form stating that the signers agreed with CAUSA USA's goals to 1) Affirm a God-centered morality in America; 2) Uphold freedom for all; 3) Educate people about the dangers of atheistic communism. Members and some supporters worked aggressively in all fifty states to complete the drive by Thanksgiving. Afterwards, CAUSA USA sent information to all signers about its work and a monthly publication, *The CAUSA Report*. Successful completion of the CAUSA Signature Drive, a national outreach project, gave members new confidence. It reinforced the movement's work on the ICCs and led to the establishment of new organizations, such as ALC, ACC, and AFC noted above. AFC weighed in heavily for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and distributed 30 million pieces of educational literature during the 1988 presidential campaign, including highly effective "voter scorecards." In 1990, it staged "Desert Storm" rallies in all fifty states, prompting the PBS series *Frontline*, in a documentary entitled "The Resurrection of Rev. Moon," to declare him "a force in American politics." Taken together, the ICCs and CAUSA Signature Drive demonstrated that the movement could reach out at the grassroots level, if not yet to gain members, at least to gain supporters and promote civic causes.

10. RFK Stadium and Madison Square Garden Blessings, 1997, 1998

The 1990s was the great era of proclamations for the Unification tradition. In 1992, Rev. Moon considered his foundation secure enough to declare openly that he and Mrs. Moon were "the True Parents of all humanity... the Savior, the Lord of the Second Advent, the Messiah."¹⁰ The following year he proclaimed the opening of a whole new historical epoch, the Completed Testament Age. Although details as to the precise nature of the epoch were as yet sketchy, it was understood to involve a fundamental shift in the order of salvation from the individual to the family. The implications of this were momentous. For Rev. Moon, it signaled a radical new beginning for the movement and rendered all previous religious expressions, including that of the Unification Church, obsolete. Although HSA-UWC evidenced a stubborn will to live and successfully resisted its dissolution, the church began to reconfigure itself as a "Family Federation" and launched into efforts to realize a

restored and purified Garden of Eden. The gateway to the Completed Testament Age was the Blessing, which was extended far beyond the Unification community during the 1990s. In fact, members routinely referred to the “globalization of the Blessing.”

These developments had a significant impact on the movement in America. During the 1970s and early 1980s, Rev. Moon concentrated his activities almost exclusively in the United States, and it was understood to be at the center of the providence. However, after 1985 he began to shift the focus of his ministry and expectations elsewhere: to Korea, to the former Soviet Union, and to South America. The movement continued to fund *The Washington Times* and some educational and religious nonprofits. However, rather than breaking new ground, this only extended activities already in place. The only dramatic new initiative was the acquisition of a controlling interest in the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut in 1992. This required a significant monetary investment, was hotly contested, and resurfaced anti-Unification Church sentiment. Still, the cutting edge of the movement’s worldwide efforts in the decade after Danbury was not the U.S. At best, the American movement functioned in a supportive role.

This was especially true of the global Blessings. On August 25, 1992, Rev. and Mrs. Moon conducted an International Holy Wedding for 30,000 couples at Seoul Olympic Stadium. It was the centerpiece of the first World Culture and Sports Festival (WCSF). The WCSF was meant to be a culmination of Rev. Moon’s worldwide activities and made good on his commitment to sponsor an “Olympics of World Culture” following the conclusion of the Seoul Olympics in 1988. The movement’s second WCSF in 1995 was more challenging, since Rev. Moon announced that he would officiate for an International Holy Wedding of 360,000 couples, some 40,000 in person and the rest by satellite transmission from the main venue at Seoul Olympic Stadium. This was the movement’s first avowedly open Blessing. Forty-three Muslims and twenty-eight longtime contacts from seven different religious traditions had participated in 1992. However, their presence was not widely publicized. This time, the movement made a public commitment to transcend religious and denominational distinctions, in part because it did not have enough blessing candidates among the membership to meet the goal. As a consequence, the movement headed into uncharted territory.

The American movement did not play a prominent role in the globalization of the Blessing, either in 1992 or 1995. Its role was restricted primarily to working with VIPs, and its Blessing total was not impressive in comparison to the result and “amazing miracles” reported in Africa, Brazil, Taiwan and elsewhere. In terms of leadership, the U.S. movement seemed to be fading. Blessing 97 at RFK Stadium in Washington, D.C. and Blessing 98 at Madison Square Garden in New York were important turning points because

they carried the American movement back into the center of the providence. They also empowered the membership in unprecedented ways, transforming many from being followers into spiritual leaders.

As early as 1980, Rev. Moon proclaimed that the era of the leader-centered movement had ended and the member-centered movement had begun. However, it took most members more than a decade-and-a-half to realize the import of this pronouncement. The American movement remained largely hierarchical, and members looked to leaders for direction. The key point about the global Blessings was that members could not wait for leaders in order to meet the astronomical goals that Rev. Moon had set: 39.6 million couples blessed worldwide for RFK Stadium and 120 million couples for Madison Square Garden. They had to become spiritual leaders themselves. Previously, members believed that only Rev. and Mrs. Moon or top leaders could bless couples. During the RFK campaign, they took the Blessing into their own hands and took it to the people directly. In living rooms, on streets, on beaches, in parks, at fairs and other locales, members prayed over couples, distributed holy wine (or grape juice), sprinkled water, repeated vows, took photographs, and, in general, acted as conduits of spiritual blessing.

The biggest external breakthrough, apart from hugely enlarged Blessing totals, was the American movement's success with Christian ministers. Between June and December 1996, the movement sponsored highly successful weekly three-day, expenses-paid "Empowering Christianity through True Family Value Conferences" in Washington, D.C. for more than 4,500 clergy and religious leaders. Movement spokespersons reported that 2,000 U.S. ministers were blessed in connection with the RFK Stadium event, and more before Madison Square Garden. The movement was able to mobilize a massive 2,000-voice gospel choir from 77 churches for Blessing 98 at Madison Square Garden, and more than 200 churches brought their congregations. Over 120 ministers and 14 busses of parishioners came from Chicago alone.

Taken together, the two Blessings signaled a coming of age and a changing of consciousness. Movement representatives in nations other than Korea were offered the chance to host global Blessings, but only the U.S. did so. Rev. Moon recognized this, and in 1998 designated the U.S. as "elder son" nation to the "parent" nations of Korea and Japan. At one level, this represented a neo-Confucian ordering of internal movement polity. At another level, it may have signified the elevation of a successor nation. From this perspective, if Korea was the first stage rocket booster that got the movement off the ground, and Japan the second stage that powered the movement into orbit, the U.S. was the third stage vehicle to steer the movement to its destination.

Entering its second forty years, it will be up to the American movement to consolidate the tradition, develop forms of governance to empower members worldwide, build on the movement's favorable age and sex ratios, and

effectively socialize those born in the faith. Accomplishment of these responsibilities will be essential to ensure continuity and achieve the movement's long-term goals. While it is by no means certain that the American movement is up to these tasks, its first forty years provide ample materials for reflection and resources with which to work.

The period 1959-99 was the era of Rev. Moon's mature and public ministry. During these years, Rev. and Mrs. Moon emerged and carried their ministry worldwide. Their activities in America constituted only a portion of that development, but that portion was immensely important. Rev. Moon rightly saw the U.S. as the key to unlocking the rest of the world, and he concentrated the movement's resources in America during the heart of the 1959-1999 years. In this respect, the turning points and defining moments of the American movement are important not only for understanding the tradition's development in the U.S. but also for appreciating Rev. and Mrs. Moon's mature, public ministry.

Notes

- 1 Mark Noll, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997), p. 12.
- 2 The history of the movement's core theological and sacred text, variously translated into English as *Divine Principle* (1973), *Outline of the Principle* (1980) and *Exposition of the Divine Principle* (1996) is complex. Also, in October 1997, Rev. Moon began the tradition of *Hoon Dok Hae*, using passages from his many sermons for reading and learning. Some consider *Hoon Dok Hae* to have displaced the Divine Principle as a sacred canon. Others see it as a complementary expression of the "Completed Testament Word." For a helpful discussion, see Jin-choon Kim, "A Study of the Formation and History of the Unification Principle," *Journal of Unification Studies* 2 (1998), pp. 49-69.
- 3 Arthur Ford, *Unknown But Known* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 114-23.
- 4 Young Oon Kim, "Brightly Beams... Washington Family," *New Age Frontiers*, January 1968.
- 5 In the San Francisco Bay Area, Sang Ik Choi developed a "character educational" method which adapted the Principle to secular, non-theistic audiences and appealed to disaffected youth. His group existed in a state of tension with Young Oon Kim's Unified Family, which maintained a center in Berkeley. See Michael Mickler, *A History of the Unification Church in America, 1959-74* (Garland, 1987), pp. 87-128, 166. See also Gary Fleisher, "Discovering and Avoiding Other Followers" in *40 Years in America: An Intimate History of the Unification Movement, 1959-1999*, Michael Inglis, ed. (New York: HSA-UWC, 2000), p. 29. Sociologists David Bromley and Anson Shupe maintain that the Unification Movement during the 1960s and 1970s was "bifurcated into two distinct wings," a mainstream East coast

- tradition and a revisionist, minority West coast branch; see *Moonies in America* (Sage, 1979), pp. 75-77, 103-106.
- 6 Edwin Ang, "Looking Ahead..." *New Age Frontiers*, June 1970.
 - 7 Neil Salonen, "Looking Ahead..." *New Hope News*, December 23, 1974.
 - 8 See Andrew Wilson, "From the Editor," *Journal of Unification Studies* 1 (1997), pp. iii-vi, for a partial listing and discussion of these works.
 - 9 Carleton Sherwood, *Inquisition: The Persecution and Prosecution of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon* (Regnery Gateway, 1991).
 - 10 Sun Myung Moon, "Becoming Leaders and Building a World of Peace," speech at the International Culture and Sports Festival, Seoul, Korea, August 24, 1992.

DYNAMICS OF MESSIANISM

Robert M. Price

I am currently working on a comparative paradigm for messianism, a conceptual scheme drawn from the study of various messianic movements throughout world history. Such a typology may help us understand new messianic movements as they arise. What is a messiah? What is the difference between a true and a false messiah? And what can be expected to happen when a messiah comes, as well as when he goes? I would like to set forth the rudiments of my theory, now, in this time of messianic expectation.

Usually such synthetic studies as this one have the character of “post-game wrap-ups.” They are of interest mostly to scholarly outsiders, not to members of the type of movements they discuss. This is perhaps because followers of messianic movements prefer to regard their movements and their progress as the result of pure, unmediated miracle and providence; thus, they are indifferent to the explanations of unbelievers offered in the spirit of scientific naturalism. And this is why, in the case of messianic movements, people so often ignore and repeat the lessons of history. A significant exception is a uniquely modern messianic movement, the one sponsoring this very journal, the one at whose seminary I began working on the present study: the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon. This movement seems to have embarked on its historic course with an unusually acute awareness of its position in the modern world. As a result it stands an excellent chance of learn-

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ing the lessons of the past and so of avoiding the repetition of the sad ones. Thus I will begin with typological generalities, and then apply them to the specific case of the Unification movement.

1. *General Characteristics of Messianism—and Its Aftermath*

First, let us remind ourselves of Clifford Geertz's description of religion as a cultural system of symbols for managing the three great negativities of life: *adversity, ignorance and injustice*. Life is filled with these three things, and yet we cannot grow inured to them. We seek their resolution by appealing to an imagined, unseen realm *outside and adjacent to* the visible world. We posit that the sad facts of death, ignorance, suffering, and oppression will be avenged, reversed, justified, explained or alleviated *up there, out there, in heaven or in the future*. The murderer may seem to get away scot-free as far as we can see, but rest assured, he will get what's coming to him in hell, or when he's reincarnated as a flatworm. Why did tragedy strike? We don't know, but we will when we get to heaven.

a. *"This-Worldly Theodicy"*

As Peter Berger notes,¹ messianism is one such rationalization strategy. Note how it works: messianism does *not* do what some theodicies do. It does not pretend to answer the question of how God can be good and yet allow all the evils of the world. It is more pragmatic than that. It knows that mere theories are cold comfort at best. Messianism focuses not on the beginning, the source of the problem; it focuses instead on the *end* of it, which it says is coming *soon*. The Savior, the Redeemer, will come to wipe away every tear. He will finally destroy evil. And when it is gone, who will think to reproach God? Who will care why everything went wrong once it has been made right?

Berger calls this a "future, this-worldly theodicy." By contrast, an "other-worldly theodicy" would abandon hope for the messiah bringing justice into this world or "peace on earth." Instead it would promise relief from the ills of this world by giving you a ticket to heaven. In the latter case, *you* would be leaving the visible, factual world of ills, this veil of tears, and embarking for the farther shores of Geertz's unseen larger world on the margins of this one.² In Mircea Eliade's terms, this world that needs redemption would be *profane* space, while the unseen world of imagined answers would correspond to *sacred* space. Messianism envisions that a savior is presently waiting in the wings of unseen sacred space. This may be understood as his already existing in heaven; or his waiting in concealment somewhere on earth, as a leper outside the walls of Rome; or it may be simply the prophesied certainty of his coming. In other words, he is "waiting" in the *future*. The messiah's place is *off-stage*. He is always "the one who is to come." The trouble starts when one day he *appears*.

When someone announces himself to be the Messiah, he is claiming to have brought sacred space into profane space, transforming the one into the other. “The kingdom of this world [that is, profane space] has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ [i.e., sacred space].” People are excited because they have been convinced that all evils will cease. The world will be changed. But history stubbornly goes on, even after the supposed coming of the *end* of history. How is the impression maintained that redemption has dawned?

First, a bulwark is erected against the profane world. Of course, the profane world does not cease to exist, but the messiah and his followers create and retreat into a bubble of messianic, eschatological existence. Berger and Luckmann³ call it a “finite province of meaning,” a willing suspension of disbelief, a retreat, usually temporary, into a carefully circumscribed and fortified sub-world in which the kingdom of God will seem to have come.

The boundaries of this island reality are laid down by behavioral rules, inner-circle jargon, special clothing, and distinctive beliefs. Contact with outsiders is strictly regulated: believers spend all their time with each other and interact with outsiders only by token of evangelism. An example of this is the Jehovah’s Witness sect. In evangelism, as John Lofland explains in an early study of the Unification movement,⁴ the evangelist sets the terms for interaction with the unbeliever. By offering him the gospel, the evangelist shapes the unbeliever’s response: he will either reject the gospel, playing the role of worldling, rejecter, Satan-deceived persecutor, *or* he will accept the gospel and join the group, another welcome vote for the beliefs of the beleaguered sect. Either way, the evangelist wins!

Within the magic circle of the mustard-seed kingdom, the fires of supernatural redemption are stoked by charismatic prophecy, speaking in tongues, and reports of miracles. Soon, the believers assure one another, this beachhead of salvation will spread abroad to the ends of the earth. But redemption does *not* come, not according to the original, Technicolor expectation. The most successful it can be is eventually to become a new worldwide religion or the ideology of an empire. But even this will fall short of the once-imagined glories of the millennium. (Rest assured, though, its hierarchy will still claim the absoluteness of eschatological truth to authorize its dictates and dogmas!)

b. Maintaining the Sacred Realm

The process of adjusting to the delay of the end already begins within the reign/ministry of the messiah, if it lasts long enough. Otherwise it may occur at his death. Either way, there are various ways of adjusting to the failure of the eschaton, coping with the ongoing of history. One is *ritual anticipation/evocation of the future*. Eliade⁵ understands ritual as the process of cyclical return to the sacred time of origins, as nature is renewed and rejuvenated

each year when spring comes. But in the case of a messianic sect, ritual is the calling into the present of the *future*. (Not that this is much of a difference from Eliade's paradigm, since in most eschatological schemas, *Erdzeit* = *Urzeit* anyway. The future state of bliss is a return to Eden, a re-creation.) For concrete examples, take the Lord's Supper and the Dead Sea Scrolls messianic banquet. Both are rehearsals, and at the same time stop-gap *substitutes*, for the real thing. In precisely the same way, watching low-budget Rapture movies (*Distant Thunder*, *Years of the Beast*, *Image of the Beast*, etc.) provide Fundamentalist church audiences with a kind of cathartic vicarious experience of the eagerly-awaited eschatological events. The believer hopes to see the events predicted by Hal Lindsay happening soon, being covered on CNN. But it never comes. So in the meantime, one can watch theatrical simulations of the events. It's not the apocalypse, but it's better than nothing. John Gager is surely correct in seeing this as the function of the drama-like Book of Revelation.⁶ It is a powerful psychodrama, supplying at least a measure of the eschatological excitement with which mundane reality is so stingy.

A second historic strategy for managing the delay of the predicted End is to "*realize*," i.e., *demythologize*, eschatology. Though Lutheran existentialist Rudolf Bultmann is the best-known exponent of this approach, it is, as he himself pointed out, quite old. The Gospel of John already seem to have abandoned hope of the second advent of Jesus and says it has happened in an unfalsifiable, invisible form as the coming of the Paraclete. The predicted resurrection? It will not happen literally; rather, the resurrection is the rebirth from the Spirit of those who believe in the word of Jesus.⁷ Similarly, in the Gospel of Thomas, the disciples ask Jesus when the repose (i.e., resurrection and final rest) of the dead will come. His answer: "What you expect has come to pass, only you do not recognize it." (Saying 51) Ali Muhammad (the "Bab," or Gate) and Hussein Ali ("Bahá'u'lláh," the Glory of God), founders of the Babi and Bahá'i Faiths in nineteenth-century Iran, likewise preached that the End-Time events were to be realized figuratively—in their own ministry.⁸

A third tried-and-true approach (and no doubt the most controversial) is *transcendence* (of the present) *by transgression* (of the present order). In the seventeenth century, messiah Sabbatai Zvi convinced much of Eurasian Jewry that the messianic utopia would soon arrive, that he would persuade the Ottoman sultan to convert to Judaism. Instead, the sultan threatened him with death if he did not convert to Islam. His response? *Allah-o-Akbar!* If a crucified messiah was a bitter pill to swallow (1 Corinthians 1:23), how much more an apostate messiah! Most left the fold in disgust, but many did not, clinging rather to various theological rationalizations for the infamous act, many of which bore a startling analogy to the atonement theories attached to the crucifixion in early Christianity. For these believers, the question arose as to whether the messianic age had dawned or not. Outwardly, things appeared

stubbornly the same. But the Messiah had come, had he not? His messianic kingdom, then, was for the time being a secret, a mustard seed kingdom. One day soon it should burst forth in its Technicolor fullness, but in the meantime believers must live out the kingdom in secret, living by the standards not of the old age but of the new. And what were these? Some mystics had dared to posit that in the redeemed, sinless age, there would be no need for the many prohibitions of the Torah, so on that glorious day the Torah would show a new face: all its prohibitions would turn to positive commands. Among one radical sect of Sabbatians, the Dönme, ⁹ the piety of the secret conventicle was to joyfully perform every act that the Torah had forbidden! Needless to say, their liturgical orgies had to be kept secret. The strange world they lived in was antipodal to that of their fellow Jews (and Gentiles). It was so different from everything else in the world; one might well believe it to be the kingdom of God.

c. Messiahs Live On, But Transformed

These processes may begin already within the lifetime of the Messiah, but they will surely get underway once the Messiah dies. And then his status of finality (i.e., his *futurity*, his eschatological character) is relativized. He remains “the Seal of the Prophets,” God’s final messenger, in name only. His community, which had anticipated no further need for revelation (since God, after all, would shortly be making his dwelling among men) still requires divine guidance. So other revealers will follow the “*last prophet*.” This may happen in either of two ways: charisma is either *routinized* or *inherited*. All this, of course, is familiar from the great sociologist of religion Max Weber.¹⁰ Charisma (the status and personal influence of the messiah) is routinized when the charismatic prophet is replaced by theologians and managers, caretakers and interpreters. Concurrently, the messianic sect is being socially and religiously mainstreamed on the way to accommodating itself to society. The sect and society will begin to permeate each other: the church in the world, the world in the church. Things become more comfortable, less exciting. As Abraham Maslow sees it,¹¹ the founder, the Messiah, had visionary “peak experiences” and invited others to share them, whereas after his death, managers, notorious for their lack of inspiring vision and charisma, take over to build institutions, tombs for the prophets.

Why does this evolution/devolution occur? A messianic movement cannot remain a radical sect and succeed demographically, since *sects cater to the elite*; they want only “hundred percenters.” Catholic Christianity and Sunni Islam, by contrast, are mainstreamed messianic sects. They are no longer “the camp of the saints” but, as Saint Cyprian said, a “school for sinners.”

If, on the other hand, the movement remains a sect at the margins of society, content with “a few good men,” the charismatic prophet will have been

replaced by successors in kind. His charisma is inherited, as from Elijah to Elisha. The successors are vicars of the Christ who will return, while he is temporarily unavailable. (The Pope is an exception that proves the rule: he is really an institutional caretaker and only claims to speak with the Messiah's absolute authority very rarely.) Bearers of inherited charisma would include the Shiite Imams descended from Muhammad through Ali. These Imams are not prophets (God forbid! Muhammad was the last of those!), but they are divinely inspired interpreters of the Koran, unlike the mere caretakers of Sunni Islam, the Caliphs. Shia Islam remained sectarian; Sunni Islam mainstreamed and continually persecuted new Shiite messianisms.

In early Christianity, the charisma of Jesus was inherited by the wandering prophets and apostles whose activities are attested in Matthew 25:34-40, 3 John vv. 5-8, the *Didache*, and other texts.¹² These Jesus-prophets, brethren of the exalted Son of Man, would speak new revelations in his name, with his authority: "Whoever hears you hears me." (Luke 10:16) "Whoever in this sinful and adulterous generation is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes." (Mark 8:38) Bultmann and other form critics attribute much of the sayings-tradition of the Synoptic Gospels to these itinerant charismatics. As 3 John and the *Didache* make clear, these "loose canons" (pardon the expression) eventually came into conflict with the consolidating authority of the bishops, those who also claimed to be successors of Jesus, but through "apostolic succession," i.e., routinization of charisma.

Let me mention one more interesting development once the messiah dies and history continues. Very often the believers go into denial: they say he did not die, but only seemed to! Invisibly to mortal eyes, he really escaped! (Note how we are again appealing to an imaginary unseen realm to soften the blows of adversity.) He is waiting in seclusion to return; or he rose and went to heaven, whence he will soon return; or his *spirit* is with God in heaven, whence it will return by means of the soon-coming resurrection of the dead. By these expedients, the terrible event which seems to debunk the messianic faith instead reenergizes it, since the death is now taken to betoken the final stage, the eleventh hour. Time to get cracking!

The *eschaton*, the end, has been deferred, but only to the *immediate* future. In the meantime, however, divinely inspired spokesmen, such as the Bab or the Paraclete, represent the vanished messiah till he should reappear. The longer this "interim" lasts, the more likely it is that the sect will remain messianic in name only, or will return to traditional future expectation: the vanished messiah, or a new messiah, will come *some* day. In fact, one of the interim spokesmen likely will claim to be the returned messiah, and the cycle will begin again.

The major alternative to having the messianic tension slacken and go limp is for the sect to perish together in a this-worldly Armageddon. Jim Jones and David Koresh took this alternative. In this way, and only in this way, can the messiah actually and literally lead the faithful into the promised land of Geertz's imagined unseen realm of final rectification.

But short of this, every messiah must become a *false* messiah the minute he sets foot on the stage of history, because history will continue. He will either be discarded by disillusioned believers or he will later be reinterpreted as a "new Moses," a founder figure, a figure of a receding past (e.g., Jesus in Matthew's Gospel; Muhammad as the provider of the Koran). Or he may be assigned to a kind of messianic Valhalla with the honorary status of a preliminary messiah, as was Simon bar-Kochba, hailed as King Messiah by no less a personage than Rabbi Akiba. Simon briefly achieved Jewish independence, only to be overwhelmed by Rome. But he was not then retroactively made a false messiah. As Geza Vermes argues,¹³ it was Simon bar-Kochba's noble failure that prompted some sages to split the office of messiah into two: that of Messiah ben Joseph, an Ephraimite Messiah doomed to die heroically in battle to atone for Israel's sins, and a victorious Messiah ben-David, to carry the banner to victory. This way, Simon could be venerated as a messiah despite his failure, and eschatological expectation could begin again, only momentarily deferred. A similar strategy is to understand a messiah who died without bringing in the kingdom of God as the *first* coming of a messiah who will come *again*, this time in glory. This, of course, is the Christian option. Again, it is only a deferral.

No messiah ever manages to bring the unseen sacred space down to the profane world, so that we may walk henceforth by sight and no longer merely by faith. He may pretend to, in which case provisional opinions are given the unimpeachable status of absolute truth, and one dare not question it. Accordingly, though he anticipated distant-future revelations supplanting his own new dispensation, the Bab commanded book-burnings of all uninspired books in his own day.

At best, a clever messiah can "stall" and remain with one foot in the future by being cagey about his messianic identity. Jesus is asked if he is the Messiah, and he leaves 'em guessing: "You say that I am." Reverend Moon used to be asked the same question, and his nimble reply topped even Jesus: "I'd have to give the same answer Jesus did." Beautiful! If he gives Jesus' answer, he must be the Messiah like Jesus, no? But, then, strictly speaking, Jesus' answer was elusive! So close, but so far! Or recall Rabbi Schneerson's caginess: he would neither confirm nor deny his avidly believed messiahship. The uncertainty kept people on edge: they thought the messiah was present, but *strictly speaking* his explicit messianic claim was still at least a few minutes in the future!

When the messiah dies, he will have returned to Geertz's unseen realm. He will be "back" in heaven, "hidden," like the Mahdi, somewhere on earth, or "he" will return to the merely virtual existence of a second prophesied messiah. Heaven, earthly seclusion, or futurity—all are in the imaginary realm.

2. *Messianism in the Unification Church*

As I have anticipated, the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon has already managed to learn a number of the lessons described here, having progressed with unprecedented rapidity through several stages that take most sectarian movements many generations. The result is that now, while the Messiah himself is alive and in active charge of the movement, the Unification Church has already sloughed off much of its sectarian alienation from nonmembers, its disdain of "worldly wisdom," and its fear of institutionalism.¹⁴ It has not merely assimilated the element of "realized eschatology;" rather, realized eschatology and demythologizing are at the heart of its theology. Though Unification theology is unabashedly supernatural, even spiritualistic, realized eschatology is primary to it, and not merely, as usual in messianic movements, a fallback position.

This is because of the unique Christology. Rev. Moon claims to be the Lord of the Second Advent, the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Parousia of Jesus Christ, not an independent messianic figure in his own right, like Rabbi Schneerson. Short of contriving to descend from the sky in celestial glory, how else could Reverend Moon justify this claim without demythologizing the Parousia? He was a man among men, a man born of woman, not an apocalyptic angel. If he were to heed the charge of Jesus on Easter morning 1935 to fulfill his mission, demythologization was inevitable. (The Bab had been forced to draw the same conclusion once he realized he himself was the Mahdi whose advent he had been heralding.¹⁵)

When Unification theology demythologizes the advent of the Christ, reconceptualizing it as a birth (of Reverend Moon, plus, of course, his accomplishments), it transmutes the prophesied "end" into a new beginning. In the same way, the messianic fulfillment brought by Sun Myung Moon must be that of establishing a new dispensation, defining the threshold of a new age stretching into the future. History will continue. It is *supposed* to continue, unlike the expectation of most messianic sects. Notice the contrast between Paul's reference to Jesus as "the *last* Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45) and Unification theology's understanding of Rev. Moon as "the *Third* Adam." Paul sees his messiah as ringing down the curtain of history. He calls Jesus an Adam just to make him the capper of history, the opposite number of the first man, the other bookend. The Third Adam, on the other hand, is a *parallel* to the Edenic Adam, not an antitype. The Third Adam raises the curtain on a new era of history. He is an inaugurator.

a. Problem of Succession

And this means, in turn, that Rev. Moon's messianic identity already includes and indeed demands the transition, described above, from messiah figure to founder figure. Since it is supposed to happen, it will be no shock or disappointment when it does happen. Still, certain problems may remain, even if they are seen clearly ahead. For instance, there is the problem of succession. Even though no one will be taken aback at the very fact of Rev. Moon's eventual passing, succession disputes tend to emerge only at the moment of succession itself, since the moment unleashes certain tensions that could not come out into open negotiating space earlier on. The situation and its outcome will be even more unpredictable if someone suddenly feels the impulse of prophecy. It would be very surprising if a movement like Unificationism, a surprising hybrid of businesslike administrative organization on the one hand and of shamanistic spiritualism on the other, did not eventually find itself forced to decide, as early Christianity eventually had to, between "ecclesiastical authority and spiritual power."¹⁶

The Church has already felt something of the turbulence that can erupt between office and charisma, even during the founder's lifetime, when, for a while, Rev. Moon himself took seriously the claims of a radical Zimbabwean youth who claimed to be channeling the spirit of a deceased son of Rev. Moon. Events revealed the channeler to be a charlatan, and the storm passed, but it should remain a living warning of what might happen following the founder's death: what if someone should step forward claiming to be the prophetic voice of Sun Myung Moon from the spirit world? For speculation's sake one might suggest that such an eventuality might be ruled out in advance by the founder's own prescriptive stipulation. But then we would simply be moving one notch over to a slightly different version of the dilemma of religious authority, that between canonical scripture (the founder's bequest) and the living voice of prophecy (the claim of a self-appointed successor).

In any case, the two models of authority seldom peacefully coexist. For instance, the Taiping messiah, Hong Xiuquan, who understood himself to be Melchizedek and the younger brother of the ascended Jesus Christ, was able to brook the sometimes intrusive revelations of Xiao Chaogui, an early compatriot who was believed to channel revelations from the ascended Jesus himself, not to mention the utterances of Yang Xiuqing, who spoke with the very accents of God the Father. But eventually, Xiao Chaogui lost out to Yang Xiuqing in what appears to have been a prophetic power struggle.¹⁷ The Younger Brother of Jesus still had to put up with the sometimes humiliating oracles of the Father, but his Elder Brother fell conveniently silent.

b. Evolution towards the Mainstream

Another problem, usually met with after a founder's death, but already occurring within the Reverend Moon's lifetime, is the painful evolution from a "camp of the saints" sect to a "school for sinners" church. Stevan L. Davies has mapped out the social dynamics between factions of an evolving movement of this type in his *The Revolt of the Widows: The Social World of the Apocryphal Acts*.¹⁸ He shows how the itinerant prophets, those who had heeded the Gospel counsels to leave home and family to preach the news of the kingdom of God, conducted a circuit-riding ministry among sympathetic house-churches and Christian communities, to whom, however, these prophets had less and less to say. As Christianity took root among communal entities, families, homes, settlements, the old commands to sell one's possessions and give to the poor fell increasingly on deaf, or at least puzzled ears. Notoriously, such dominical commands found no welcome in increasingly bourgeois Christian social settings such as eventually produced the Pastoral Epistles. Settled, domestic life represented a mainstreaming of the originally radical apocalyptic preaching. A sect was becoming a church, and the spokesmen for the old order became increasingly irrelevant fossils as things changed.

I see something similar already happening among the ranks of Unificationism. Unificationists who began, precisely in the fashion of early apostolic workers, street witnessing and fund-raising, passed through the sacramental portal of the Blessing, a *hieros gamos* whereby they officially became grafted into the True Family of the True Parents. The very notion of Perfect Families, models of stability and matrices for the production of Perfect Children, immediately clashed with the continued obligation to perform apostolic ministries suitable for the celibate and unattached. These tensions are still being worked out. The felt contradiction seems to be the result of an attempt to keep the Unification movement a sect even while it is marrying its way into a church.

The transition from the camp of the saints to the school for sinners has been accelerated even more by the decision to open up the sacramental Blessing of couples to those who are not believing Unificationists. In this way, the influence of the True Parents is believed to be increased like leaven in the lump, permeating society in a broader way. But some veterans of the movement fear that what is happening is theological inflation: a wider extension of the influence of the True Parents, but at the cost of shallowness.

What we have, apparently, is an analogy to the controversy over the Halfway Covenant in American Puritanism. Puritan congregations required an "experience of grace," a datable moment of conversion to faith in Christ, or one could not be a full member. Otherwise, one soon has a school for sinners, not a "visible church." And they didn't want that. But that is what they got, in the form of Solomon Stoddard's Halfway Covenant, which allowed the chil-

dren of converts to take communion in church even though, having been raised as perfect children (pardon the borrowed terminology), they lacked the opportunity to convert to Christ from a previous life of sin.¹⁹ If non-Unificationist sympathizers can be united with the True Family without conversion, then one must ask whether the movement is not only compromising its original sectarian zeal but even blurring the borders of the Unification Church as a movement at all. It might appear to be rapidly evolving into something of a para-church movement like the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association or the Christian Broadcasting Company. The support thus sought and gained is proverbially a mile wide and an inch deep. There is nothing necessarily wrong with such a change. But we seem to be passing from one New Testament analogy, that of the seed growing secretly, to another, the salt of the earth. That is, the hope is no longer that the messianic movement will gestate unobtrusively till the Great Hour comes at last, but rather that it will quietly and subtly savor the general stew. It is a more modest goal, and a more realistic one, from a demythologized point of view.

And yet the danger is great that the more at home in the world the Unification Church feels, the more difficult it will be to distinguish it as an alternative to the prevalent social order and value system. Many once-revolutionary movements have in this fashion sold their birthrights. If I may venture a guess, I would suggest that the Unification Church will follow the same path marked out already by that movement which has in so many ways foreshadowed it, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the Mormons. Both movements have seen the need for maintaining two seemingly contradictory emphases: a settled, domesticated life (reminiscent of the Pastoral Epistles) on the one hand, and a call to an elite, apostolic ministry of pioneers who have left home and hearth behind them for the sake of the Kingdom of God (reminiscent of the Synoptic mission charges). Both churches understand salvation as a corporate transformation or recreation of a social order, thus demanding a “bourgeois” ethic of “ordinary” righteousness. And both churches understand the need for some to keep alive in practice the “higher righteousness” of the hero, the knight of faith, as living pointers to that kingdom to which all aspire.

The result is a two-track system akin to that of Theravada Buddhism, where it is the lot of the elect few to bear the burden of the *dharma* and the *sangha*, to pursue the straight and narrow Eightfold Path to Nirvana, pointing the way for those “worldly” but faithful masses who hope to share a prophet’s reward by keeping the prophets in good supply with cold water and alms. Their “secular” common life is enriched by the stricter vision, ironically, of those who have renounced the comfort of a natural family to seek instead the spiritual brotherhood of one’s fellow monks. Mormons maintain the system by encouraging young LDS men to undertake a two-year faith mission of

evangelism, after which time they reintegrate into the settled, more mundane existence of most Americans. But for a while they understood what it meant to live the apostolic life, and it is hoped their subsequent lives as parents and professionals will be forever colored by those two years.

Likewise with the Unification Church: if many put their street-witnessing days behind them to undertake a more relaxed family life, that earlier term of duty will help assure their family life will itself become a ministry, a living out of the ideals they once fervently preached “in the trenches.” Each stage will be seen to have validated the other. As with the Mormons, one’s initial missionary service raises the standard to which later life is expected to conform, and that later life vindicates the gospel one earlier preached by showing that it can be real not only on the rather atypical, even surreal period of street corner evangelism, but in the “real” world, in which most people live, as well.

Like Lao-tzu, who emerged from the womb already an old sage, Unificationism seems to have been born with a mature historical consciousness. Like the adolescent Jesus in the apocryphal Infancy Gospels, who irritated his tutors because he already possessed an adult’s knowledge, Unificationism is uncannily shrewd in its self-understanding. Only history will show how this unique perspective will affect the survival, success, and further evolution of the Unification Church.

Notes

- 1 Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Approach to Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1969), pp. 69-70.
- 2 “Religion as a Cultural System,” in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 87-125.
- 3 Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), p. 25.
- 4 John Lofland, *Doomsday Cult: A Study of Conversion, Proselytization, and Maintenance of Faith* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966), pp. 208-209.
- 5 Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), pp. 68-161.
- 6 John Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975), pp. 50-57.
- 7 Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), e.g. p. 261; see also Robert T. Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1988), pp. 284-293.
- 8 Bahá’u’lláh, *Kitab-I-Iqan, The Book of Certitude* (Wilmette: Bahá’i Publishing Trust, 1950), *passim*.

- 9 Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York: Schocken, 1971), pp. 142-166.
- 10 Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), pp. 60-79.
- 11 Abraham Maslow, *Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences* (New York: Viking, 1974), pp. 23-29.
- 12 Gerd Theissen, "The Wandering Radicals," in Theissen, *Social Reality and the Earliest Christians* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 33-59; M. Eugene Boring, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus: Christian Prophecy in the Synoptic Tradition*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 46 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
- 13 Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Review of the Gospels* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1973), pp. 139-140. See also Leibel Reznick, *The Mystery of Bar Kochba: An Historical and Theological Investigation of the Last King of the Jews* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1996), pp. 130-131, 145-146.
- 14 Michael L. Mickler, "When the Prophet Is Yet Living: A Case Study of the Unification Church," in Timothy Miller, ed., *When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 183-194.
- 15 In the invaluable *Selections from the Writings of the Bab* (Translated by Habib Taherzadeh, [Haifa: Baha'i World Center, 1976]) we have a recapitulation of the much-disputed Son of Man problem in the Gospels. Bultmann and others suggested that the Gospel sayings on the future coming of the Son of Man were indeed authentically dominical but referred to someone other than Jesus himself, and that they must be carefully disentangled from the mass of Son of Man sayings, authentic and inauthentic, apocalyptic or not, which are all unceremoniously dumped side by side in the Gospels. In the same way, many statements of the Bab regarding Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest seem to anticipate the soon coming of the Mahdi as someone distinct from himself, implicitly Bahá'u'lláh, but this turns out to be an optical illusion: the Bab never predicted an immediate successor to himself. Rather, he at first considered himself merely the forerunner of the Mahdi and thus, as Bultmann suggests for Jesus, spoke of a distinct, soon-coming figure: the Hidden Imam, the returning Muhammad al-Mahdi, the 12th Shiite Imam. Subsequently, he realized he himself was the Mahdi (see Ignaz Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, trans. Andras and Ruth Hamori [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981], p. 246) and may have spoken of himself for a while in the third person, deferring his self-revelation, as Albert Schweitzer thought Jesus was doing in his futuristic Son of Man sayings. But the redaction of this collection of the Bab's statements is the work not of the surviving Bab'i (Azal'i) sect, but of the Bahá'i sect and reflects their belief that the Bab meant to refer to the coming manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh.
- 16 Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries*, trans. J.A. Baker (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1981).

- 17 Jonathan D. Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (New York: Norton, 1997), p. 147.
- 18 Stevan L. Davies, *The Revolt of the Widows: The Social World of the Apocryphal Acts* (Carbondale: Southern University Press, 1981).
- 19 See Stoddard's "The Inexcusableness of Neglecting the Worship of God," together with Robert L. Ferm's introduction, in Ferm, ed., *Issues in American Protestantism: A Documentary History from the Puritans to the Present* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1969), pp. 41-48.

THE UNIFICATION CHURCH: THEORY VS. PRACTICE / IDEAL VS. REALITY

Fredrick Sontag

The advantage to living in a time when new religious movements spring up is that one can observe an emerging religion in its origin and development, even though one is always an outsider and never gains an insider's perspective. With established religions, we often forget their rough and disturbing beginnings. Read the life of George Fox, founder of the Quakers, and you will hear a tale of uproar and near violence due to his eruptive church appearances. This contrasts with the Quaker meeting in silence these days. Or, witness a Papal mass in Saint Peter's in Rome, and it will be difficult to visualize Jesus in controversy defending a persecuted minority group. Thus, to understand better the origins of one's own long-established religious tradition, now refined to domesticity, each of us would do well to become involved (at least as an observer) in some new religious group in order to gain an understanding of how a religion gets started.

The disadvantage of living in a time of new religious origins is that the intruder usually generates heated emotions which, ironically, makes it difficult to appraise the newcomer accurately. Calm, ritualistic, traditional religious paths allow calm appraisal (or sometimes no appraisal, since everything is dull). In trying to understand any religion better, then, we are caught between its now familiar procedures, which often arouse little passion (that life blood

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of all religion), and trying somehow to transport ourselves back in time to witness and to participate in its rude beginnings. Retouching origins can revitalize languishing spirits, but to be in the middle of a contemporary movement is often to be embroiled in the controversy, not in a quiet spiritual renewal.

In the late twentieth-century it would be hard to pick a new religion that generated more controversy than the Unification Church (actually, the Holy Spirit Association for the Unity of World Christianity). But if one is involved in one or another Christian traditions, and if one wants to gain a new perspective on one's own roots and perhaps even a renewal of spirit, the Unification movement (as it often calls itself) is a particularly good candidate for study. Why? Although it arose out of ordinary Western garden-variety Christianity, it incorporates Eastern, Oriental aspects that make it different. Such novelty provides for better contrast, since we tend to argue with and compare ourselves to those most like ourselves, e.g., in the Roman Catholic and Episcopal dialogue.

In order to be new, all emerging groups must be "heretical" until they establish themselves and attain acceptance. Mormonism (The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints) does not offer orthodox Christianity; its founder was martyred for his radical preaching. Today we think of Mormons as paragons of domestic virtue. But we can better understand our religious history as Americans if we study Mormonism's origin in violence, or if we realize how "oddball" our Puritan forefathers were in their day in their native Europe. The United States was born out of religious controversy and out of offbeat religious groups, and we understand our religious origins better by looking at new religious groups rather than simply charting current church attendance. (As someone remarked: Every oddball religious sect that failed in Europe flourished in America.) Controversy can close minds, but sometimes it can open them too.

1. External vs. Internal Perceptions

Although Rev. Moon slipped into the U.S. quietly at first, the Unification Church burst upon the media in the early seventies. It is hard now to remember some of the circumstances of that time, so changed is our situation today. Then we faced a younger generation who were disaffected with much that made up American cultural ideals, including our triumphal Protestant celebration of America's success as being "God-given." In their rebellion, what was exotic and non-traditional appealed to many as an avenue of escape from oppressive orthodox "Americanism." In this cultural reaction, Indian and Oriental religions and life-styles developed a sudden attraction. To the rebellious youth, dancing with the Hari Krishna seemed natural. Many had become disillusioned with political activism, in spite of their success in igniting the

protest against the war in Vietnam, and turned next to religious reform. That anti-war crusade had succeeded, but the notion that, as a consequence, they would change all of American culture did not follow.

In the midst of this furor Sun Myung Moon arrived in the U.S., preceded only by a few dedicated Korean followers. No one could have predicted the appeal of his message, as it is recorded in *Exposition of the Divine Principle*, their chief document. His commission from Jesus, he said, was to bring the kingdom of Heaven to earth, not at the end of the world but now. Many Americans were emotionally committed to South Korea as the Christian bulwark against Communism, in whose defense the US had fought. This caused even the religious establishment to greet Rev. Moon as a hero, as a representative of successful Western missionary effort. Indeed, his family had been converted to Presbyterianism, which had been established in Korea by American missionaries. But as his movement spread and attracted thousands of the young, the media soon discovered the unorthodox aspects contained in the preaching of his message, e.g., of the imminent coming of God's Kingdom on earth.

In an earlier study, I investigated this phenomenon and its controversial aspects and attempted to outline the essence of the doctrine and its appeal.¹ Its theology can be rationally articulated and critiqued, perhaps more so than that of the Latter-Day Saints, with which the movement shares some similarities. The point of this essay, however, is not to offer a theological analysis but rather to contrast their religious ideal with the practice of the church at the moment—in the hope of generating dialogue. As one who early on studied that phenomenon, over a period of time I came to know personally many members, both leaders and foot soldiers, perhaps more so than any other non-member. My published sympathy for their ideals has been criticized, but precisely because “some of my best friends are Moonies,” I was also pained when I observed any disparity between their ideals and their practice.

It must quickly be added that the same discrepancy characterizes any organized religion that I know. Any enthusiastic religious follower experiences pain upon seeing the religious ideal less than perfectly embodied, whether in leaders or in one's fellow followers. After discovering this, each individual, whether Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Buddhist, must decide whether to face this fact and stay on to work for what improvement he or she can accomplish, or to “check out” and continue religious wandering. If they defect, the search continues for the elusive holy grail, that religious group which will perfectly embody its ideals in practice. Many Unificationists are certainly in that dilemma now, as projected dates for radical transformation pass and leaders sometimes seem either aloof from members' problems or appear self-interested.

Every new religious movement, if it is to recruit defectors from other religious groups, must offer an attractive picture of an attainable ideal life.

Certainly this was the case with Rev. Moon. The “outside world” has used exaggerated notions (e.g. “brainwashing”) to account for the movement’s attractiveness. But most dedicated followers would say that it was the picture of an ideal, of a restored family life (a concept which is at the heart of their doctrine), which he or she found to be appealing. Converts discovered a group, as many said, “really living their ideals.” The goal to bring God’s kingdom to earth soon must be appealing to anyone with a Christian or Jewish background, although its attraction to Jews became a matter of even more intense pain to Judaism. Nevertheless, whatever the religious background, the new convert was ecstatically caught up in the vision to inaugurate an ideal existence, and to do it “now.”

To work furiously to restore the earth to God’s way must be attractive to those who are idealistically inclined. The average Unificationist had to be an idealist and believe that God wanted him or her to act as an instrument to restore the earth. However, the point of this dialogue piece is to ask: What happens when time passes, as it must, and the ideal life still seems held off at arm’s length, or when one is embroiled in less than ideal actions with leaders or other members? The movement often announced specific timetables, and some of those dates have passed with little observable change. A number have defected, although a loyal core remains, and the movement is still growing overseas. Some accommodations have been made. The issue is: how many and by whom?

2. *Disparities between Ideals and Practice*

As with the early Christians who were sure of Jesus’ imminent return during their lifetime, all eschatological movements face this Waterloo in their religious history. And so the Unificationist must pass through it too, or find some personal accommodation. Can the ideal be preserved, and perhaps even doggedly held on to, in the face of practical disappointment when one observes postponed dates and often less than spiritual behavior by those who should embody the religious ideal? Where power and money are involved, one is bound to see leaders interested in obtaining and preserving influence—a fact true of any institutional religion I know anything about.

In the case of Unification practice, this issue is complicated by the fact that life within the church is not simply dictated by their major religious document, *Exposition of the Divine Principle*. Like trying to understand Roman Catholic life and practice from reading the Gospels alone, to know the Divine Principle will tell you something of their lifestyle and ideals, but it cannot tell you all. It does not tell you what it is like to live within the “Family,” which is how the member thinks of his or her “family centered,” and “God centered” life. For instance, the “Blessing” ceremony, their mass marriage, is not dic-

tated by the Divine Principle. It grew up as a custom within church practice, and a very important one it is. It includes the Oriental tradition, foreign to Western Christianity, of the arranged matching of couples. This is done by Rev. and Mrs. Moon and the church hierarchy, often matching partners who were previously unknown to each other.

Marriage unions are to serve a higher purpose, not simply individual attraction. Given Western divorce rates, their system cannot be judged a failure, but it does cause agony for some, particularly Western, couples. Most Westerners are used to the notions of romantic love and individual choice. Suddenly to find oneself with a partner one has not known before, and perhaps from another race and culture, can involve immense problems of adjustment—although that system is perfectly logical given the religion's goal to unify all religions and cultures.

As in any religion, Unification practice reflects its cultural origins; for example, the rigid hierarchical structure of church life reflects its Confucian background. Of course, Roman Catholics face the same dilemma, that is, if they espouse democratic individualism within a church with a long tradition of authoritarian rule. This conflict may be even more difficult for Western members of the Unification Church, since the church's theological origins are Protestant. Koreans stand at the center of many church enterprises, and designedly so. What some Western members once touted as "the Americanization of the church" intentionally became the Koreanization of the church.

Since everyone must reconcile himself or herself to a less than ideal marriage, perhaps the most desperate struggle of ideal vs. reality within the church comes over basic lifestyle. Does one live communally in church centers, working on church enterprises, or disperse and enter ordinary professions, thus living apart? Once the crusade and rally eras ended by Rev. Moon's intentional proclamation, each member had to decide what to do with his or her life, now that they were no longer fund-raising on the streets and vigorously campaigning for converts. The ideal of establishing the restored, God-centered family conflicts with 24-hour duty on projects and roaming about the world on missions. Once members are married and with children—after securing permission to start a family and being certified as spiritually prepared for the task—how shall they earn a living and give their families the lifestyle needed to create the ideal family? That is no small task, made even more difficult by pressure from the "Japanese tradition" within the church to sacrifice and to live communally. This is perhaps one reason why their religious movement is growing most in Africa and South America now and is less vigorous in the West.

Tension develops between the picture of the ideal family, which was so attractive to the convert, versus the practical facts of an arranged marriage and

the necessity to decide between an independent, secular job versus often lower paying church work. This is the main dilemma many members face today. Some have defected, which is not to say that many did not stay and profess their loyalty to Rev. and Mrs. Moon, the exemplary ideal family and their "True Parents." Of course, in time all of our marriages face the same dilemma, except that the Unification member has had the idealized, heavenly family held up as being realizable and within reach. This makes the pain of discovering a distance between ideal and reality more intense than it is for a pragmatically based secular marriage.

"Sacrifice" is a traditional religious demand, for celibate monk and Unificationist alike, and this fact must be taken into account. Thus, the dissatisfied member is often met, not so much with sympathy for his or her plight, as with a demand for continued individual sacrifice as a means to achieve the ideal. The problem with this spiritual request is that the average member has already sacrificed much during his or her years as a fundraiser and street evangelist. Now married, after a lapse of time, they look for some evidence that the sacrificial effort is indeed bringing the ideal nearer realization, that the kingdom of God on Earth is closer to establishment. Unfortunately, the secular city seems largely unchanged, or too often in regress today. Rev. Moon did adopt a strong Western ideal of a belief in cultural "progress."

This same conflict faces the isolated monk or nun in the monastery. The days of trial have been endured. Now he or she asks: Is the ideal spiritual life really at hand? The cloistered nun or monk, however, or even the ardent Protestant in the Crystal Cathedral pew, face a trifling in their trial of faith and fidelity compared to that which confronts the Unification Church follower, who has sacrificed for the predicted total cultural, political, and economic transformation. To achieve an inner spiritual change of individuals is not enough, nor is it what first attracted converts. To propose to transform the whole world order by creating restored, ideal families is an immense undertaking. Thus, it is all the more subject to disillusionment if the final goal eludes them. The ideal of irreversible 'progress' comes under challenge.

The political activity of Rev. Moon's followers has puzzled and angered many. Why did they for so long support anti-communists almost indiscriminately, not to mention backing President Nixon in his darkest hours? Was it mere flexibility that their stance changed so radically after the fall of communism? The rationale for the church's early anti-communism is partially explained by the experience of Rev. Moon in Korean communist prisons, but that is almost beside the point. Religions support all kinds of political causes, and each believer is sure that his religious beliefs make her political views justified. The issue is the same with the Roman Catholic hierarchy in South America or with liberal Protestants in America. When political events do not

follow the desired scenario, the spiritual life of the follower can be plunged into crisis. Will he or she still believe in the goal and make the sacrifice needed to achieve it, in spite of practical reversals in the program?

The church's interest in the economic sphere may complicate life for loyal Unificationists even more. Not only the culture, but also the commercial life of the world must be "restored," they believe. Most Christians would accept this as an admirable, if difficult goal, but it does not mean that one tries to persuade the President of the General Motors (perhaps better, Toyota) to forgo profits and forsake commercial success for a life of contemplation. No, the church itself must plunge into the economic whirl to show the way to a spiritually based economic success. And despite numerous failures, the Unification Church was at least for some time amazingly successful economically. Although this poses spiritual obstacles, as I will argue, their economic success also funded the institution and in that way assured its survival. Thus, even when they are not religiously or politically or culturally fully successful, economically they can be sustained. Japan is no longer for them an economic mainstay, but the Korean economy has risen, and they have diversified their enterprises.

Yet, if their spiritual goal, to create God-centered families and to restore God's world to a Garden of Eden, is attractive to the religious novice, money is universally attractive. Those outside may be attracted by the doctrine outlined in the *Exposition of the Divine Principle*; but those within the church may also eventually remain in it due to the economic spin off even after their religious ardor has cooled. The highly placed leader who becomes spiritually cynical must decide if economically and socially he or she can do just as well outside the Church's fold as within. Those who may cluck in disapproval over outsiders who are attracted to the church's conferences or to their enterprises due to the economic benefit offered (e.g. complementary travel and fine hotels, which follow from the Oriental custom of generous hosting), often fail to understand that the Unification outlook sees not a thing wrong in buying a little influence. That is the way life moves. Not to recognize it is moral hypocrisy. Nothing about their use of monetary generosity, they might say, is covert. One courts well placed persons with favors. How else is one to become influential in the world and to build God's kingdom?

Secular influence is central to the Unification Church's religious aims. Few understand this, and some pious moralists will not even consider it as an acceptable religious path. However, one must ask what established religion today would be where it is had it not eventually succeeded culturally and economically. Certainly Roman Catholicism would not be a worldwide body but for the assimilation of Roman power, nor would Baptists have the influence they do in our American life if they had not become established in U.S. social, political, and economic circles. Still, insiders in the Unification Church take

note of the occasional cynical climber-of-the-ladder within their movement, and so they must fight the corruption that money and power always breed. Unification doctrine teaches that they can wield influence and not fall into sin as Adam did. But here again we ask painfully: Has the reality in practice fully vindicated the ideal of remaining pure, or does practice often embroil the ideal in ironies? Has no one in the church gained power and used it selfishly? Unlikely.

As Lord Acton said, "Power (and money) corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." The Divine Principle teaches a way out of this perennially perplexing evil, and so its enthusiastic followers can celebrate the impending release of the secular world from corruption. But do we see as much change as we should within the Unification family? One who observes closely will see many fine individuals. As with other religions, good families can be found within their group. Individuals who have been rescued and changed for the better offer testimony to the transforming power of life according to the Divine Principle. Even the movement's zealous opponents would be blind not to recognize the conversion power that the doctrine has exercised on many, whatever one may like or dislike about other aspects of the church's activities. How else, short of magic, could one explain the church's attractive power to thousands of decent, idealistic, intelligent people?

Some within the church have become disillusioned over the gap between the power of its converting ideals and the actual life lived by many, and most of those have left. Enthusiasm wanes, ordinary ways of life return. Ecstasy becomes a memory. But the same is true for the disillusioned in any religious group, since any church I know of preaches an ideal which inevitably has its fallen practitioners. Percentages differ in different groups, and statistics are hard to come by in the Unification Church. Since "perfection now" is the absorbing goal, this makes record keeping unimportant in the midst of a perpetual campaign atmosphere. However, even a slight spot of internal corruption is doubly difficult for a religion that believes it knows a "Principled way" by which Adam's fall can be prevented from occurring again. Economic success, not poverty, is the goal, so some are bound to use funds selfishly. Outsiders may not be aware of such internal faults, since Oriental "face saving" makes it difficult for the ardent leader to give less than an ecstatic public account of success. It would amount to apostasy to suggest that the projected goals were not being met, yet all the while members with a Western mentality are more realistically and pragmatically assessing the results.

In public it is theory that gets recited, seldom actual practice. The ideal is always reasserted; real conduct is not mentioned, at least not to outsiders. This can plunge the realistic Western convert into a crisis of faith. The Oriental mind may notice no contradiction, or else considers this normal and not to be mentioned openly. Public politeness is an Eastern way of life; Western direct-

ness is not. Korean leaders may argue fiercely among themselves in private, but publicly all is sweetness and light and progress. The Eastern mind takes discrepancies between private and public for granted. This may explain why Rev. Moon has been more successful in the Orient, in Latin countries, and in Africa, and why the new religion was most successful in Western countries during the time of youth rebellion against their own traditions.

The Western mind thinks every issue should be discussed openly and every discrepancy publicly proclaimed. The Oriental mind is appalled by the notion of an open airing of internal problems and so more easily accepts the discrepancy of ideal vs. reality. Private failure may be a fact, but why should it be discussed? There was for some time an underground publication, *The Round Table*, edited by ardent Western Unificationists who wanted to air church lifestyle problems in print. Such a notion appalled most Korean leaders. The paper spoke about authoritarian leadership or the agony, in some cases, of living in arranged marriages.

The official line is that although there may be issues, publicly you should submit to authority and then discuss privately. Such a response frustrates the Westerner. How shall practice ever be brought in line with ideal theory, the Westerner asks, unless issues are openly faced? The Oriental attitude responds (often silently): How are ideals ever to be realized if issues are displayed in front of non-family members? Ideals must not be tainted by such concerns, which are of course there. But to admit them publicly is to damage the cause you believe in. *The Round Table* has ceased publication, but such discussions continue on the Internet.

3. *Cultural Adaptation, or the Lack of It*

Zen Buddhism is commonly identified with Japanese culture. However, Zen is Indian in origin by its Buddhist beginnings and Chinese in its actual formation. Indian mystical lore was not translatable into the pragmatic Chinese outlook. So Zen emerged as a radical practical transformation of an otherwise unadaptable Indian religious fantasy. All this is an immensely complicated matter, but the point is that Zen might not have emerged as an integral part of East Asian culture had it not transformed itself from its Indian origins into a mode of Buddhism that could be culturally acceptable. Similarly, the Roman Catholic Church became a world religion by showing an amazing ability to adapt itself to the cultures into which it penetrated. Zen claims to preserve the core of Buddhism, and Catholics also claim to hold to a common core, in spite of diverse cultural adaptations.

To my mind, if anything can hold the Unification Church back from its intended world-wide spread, it will be its stubborn insistence on preserving some of its Korean folk-ways and asking all members to follow suit culturally. The church is genuinely international in its message, and it aims at world-wide cultural unity. Nonetheless, it is often provincial in continuing to operate in a Korean style. Rev. Moon would never have served a term in prison for income tax evasion had his associates understood the need to accept the maxim, "When in America do as Americans do." Their conviction on alleged violations of tax laws were unnecessary and occurred only because they could not see the need to do otherwise than they would have done in Korea. The perjury of Rev. Moon's close associate (for which he was convicted) is a perfect example of loyalty to and sacrifice for the leader, a virtuous act by Oriental standards but largely unacceptable in the West.

There are interesting and varied facets to the doctrine of *Exposition of the Divine Principle*, although that document may also need to be purged of the provincial cultural accretions that stem from its Korean origin. Rev. Moon set down its basic teaching, but it was enlarged on by others, making the printed work eclectic. Many educated members would like to sophisticate the doctrine, although as in all religions there is no exact agreement about what is essential, what can change, and what constitutes heresy. Still, the process of reform could (and does) go on, just as Peter and Paul freed early Christianity from its seeming destiny to remain a minor, deviant sect of Judaism. Can Rev. Moon's followers free their doctrine from its restrictive Korean setting and adapt it to world-wide culture, making it unnecessary to force Korean ways on every follower? For instance, can the policy of arranged marriages between strangers be modified? It is not absolutely required by an orthodox reading of the Divine Principle, and it does seem recently to have been relaxed.

I believe every new religious movement needs to be liberated from its provincial origins, as Christianity was from Mosaic Law, and Lutheranism from Luther's provincial political views. Unless this takes place, no religious movement can spread far beyond the cultural setting of its origin. Like primitive Christianity, from the beginning Rev. Moon intended to be international in scope and in aim. But ironically, the Korean cultural practices linked to the doctrine may limit its growth—as it has at least in the West—and in fact force many ardent idealists to live outside "the family" because they cannot accept some of its lifestyle practices. The ideal is there and has appealed to many. Many are caught up for shorter or longer periods, but only a small percentage remain. Do so few stay very long because culturally restrictive practices in fact thwart the development of the ideal life they seek? (The same problems, of course, are present in any religious movement I know anything about.) What then is the problem here?

Certainly American and Western cultural ways are no less provincial and

can equally restrict new religious growth. In fact, part of the Unification message and its appeal is its pronouncement on the decadence of Western ways, particularly martial infidelity. Simply to abandon Oriental practices for Western liberalism would be no particular advantage. Certainly it would not serve a religious message brought to the West out of the East, as Rev. Moon now asserts that God called him to do. (His home in New York is called "East Garden," that is, the Garden of Eden now returning, coming from the East.) But the nagging issue of the discrepancy between ideal and practice in Unification Church life today should force the dedicated member to ask: What cultural inheritances are accidental and in fact restrictive to religious growth and so should be critically appraised and either modified or abandoned, in order to let the church member's life come closer to the proclaimed ideals?

Is there more than one way to live out the "Principled life," or must all of Rev. Moon's followers argue to eternity, as Christians have, trying to hold each other to only one form of belief and practice? Although Westerners sometimes think that they originated pluralism and pragmatism, these are good Oriental traditions too. Westerners often thwart themselves by lack of flexibility in practice. But surely to hold the Unification church tradition, its practice and its lifestyle, to any one cultural form separates its theoretical universalism from its practice. It forces the ideal further away from the reality of the member's actual life and also thwarts the goal of becoming truly international.

4. Ideal Family vs. Secular Influence

By way of illustration, let me comment on one doctrine that is central to the practice of the Unification movement, indicate the reasons why it should be rethought, and point out how its implementation drives members to activities little understood by outsiders and which possibly are detrimental to their own religious goal.

Key to the Divine Principle's understanding of why Jesus did not succeed in bringing the kingdom of Heaven to earth in his lifetime, and thus central to the Unification attempt to realize God's kingdom on earth now, is the belief that Jesus went to the poor and to the outcast of his time only because the leaders of Judean society failed to support his cause. Jesus should have gone to the powerful of the day and then on to Rome. In this regard, Unificationists believe that the only way to usher in God's kingdom is through influence, power, and public presence. And this demands funds sufficient to attract important people.

This theory explains how and why Jesus' mission "failed" practically—although he did establish a spiritual kingdom, as Unificationists readily agree. It guides members as they go about seeking to institute God's kingdom today. It also explains why many of the activities of the Unification movement baffle outsiders, the purpose and nature of which few understand. International conferences abound, staged in luxury hotels, with furious if subtle pressure to bring "top names" to attend. Literally millions of dollars are expended, although the costs of these conferences are surely no higher than any such gatherings. The common assumption by outsiders is that Rev. Moon is trying to "buy respectability." In a sense that is true, as it is of almost any new enterprise, whether business, cultural, religious or political. But the issue is "why"? Why would a religious group go to such effort to stage vast international assemblies? Moreover, they operate business enterprises, newspapers, magazines, publishing houses, and political lobbying efforts.

Unificationists believe they must achieve cultural, economic, political and, above all, intellectual prominence in order to succeed in their religious goal. Only by exerting influence at society's top levels can God's kingdom and the God-centered family be spread internationally, once it has been restored in member's lives. However, this theory, little as it is understood by those outside the church and central as it is to the Divine Principle's notion of how God's plan is to be instituted on earth, is a prime example of how practice of an ideal leads to a reality in fact different from it. Their furious attempt to gain influence in the world for perfectly good purposes (according to their doctrine) often leads to practices that may harm members and cause confusion. (Not that such challenge is unwelcome; Rev. Moon actually favors baptism by fire for all novice members.)

Why may it be harmful? Unificationists' aim is to create a nucleus of God-centered families, first blessed by the marriage ceremonies, next working together to restore mankind from original sin by practicing "Principled" living. To accomplish this, one needs close families, a supportive environment and available spiritual guidance. But the struggle to gain money and prestige and influence in society, although grounded in doctrine, in fact leads to most of the actions that the public questions or finds negative i.e., quick conversions, street fundraising, pressure on "top names" to attend meetings, vast sums spent on conventions and travel, and literally frantic global activity.

In such a situation, justified as it is by doctrine, how can God-centered families be formed or human sin be eradicated? We ask again, "Doesn't power corrupt and absolute power corrupt absolutely?" But members who follow the Divine Principle believe they can set themselves free from this human flaw. They believe they can use money and influence virtuously.

But in fact, their access to affluence often attracts to them those who have little interest in anything but new prominence and/or a free ride. It also encourages some church leaders to conform, at least outwardly, in order to gain power and privilege in the hierarchy. Certainly this is not true of every member, every leader, or every non-Church person who attends a luxury meeting, who helps lead conferences, or who accepts an airplane ticket. But it is true that any self-centered struggle for prominence and control can infect the ranks and deflect the energy needed to develop their spiritual life.

Any organization is subject to subversion by opportunists, but the Unification movement is plagued by: (1) going for money and influence purposefully, rather than following Saint Francis's life of poverty; and (2) by thinking that they have found a way to live free from the corruption that affluence and influence engenders. More importantly, the lives of members too often languish for individual spiritual attention because emphasis is, quite purposefully, on public appearance. Good members willingly sacrifice to put on the grand conference, to make the business profitable, to get political attention. They understand the high religious purpose behind these efforts. But by living under this pressure, do their lives often crumble and their spirits languish rather than blossom into God's kingdom on earth?

Does Rev. Moon realize all this? Why do leaders not work more intently to secure the God-centered family life that they espouse? All those leaders who are in attendance "at court" have it in their best interest to present the most positive picture to their "central figure," even if the facts are that membership declines and that the influence gained is often less than is proclaimed. Ironically, the "big show" goes on and businesses flourish all to provide the financial support for these (as Rev. Moon sees them) genuine religious purposes. But the means used to accomplish the religious goal (God's kingdom on earth, soon) may be thwarting that achievement, may actually be driving practice further away from theory and reality further away from the ideal. Like the horizon and Marx's classless society, the goal may seem further away the closer they get to it.

5. Concluding Reflection

If one understands Unificationists' doctrine and their religious aim, and perhaps has sympathy with their goal to bring God's kingdom on earth soon, what might be recommended? Several points occur in summary, some already mentioned:

(1) Keep the goal to create God-centered families central in every way possible, attempting by that to eradicate the sins of the Fall.

(2) Concentrate leaders' attention on spiritual counseling to members. Let them help members to attain that goal, not necessarily by urging them to a comfortable life but by bending every means to underwrite the new families.

(3) Consider the adoption of means, in every culture and country, which meet that indigenous intellectual mode of understanding, recognizing diversity in cultural approach (as actually fits Unification theory).

(4) Appraise every new scheme, whether business or intellectual conference, as to its value vs. the how time and funds might be spent creating a greater spiritual base.

(5) Such recommendations need not mean for the movement to become self-centered. That would contradict their goal of service to others, but it would mean to evaluate each scheme according to the spiritual needs of the membership, both present and potential.

(6) Consider the portion of funds spent on conferences and restrict their size, lavishness, and frequency to allow greater diversion of funds to the relief of physical needs, both those inside and outside the movement.

(7) Ask whether more alternatives can be found to the arranged marriage system, just as all Catholics need not become priests or nuns in order to live out their religious life. Choice of one's spouse could become an option for those who want it. And as a matter of fact, the Blessing of existing marriage seems to be becoming a more common practice.

(8) Refine the doctrine, the Divine Principle, its practice and all customs, asking what must be held to as essential and what can vary by time, place, and local custom. For example, a recent color-coded version of *Exposition of the Divine Principle* puts essential points in red.

(9) Re-evaluate the timetable for the coming of the kingdom. This is not hard to do since their doctrine is one that accepts a contingency of operation on God's part, not the necessity of divine foreordination as most Old World views had it. Has God changed His approach since Rev. Moon's original vision of Jesus and his commission to him to work to bring in the Kingdom? On their theory, such change in divine operations is quite possible.

(10) Scrutinize the Oriental tolerance of spoils and luxury for the leader as against a standard of sacrifice and spiritual growth. The rise of a younger generation of leaders could change some of this. (Require a reading of Saint Francis by every leader and a lecture on the purity of poverty and the corruption of Rome?)

(11) Open a forum and an avenue of expression for member's needs and devote more top attention to such concerns. Balance the constant push to secular growth with a concern for spiritual advance.

(12) Ask whether the constant, almost impulsive, movement from project to ever-new projects, from place to place, often without much advance study, can be wasteful of lives and resources? Move from a crusade mode to careful advance. Do this without losing the zeal for inaugurating a new world and for creating new lives, which first made the movement attractive to many. This might be the most difficult project God has yet given to the Unification movement.

Every comment above could apply to most religions in their early years. The Unification Movement simply offers us a good example, since we observe it in its growth and expansion phase.

6. *Postscript: Peter's Vision of Christianity*

All Christianity goes back to the experience of Jesus, but all authentic Christianity should also be measured by Peter's vision (Acts 10), without which we might not have a "Christianity" distinct from Judaism. Jesus' Jewish followers would have remained Jews, and then all who wanted to join in remembering Jesus would have simply kept the Mosaic Law. But Peter's vision opened Christianity to all people and made it a universal religion, detaching it from all national, cultural observances. While many since that time have tried to re-provincialize their rituals, at its truest Christianity retains Peter's universal vision of openness to all without regard to cultural background.

Thus, in so far as all Unification Church members are held to Korean or Eastern customs, they restrict the scope of their outreach. True, Mormon rituals today still evidence the situation of their 19th century American origin, as Christian Science also does. But the issue is to overcome the specifics of origin in order to reach out to all, just as Roman Catholicism may one day have to outgrow the male-centered notions contained in its Jewish heritage.

So, should Rev. Moon seek to universalize the doctrine and practices resulting from his vision? Jesus appeared to him, he reports, just as he appeared to others, including Saint Paul. However, the mission should not be to Koreanize Christianity, but to use the vitality inherent in that new setting, the East, to revitalize Christian ecclesiastical forms to recognize again Peter's universal vision, which frees every follower from cultural provincialism:

The truth I have come to realize... is that God does not have favorites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to Him. (Acts 10:34-35)

Notes

- 1 *Sun Myung Moon: The Man and the Movement*. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1977).

UNIFICATIONISM IN AMERICA: MODELS OF SUCCESS

Tyler Hendricks

If you have been in the Unification Church for decades and you do not have any spiritual children, then you are parasites, robbers!

Rev. Sun Myung Moon, 1994.5.10

If the Unification Family Church cannot grow in membership, enabling members to gain spiritual children, then it is creating a membership of parasites and robbers. Assuming no one desires that their life of religious sacrifice lead to this outcome, I will argue in this article that members can support each other's achievement of successful spiritual parenting through development of church life. The basis for this development is a change in thinking about how to gain members.

In light of the Unification Church's family-based belief system, it is ironic that it frames the task of witnessing as an individualistic matter. Its model is True Father clinging to a pine tree on a mountainside in desperation to save humankind. Saints who can win souls by themselves, however, with no church environment, are few and far between. Most people require a support system in which to bring someone to God. That support system is the church. Most of the current members joined an active church center. Most gained spiritual children when they were working in an active church center.

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This article is about making that church in America.

To approach this, I will first say a few words about religion in America. This is to show first that there is a generalized religious culture in America that is Protestant Christian in spirit. To generate the give-and-take action necessary to succeed, the church must relate with that context. Rev. Moon acknowledged this principle with reference to the Unification Church in Japan. He stated, "An important issue in the evangelical work in Japan was to find a way so that Japan would not condemn the faith and ideas of the Unification Church because of a perceived contradiction with the core of Japanese culture. At the same time, the Unification Church had to maintain its integrity and educate Japanese society in such a way that the Unification Church faith could take root in Japan."¹

1. *The Religious Spirit in America*

On the one hand, American religion is highly diverse in terms of origins and doctrines. On the other hand, in terms of behaviors and attitudes, American religion is quite uniform. Whether the groups in view are Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim or any other, there are huge areas of commonality.

The development of this religious style began with the second generation of Christian Americans—the offspring of the Puritans. The first-generation Puritan services centered on a highly theological reading of providence, interpreting the public duty according to the times. Services presented careful explanations of God's providential will, warnings to those who do not comply, and serious hymns laced with the promise of salvation and threats of damnation. (In other words, these services were similar to today's Unificationist services.) It should be noted that while Rev. Moon and most conservatives rightly praise the Puritans, *they were a short-lived phenomenon*. They did not keep hold of their second generation.

Their children attended church because there was only one church in town and it was against the law not to attend. But in general the children's hearts were not there. Elders were no longer hearing the testimonies of saving grace that the Puritans knew, to their eternal credit, was the authentic sign of salvation. Their children drifted spiritually from the church and substituted good morals and worldly success for the real experience of salvation. It was not until the Great Awakening arrived that the Americans found their spiritual home. The offspring of the Puritans went the way of the Awakenings. Sects like the Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Shakers and "Independent Congregationalists" blossomed.

These new sects were manifestations of popular enthusiasm, versus institutional and traditional forms. They were established by inspired lay people, based upon their direct religious experience and sense of God-given author-

ity. They were evangelical, not territorial, and they ignored the conventional parish lines of the state churches. They were unpretentious, based upon self-evident truth. They had lively music that the older folks did not like. They were self-taught. A scandal to the established churches of the East Coast, these services broke the barriers between black and white, men and women, adults and children, allowing individuals to make up their own mind and preachers to find their own truth within the scriptures.

After the Revolution, Americans loosed the church from the state. Since no one was forced to attend church, the churches that grew were those who found the way to minister to people's direct needs. The conventional churches—the Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Episcopalian—grew proportionally to population growth and immigration. Joining their ranks were the Catholics, who grew to large numbers by dint of immigration and effective youth education. Today they are numerous and are healthy in many ways, but they have a dearth of priests. By the 1960s all the mainstream Protestant churches were shrinking. The churches that have grown throughout American history are those that assimilated the spirit and style of the Great Awakenings: the Baptists, Methodists, and their offshoots in the Holiness movement, Pentecostalism, Fundamentalism, the Latter-Day Saints, Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses and thousands of independent Bible churches.

a. Continual New Expressions of Truth

Sociologist of religion Donald Miller has coined the term “new paradigm church” for certain current manifestations of this tradition. He describes three contemporary exemplars of this as “changing the way Christianity looks and is experienced. Like upstart religious groups of the past, they have discarded many of the attributes of establishment religion. Appropriating contemporary cultural forms, these churches are creating a new genre of worship music; they are restructuring the organizational character of institutional religion; and they are democratizing access to the sacred by radicalizing the Protestant principle of the priesthood of all believers.”²

I acknowledge that Unificationists have been very innovative over the years. Consider the video series for Christian clergy, the CAUSA slide lectures, the True Family Values workbooks, and the Pure Love Alliance and International Educational Foundation curricula. And yet, none of these have served the purpose of bringing people into the Unification Church. None of these have had the objective of bringing people into a life changing, heart-relationship with God through the church community.

Unificationists have not developed the Divine Principle itself into a listener-friendly study course. Is it proper to develop better expressions of Principle? Of course! As Rev. Moon said, “When lecturing on the Principle, people don't like it when it is done in the old way.”³ This is the most creative

era of human history, due to God's providence. But Satan is a great innovator too. Communism fell, but Satan had a backup plan called secular humanism, or, to put it bluntly, paganism. Paganism is individualistic, free-sex ideology dressed up in spiritual trappings. Unificationists have to adapt what Satan is doing! This is a simple application of the principle of the false preceding the true. Martin Luther and John Calvin both hired people to adapt songs that people were singing in the taverns for use in the church. Luther is cited to have said, "Why should the devil have all the good tunes?" (This phrase is sometimes also attributed to Salvation Army founder William Booth, another leader who broke the musical conventions of his time by adapting popular songs.)

Rev. Moon cautions Unificationists not to look to the past, whether the American past or the Korean past. "Now what goes forward into the future of hope has to emerge," he said. "Although some religions insist on going back to the past, today's situation is not the same as the situation of the past. Could today's problem be managed by the contents of the past? We should not go back to the past."⁴

The Unification Family Church should go forward in America with a grasp of the characteristics of American religion. Then it can know what the people expect, what they can understand, and hence, it can fulfill the first requirement to create give and take action: make a common base.

Here is my appraisal of the characteristics of American religion:

- Friendly, warm and embracing
- Informal, casual
- Efficient—no frills for their own sake
- Competent
- Practical, useful, makes a difference in my life
- Unpretentious
- Flexible
- Innovative, whether in a conservative or liberal direction
- Responsive to the culture
- Laity dominated
- Less concerned with buildings, tradition and ritual
- More concerned with saving people
- Non-intellectual, even anti-intellectual in relationship to secular knowledge
- Emotional and physical, not conceptual

Here is the view of a noted Christian analyst, George Barna, on the topic of the shape of successful Christian churches in the 21st century, based upon present trends:⁵

- Decentralized
- Lay-driven
- Horizontal
- Accepting
- Focused on mission and vision
- Specialized in terms of audience
- Relevance-bound, not tradition-bound
- Participation and innovation by members
- Personal transformation more important than gaining knowledge
- Accessibility, impact and integrity more important than size, efficiency and image
- Growth facilitating rather than attention grabbing
- Relationships and experiences rather than more and better-run programs

A study by Richard Cimino and Don Lattin reveals that these characterize not only the growing Christian churches, but *all* growing spiritual movements in America.⁶

2. Resources and Models

It is my belief that Rev. Moon has always promoted the principles of “new paradigm” growth, the principles embedded in American religion. Of course this is not all he is promoting and teaching. But his teachings provide the examples and theological foundations to grow the church this way. Rev. Moon’s words on church development provide one foundation and model for the Unification Church in this American context. On that basis, models of other church communities that are growing can be examined. Finally, there are the movement’s own models of success as reference points.

a. Rev. Moon’s Words on Ministry and Church Development

Rev. Moon developed his church from the 1940s through the 1960s in Korea. By the time he came to America, he was working on the national and world levels. One thing he sacrificed in coming here was his role as a local pastor. An experienced local pastor knows that to give that up is a big sacrifice—one of the many of Rev. Moon’s sacrifices during his long course. Of that period, he later said, “Now, I am very famous and so busy that I cannot give the

Divine Principle lectures. The old days when I was raising members was the most exciting period.”⁷

Rev. Moon built the American membership through crusades and set up state leaders and mobile unit commanders to continue a mobilization strategy. The church sought to win 30,000 members in order to shake America through the Bicentennial celebrations, but fell far short. Nevertheless, it proceeded to establish media vehicles, the seminary and high-level outreach into the religious and political communities. It never paused to build a literal church community in America.

This is why today the Unification Church desperately needs to discover Rev. Moon’s model and pattern of church building, based upon his ministry in Korea. It is fortunate that now there is access to some of his words on this topic. It is amazing to find that many of his words parallel the strategies evident in the new paradigm Christian churches. It is the strategies developed in these churches that comprise a second resource.

b. Models of Churches that Are Growing

The early seventies were a time of intense spiritual activity in America. Many American readers may recall, as do I, the return to Christianity by many of our peers. These young people transformed Christianity in the context of the youth culture of the times. They rejected the Christianity of their parents’ generation, the liberal, staid, bureaucratic mainstream Christianity under-girding the “vast wasteland” of American culture. They rejected the churches that spurned rock music, colorful clothes and long hair on men. These young people, our peers who followed the path of the Jesus movement in the seventies, kept the music, hung loose with the clothes, kept their hair long if they liked, and accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Salvation, they realized, is a matter of the heart, not the hair or other externalities.

Many of these Christian groups faded away, but some took root and created a new wave of Christianity in America. They are what sociologist Donald Miller calls “new paradigm churches.”⁸ They didn’t all grow out of hippie communes. The Jesus People merged into the already flexible, innovative Baptist, Holiness and Pentecostal communities and found new ways to live the gospel life. Out of those half-hippie Bible study groups they have developed and are developing new forms of community life, and today they are growing like wildfire. Without any missionary plan, world-conquering vision or denominational subsidy, as of 1996 the members of just two recent Bible-study start-ups, Vineyard Community Churches and Calvary Churches, had grown into 1,290 congregations in some thirty countries. Many of these churches contain thousands of members, although the median size is about 150. They grow by the principle of volunteerism. The founder of the successful Vineyard Fellowship in Columbus, Ohio, was kick-started by spirit world. He was per-

secuting a Christian evangelist on his campus when the Holy Spirit spoke to him. The Spirit said, “Do you think you could do better?”

There are three points to be made here. One, what Rev. Moon asked and I believe expected the membership to do in America was very much like what these Christians are doing. In faith I believe that there is a deep connection between these seeds that Unificationists left uncultivated as a result of their attendance to the wilderness course, and the methods for harvest developed in the American Christian churches. These ministry methods for church health and growth *are ours already*. A reading of Rev. Moon’s teachings encouraging Unificationists to use exactly these strategies reinforces this belief.

Two, the most successful Unification church, the Oakland church of the 70s and early 80s, exemplified many traits of these other churches. What these other churches have done, and what the Unification Church has failed as yet to do on a large scale, is integrate this high-intensity, culturally attractive faith *with family life*.

And three, the growth of these new paradigm churches is a work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit for the sake of the Second Coming dispensation. It stands to reason that working with these churches can help *all* to realize their aspirations.

Some may object that Unificationists cannot follow what other churches do because “we have the Messiah so we cannot be compared with nor learn anything from them.” It is true that there are doctrinal and practical differences. Nonetheless, there are major similarities. Both are groups with a message of salvation trying to get others to join through the Holy Spirit (or what we call “vitality elements”). Both are trying to win souls out of the same secular city. Both are competing against the same competition, the same temptations. And, when it comes down to it, people join churches because they feel God’s love, a love that heals, gives hope and binds families together. Most Unification Church members joined for the same reason.

Further, churches, no matter what their doctrine or organization, face common problems. *Every* church struggles against:

- Dry lifeless sermons and services
- Lack of congregational participation
- Stressed-out leadership
- Uninspired members
- Antiquated or unsuitable facilities
- Difficulty in gaining and keeping members
- Difficulty in reaching youth
- Isolation from the larger society
- Becoming ingrown
- Aging leadership and membership

- Declining tithing
- Marital struggle and family breakdown

All churches have these problems. Churches grow in proportion to their ability to overcome these challenges. Unificationists can learn from the ways in which others have overcome the same problems. At least one major Christian leader, Rick Warren of the Saddleback Church, tells his audiences that he learned from what the Unification Church did as a successful group back in the seventies.⁹ Others, such as Bill Hybels at Willow Creek Church, state that in their early days they were taken to be a Unificationist front group.¹⁰ Such were the similarities back then. On April 15, 2000, Mrs. Moon pointed out that Rick Warren's success was due in part to his adopting our workshop system. She called the church leaders present to create success equal to Rick Warren's, and more because they have a deeper revelation of God's Word.

Another objection is that these groups are so friendly to the culture that they have lost the prophetic edge. It cannot be denied that the Unification Church pushes the doctrinal envelope into the future. But the best of these churches are, in my estimation, counter-cultural even if not radically prophetic. Look, for example, at the home-schooling movement and the pro-choice movement that many of these churches support. The Promise Keepers surely have their share of liberal mainstream critics. John the Baptist was a prophet who gained a large hearing in his society. There is no law saying that a prophetic message cannot stimulate joy, radiate vitality, give life and draw upon culture-specific metaphors and media. What I am proposing need not compromise the Unification Church's prophetic message. Ironically, these churches receive the "you are too culture-friendly" criticism from bureaucracy-bound Christians!

c. Unificationist Models of Success

Some of the best Unificationist models of success are in areas other than the church per se. Three models of movement success in America are the Universal Ballet, the True World Group restaurants and the New Yorker Hotel. Later, we will examine lessons to be learned from the most successful Unificationist congregation, the Oakland Church. What can be learned from what these leaders and members have already accomplished?

1) A Lesson from the Universal Ballet

POLICY:

- Identify something you are good at and have a passion for, and do it.

ACTION:

- Invest funds and work with talented, gifted people even if they are not our church members.
- Provide long-term support from the movement.
- Practice! Practice! Practice!

RESULTS:

- A world-class ballet company
- Fulfillment for all parties
- A real contribution to the world of ballet and of culture in general
- True Parents' prestige boosted

2) Application of the Lesson from Universal Ballet to the Church

POLICY:

- Gifts-based ministry: find the people who want to be church leaders and are good at it.
- Allow others to find what they really want to do and help them turn that into a ministry.

PROJECTED ACTION:

- Invest in church leadership and church development and keep a steady course, protecting that territory for the long term.
- Continually upgrade the Unification Theological Seminary for the education of leaders and laity.
- Study and develop models of success.
- Encourage and validate innovation and reward success.
- Build a foundation to support consistent focus.
- Practice! Practice! Practice!

PROJECTED RESULTS:

- A world-class spiritual movement
- Fulfillment for all parties
- A real contribution to humankind
- True Parents' victory

3) *A Lesson from the True World Group*

POLICY:

- Close restaurants that are losing money, even in the face of a providential goal.

ACTION:

- Two-thirds of restaurants were closed.
- Number of restaurants dropped from 100 to 35.

RESULTS:

- Gross monthly income rose from \$2.6 million to \$3.2 million.
- Average income per restaurant each month rose from \$26,000 to \$91,430.
- Administrative overhead was reduced.
- Profits increased.

4) *Application of the Lesson from True World Group*

POLICY:

- Close church centers that are not growing and sell unneeded buildings. (Compare with the demolition of those *historically priceless halls* in which thousands received liberation at Chung Pyung Lake, or the original farmhouse in which Rev. and Mrs. Moon lived at New Hope East Garden, Jardim. Does anyone miss them?)

PROJECTED ACTION:

- Research the viability of our church centers.
- Close probably two-thirds of church centers and bank accounts.
- Reduce the size of regional and national offices.

PROJECTED RESULT:

- Members are freed up to develop local projects according to need and interest (schools, new churches, social action).
- Slimmed-down regional and national offices have better focus.
- Increased results, energy and pride.

5) *A Lesson from the New Yorker Hotel*

POLICY:

- Utilized professional management, a working, hands-on board and disregard race in determining leadership.

ACTION:

- Entrusted the New Yorker project to an active American board and hired industry professionals.

RESULTS:

- The building moved from a \$60,000 monthly subsidy to hundreds of thousands in monthly income.
- The building is completely renovated.
- New Yorkers' respect for Rev. Moon and the Unification Church rises, with positive New York media coverage.

6) *Application of the Lesson from the New Yorker Hotel*

POLICY:

- Utilize professional management and a working, hands-on board.
- Disregard race in determining leadership.

PROJECTED ACTION:

- Work with professional management and a hands-on, working board.
- Empower our church leaders with training and support.
- Develop vertical culture with indigenous appeal.

PROJECTED RESULT:

- Increased membership
- Increased financial foundation
- Substantial foundation for Rev. and Mrs. Moon in America

By way of summary, the policies listed above fit into the culture within which today's Unificationists are working. They entail training, collegiality, sensitivity to people's wants and needs, practicality, and utilizing the gifts God has given the membership. To borrow an insight from Jack Whedbee, these policies describe how to strengthen the *hyungsang* of the providence, the *body* that can be an effective vehicle to serve the *sungsang*, Rev. Moon's *mind* that is pushing forward relentlessly. Without a strong body, the mind cannot achieve its full potential.

3. *Lessons from the Oakland Church*

The Oakland community, 1972-82, employed clear strategies by which they achieved success. They were not the only Unification Church in America expanding at that time, but in Oakland these strategies were implemented with the greatest consistency over longest period of time. Although I know that not all of Oakland's practices were laudable, and that members cannot utilize these exact strategies today, there are still very important lessons to be learned—both what to do and what not to do. So let's look at this witnessing model a little more closely, with an eye to the positive lessons.

a. Stable, Step-by-Step Educational Program

The main point is that each step ends with an invitation to take the next step, and the next step is ready to go immediately and is harmonized with the previous step. Therefore, people have a clear and simple goal in doing outreach: just inspire the person to value the next step.

b. Simple, Attractive, Non-Confrontational Introductory Lecture

It should be very upbeat, simple to a fault, humorous, inspirational and idealistic. It should be full of commonplace truths that, although no one practices them, no one can deny them.

c. Weekend Workshop Components

- Simple but essential lectures on creation, fall, Jesus and history, that address fundamental questions about the existence of God, the purpose of life, good and evil and that the Messiah is on the earth.
- Energetic music, joyful, heartfelt and easy to learn
- Small group discussions that focus on each individual's response to the lectures and questions. Groups have a leader and assistant leader with well-defined roles.
- Saturday evening entertainment, on the foundation of small group activities such as preparing skits and song writing and performing together.
- Testimony time after the entertainment, prepared well by an older member who tells his or her story of joining the movement.
- Serious prayer
- Care and concern about each guest—the epitome of guest friendly! For this to happen, it is vital that the new guest's spiritual parent attends the workshop with the guest. This is the personal bond; the spiritual parent is most concerned about the guest's welfare; and it is a reward to the spiritual parent for bringing a guest.
- Often, members who are getting dry spiritually can replenish their hearts at the weekend workshop.

d. Education Track

Seven-day workshop, twenty-one day workshop and a formal course of study and training lets new believers put the theology into practice in daily life (“actionizing”). This constituted a *seamless track* to bring new believers into full missionary life.

e. Relevant Material

Presentations were based on common sense and the Bible, and had a good deal of humor and illustrations. When I attended an Oakland 2-day workshop in 1980, I was struck with the focus on theodicy—how one can believe in God in the face of the world’s evil. There was a good deal of emphasis upon the human portion of responsibility as well. In other words, the message was not ideological but rather addressed the primary arguments for why one should believe and devote him/herself to a godly way of life.

f. Relatable Leadership

Americans were out front, with non-Americans leading by supporting from the background. Mrs. Durst did not hunger to stand in the spotlight. I was in Oakland four months and saw her only in late evening, members-only fellowships and when she would offer a song and words of encouragement at the conclusion of the weekend workshop. The difficulty to gain access to her only *added* to her spiritual authority.

g. Efficient Organization

Oakland had a stable core staff and clear hierarchical system. While expressing a great deal of horizontal affection, that church had the strongest vertical system I ever experienced. And concerning the (in)famous Oakland “horizontal” spirit, consider Rev. Moon’s words: “Multiplication does not happen on the vertical level; horizontally good give and take multiplies. That is why church leaders should relate with church members horizontally. Progress will follow.”¹¹

h. Functional Facilities

Oakland workshops took place in facilities that were simple, rustic and even Spartan, with sleeping bag accommodations. They were functional and they fit their niche market’s expectations.

i. Niche-Witnessing

Oakland witnessing was “niche-witnessing.” Members knew exactly who was their target and they designed their program perfectly to suit that type of person. When that type vanished from the American landscape, naturally the Oakland church was challenged. Today, not many people will drop what they

are doing to accept a stranger's invitation to dine with a group of people from all over the world. As the Oakland leadership did, there is need today to identify a niche and create a suitable program.

j. Small Group Life

The new member became part of a small group in the center (a "trinity"). The trinities were mixed gender and carried on all public activities together, meeting together for breakfast and discussion of the day's schedule, and reconvening at dinner, for evening visitations or lecture attendance, and then a closing prayer. After that, the trinity leaders would meet Mrs. Durst, making the Oakland church an early example of the "meta-church" structure in which *everyone* is in a small group.

k. A Spirit of Joy

This was an absolutely necessary aspect of Oakland life. One sister was said to push herself to leap out of bed every morning praising God. I was struck by the constant phrase, "That's great!" applied to anything and everything. There were signs in the bathroom reminding users to "leave a plus." People recited the phrase, "The Principle is the power" and "Glory to Heaven, peace on earth." Positivity and gratitude were encouraged. I thought it corny at the time, but realize now that it is a very effective psychological means to live a successful life. Robert Schuller, anyone?

4. Application of the Lessons from the Oakland Church

I believe that Unificationists can and should apply these effective strategies in the context of a family church, making them work in a less intense environment. In fact, I would go so far as to conceive of the family church *as an expanded form of the effective workshop*.

I find it helpful to categorize these strategies into four areas: worship, education, small groups and personal ministry. The spirit and impact of the introductory evening program is created in the worship service. The curriculum of the workshop series, two-day through 40-day, is provided through a variety of course offerings, including Sunday school, evening studies, small group curricula, weekend retreats and so forth. The intimate personal contact is created in the small group ministry and counseling for personal ministry.

Here is a brief elaboration of each of these areas.

a. Worship

Worship together bridges the gap of trust. It is a setting where guests are willing to listen. A good Sunday Service that provides an experience of God is a

necessary part of any successful church. It serves the purpose of Oakland's evening program. This means the Sunday Service must be seeker friendly and culturally recognizable.

Effective churches place a great deal of emphasis upon the music at Sunday Service. Music creates the atmosphere of worship—the “spiritual atmosphere.” The “worship team” is also the choir/band, and they are seeking the same experience of God as everyone else—they are not performers, they are co-worshippers. A good Sunday Service means to bring down the Holy Spirit, to give people spiritual nourishment, healing, happiness and hope.

b. Education

Education bridges the gap of understanding and develops the learner's perspective. Once people are attracted to the church, they must be taught. It will not do to jerry-rig a workshop whenever there's a guest; there must be a regular education program in place—basically a series of Principle presentations. Teaching should be clear but not doctrinal; it should utilize the rich resource of the lessons in Bible stories. Education should be provided through a broad range of offerings, including evenings and weekends.

c. Small Groups

A small group ministry bridges the gap of commitment and nurtures the individual's lifestyle. All growing churches have small groups, even just Bible study groups. This was also a key factor with Oakland, both in workshops and center life. Donald Miller found in his surveys that everyone said that the real life of the church is in the small groups. The Willow Creek leaders found that the bigger they became, the smaller they had to become. Small groups are essential to the Unificationist ministry as well.

d. Personal Ministry

Personal ministry bridges the gap of offering and develops each person's gifts. A personal, gifts-based ministry means that the individual discovers the unique gift that is his or hers, and offers it to the world for the glory of God. The church exists to be the environment in which this takes place. The church is not for the purpose of displaying the glory of the pastor. It is the place to bring out the glory of every individual. In Unification parlance, personal ministry translates into Tribal Messiahship. The purpose of church leadership is to empower Tribal Messiahs.

Conclusion

Over the past few years, Rev. Moon has been calling for a restructuring the American church. I believe that it is time to do that. The Unification Church in Taiwan broke through by connecting the Principle to the Confucian cultural tradition of the people. The Unification Church in Japan adjusted in order to work within Japanese society. On what basis can the Unification Church work within the American context? There are models of the movement's success in America, and these models largely coincide with American Christian tradition. They coincide with what others are doing successfully and resonate with Rev. Moon's teachings.

Notes

- 1 Sun Myung Moon, *Way of Unification*, Part 2 (New York: Family Federation for World Peace and Unification International, 1998), p. 35.
- 2 Donald Miller, *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 1.
- 3 Sun Myung Moon, *The Way of the Spiritual Leader*, Part 1 (New York: FFWPUI, 1998), p. 124.
- 4 Moon, *Way of Unification*, Part 2, p. 314.
- 5 George Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church: A Blueprint for Survival* (Nashville: Word, 1998), p. 177.
- 6 Richard Cimino and Don Lattin, *Shopping for Faith: American Religion in the New Millennium* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998).
- 7 Moon, *The Way of the Spiritual Leader*, Part 1, p. 238.
- 8 See Donald Miller, *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998).
- 9 Report by Rev. Kevin Thompson. See Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995).
- 10 Lynne Hybels and Bill Hybels, *Rediscovering Church: The Story and Vision of Willow Creek Community Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), p. 64.
- 11 Moon, *The Way of the Spiritual Leader*, Part 1, p. 181.

FAITH AND REASON: A UNIFICATIONIST VIEW

Theodore T. Shimmyo

Faith and reason are often juxtaposed as two different ways of cognizing the truth of God in the Christian tradition. The problem, however, is that there has been no authoritatively definitive description of the relationship between faith and reason in that tradition. Different theologies have had different views of the matter, depending on how they have dealt with the question of to what degree humans are fallen and/or saved. Theologies that regard humans as still predominantly fallen have discussed the primacy of faith over reason, emphasizing a tension between the two. By contrast, theologies that have a more optimistic view of human nature have laid more trust in reason and tended to see some kind of connection between reason and faith. The issue of the relationship between faith and reason, therefore, remains unresolved.

How would the Divine Principle address this issue? According to the Divine Principle, the Old and New Testament Ages are over. Humankind has entered the “Completed Testament Age,” in which the complete restoration of fallen humankind is taking place through the return of Christ, with the resulting establishment of complete unity between God and humankind.¹ Hence it would naturally see the complete unity of faith and reason. Referring to faith and reason respectively as “the spiritual and physical dimensions of cognition,” therefore, *Exposition of the Divine Principle* says:

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Human beings become complete only when their spirit self and physical self are united. Hence the experience of divine inspiration gained through spiritual cognition [i.e., faith] and the knowledge of truth obtained through physical cognition [i.e., reason] should become fully harmonized and awaken the spirituality [faith] and intellect [reason] together. It is only when the spiritual and physical dimensions of cognition [faith and reason] resonate together that we can thoroughly comprehend God and the universe.²

In the Christian tradition, faith differs from reason at least in the following four senses. First, faith as a way of cognition is normally a gift of God's grace granted in the course of our redemption, while reason is an intellectual ability already built-in in our human nature. Second, faith freely accepts the truth of God as revealed based on our confidence in God, while reason accepts the truth of God only when intellectually proved. Third, faith involves all the dimensions of the human person (including love, obedience, etc.) as it accepts the truth of God, while reason usually involves merely our intellectual faculty. Fourth, faith and reason create two different kinds of theology: revealed and natural theology, respectively. Faith directly accepts and cognizes divine revelation as the truth of God, creating revealed theology therefrom; by contrast, reason cognizes the created world of nature as an manifestation of God's truth, coming up with natural theology therefrom.

The present essay discusses how the Divine Principle sees the relationship between faith and reason, and between revealed and natural theology. It argues in a unique way that faith and reason, and in that regard revealed and natural theology also, are completely harmonious with each other. It also maintains that because of its notion of the "growing period," the Divine Principle is comprehensive enough to be able to map out and appreciate all the conflicting historical positions on faith and reason and effectively solve the conflicts among them.

This essay has two main parts. First, from a Unificationist perspective it addresses the relationship of revealed and natural theology by examining Thomas Aquinas' view on the subject. It offers a Unificationist critique of Thomas' view and suggests a solution to the problem of the tension between revealed and natural theology still existing in his view. We cannot avoid Thomas' view as our context because of its great influence on the subsequent generations ever since it emerged in the Catholic Church in the 13th century. The second part of the essay offers a Unificationist view on the completely harmonious relationship between faith and reason in the context of various conflicting theological positions throughout history.

1. Thomas Aquinas' View

Thomas Aquinas drew a clear distinction between revealed and natural theology. According to him, all truth belongs to either of two levels, upper and lower structures of reality—God and creation, or grace (the supernatural) and nature. The truth belonging to the realm of grace is received and accepted by faith, and hence must be revealed by God. By contrast, the truth belonging to nature can be understood by reason alone, and need not be revealed by God. Mysteries such as the Trinity, Incarnation and Christ's Atonement through the Cross, belong to revealed theology. God's existence and his attributes are demonstrated by natural theology.

The reason why the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement, etc. are not received by reason, but rather by faith, is that these topics go beyond the limits of rational judgment. The Trinity is a mystery that contains a numerical contradiction: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are each God, and at the same time God is only one. The Incarnation of God, too, is a mystery containing a contradiction when it maintains that Christ is God and man at the same time. Those topics, therefore, are the objects of revealed theology.

By contrast, the reason why it is possible for God's existence and his attributes to be demonstrated by reason alone and without faith is that they can be demonstrated from the lower structure, the created world. According to Thomas, the creation resembles its Creator "analogically,"³ if not perfectly. Based on this kind of natural theology, Thomas in his *Summa Theologiae* presented the celebrated "five ways" to prove God's existence.⁴

Revealed theology and natural theology do not contradict each other, despite their clear distinction. According to Thomas, natural theology is acceptable to all humans, including non-Christians. It functions as a useful preparation for them to eventually understand revealed theology, which is unique to Christianity because of its redemptive character. He also believed that already a part of natural theology is authoritatively contained in revealed theology. Once natural theology has encountered revealed theology, it is augmented by the latter to become more certain. In the words of Thomas, "Grace does not scrap nature but brings it to perfection."⁵ Although it is said that philosophy (natural theology) is the "handmaid" of theology (revealed theology),⁶ their relationship is not distant or contradictory, but deeply connected.

In the modern era, David Hume and Immanuel Kant critiqued Thomas' proofs for God's existence based on natural theology. Hume was skeptical about the notion of causality involved in Thomas' proofs, and Kant found flaws in the efficacy of pure reason. In the 20th century, natural theology was severely critiqued by Karl Barth. Natural theology is wrong because it con-

structs concepts of God from fallen human perspectives and idolizes them, instead of reaching a true understanding of God. According to Barth, we can only understand God when he reveals himself to us.

2. Is the Divine Principle a Revealed Theology or a Natural Theology?

Is the Divine Principle a revealed theology or a natural theology? *Divine Principle* states that this teaching “cannot be discovered through an exhaustive investigation of scriptures or scholarly texts; nor can it be invented by any human intellect” but “must appear as a revelation from God.”⁷ In this sense, the Divine Principle is a revealed theology. On the other hand, however, in the Principle of Creation it asserts that the characteristics of the invisible God can be known “by observing the universe which He created,” and refers to Romans 1:20 as a biblical ground for this assertion: “Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”⁸ In this sense, the Divine Principle is a natural theology as well. Thus the Divine Principle is both a revealed theology and a natural theology.

But what does this mean? Shall we, following Thomas, divide the whole system of the Divine Principle into two parts, one part natural theology and the other part revealed theology? Shall we distinguish between the two, saying that the former deals with the lower structure of nature (the created world) and the latter the upper structure of the supernatural (God)? With this Thomistic scenario, the Principle of Creation, in so far as it deals with the created world, would belong to natural theology, while the rest of the Divine Principle (Human Fall, Eschatology and Human History, Christology, Trinity, Principle of Restoration, etc.), in so far as it treats the process of our redemption and restoration, would belong to revealed theology. This would mean that although there is no contradiction between the two parts of the Divine Principle, the Principle of Creation as natural theology is the “handmaid” of the rest of the Divine Principle as revealed theology, i.e., that the Principle of Creation is merely a preparation for the rest of the Divine Principle and an object which is to be augmented by the latter.

This, however, is far from correct. Far from being a “handmaid,” the Principle of Creation is “the root principle by which humanity and the universe were originally created,”⁹ and constitutes the essence and nucleus of the rest of the Divine Principle. The human Fall is the negation of the Principle of Creation, and the restoration of fallen humans is their re-creation based on the Principle of Creation. Thus, the Divine Principle as a systematic theology possesses far greater consistency than the bifurcated relationship of

revealed and natural theology as understood by Thomas.¹⁰ We have no objection to distinguishing between the revealed and natural theology. But their relationship is not construed in the manner of Thomas.

From the standpoint of the Divine Principle, the supernatural (God) and nature (the created world) are to be completely united. In brief, the created world, as the substantial manifestation of God's "dual characteristics," assumes the same dual characteristics, which makes possible not only perfect give-and-take action within the created world itself, but also perfect give-and-take action between God and the created world. In other words, the Divine Principle sees a striking affinity between God and the created world when it maintains that both of them are composed of dual characteristics.¹¹ In Thomas' theology, by contrast, God is not a God of dual characteristics but merely the "pure act" (*actus purus*), a monopolar God, aloof from the world, which, unlike God, has the polarity of act and potency.¹² Thomas, therefore, could not see the relationship between God and the created world as one of complete unity. At best, he could only recognize an "analogical" similarity between them.

The Divine Principle sees a complete unity between God and the world, which naturally results in complete unity between revealed and natural theology. Widening the definitions of revealed and natural theology a little bit, the Divine Principle regards them respectively as religion—searching for "internal truth" about the "causal world of essence" on the one hand, and science—searching for "external truth" about the "resultant world of phenomena" on the other, and maintains that unless religion and science are eventually open towards each other, their original purposes will not be accomplished. Although religion and science have been walking two different paths until today, seeking internal and external truth, respectively, nevertheless they have a common purpose of leading humans to knowledge out of the ignorance that resulted from the Fall. Until both unite, the whole picture of God's truth will not be seen, nor will their common purpose be accomplished. Therefore, the unity of religion and science—the unity of revealed and natural theology—is necessary.¹³

Therefore, to say that the Divine Principle is both a revealed theology and a natural theology means that the Divine Principle is a teaching that unifies revealed and natural theology. It claims to "reconcile science and religion as one unified undertaking in order to overcome the internal and external aspects of people's ignorance."¹⁴

Consequently, it would be safe to say that the Principle of Creation, the Fall of Man, the Principle of Restoration, etc. in the Divine Principle are each a unified teaching of revealed and natural theology. For example, when the Principle of Creation discusses the process of the creation of the universe, it unhesitatingly asserts that the revelation in the biblical account (revealed theology) and the findings of modern scientific research (natural theology) in that

matter coincide with each other as truth: “Considering that the account of the creation of the universe recorded in the Bible thousands of years ago nearly coincides with the findings of modern scientific research, we are reassured that this biblical record must be a revelation from God.”¹⁵ Here the distinction between revealed and natural theology is overcome.

Recent Theological Trends

The Divine Principle’s treatment of natural theology and revealed theology is not entirely novel. There is a trend in recent theologies to remove the distinction between revealed and natural theology. In removing this distinction, recent theologies take two different approaches.

One approach is to view both revealed and natural theology as starting from revelation. We can find revelation from God in the world of nature. Of course, this has traditionally been called “general revelation,” as distinguished from “special revelation” whose primary purpose is redemption. But we can enlarge the meaning of revelation by letting it contain both general and special revelation, i.e., by letting it cover the world of nature as well as the realm of God himself. If so, the distinction between revealed and natural theology can be transcended. Many contemporary theologians, liberal and conservative alike, take this approach.

For example, John Macquarrie, an existentialist theologian, adopts this approach in attempting to formulate what he calls a “new style natural theology.” He calls for “the virtual abandonment of the old distinction between ‘natural’ and ‘revealed’ knowledge of God,” and seeks “a general possibility of revelation” or “a universal possibility of revelation.”¹⁶ Process theology, with its “panentheistic” emphasis on the relatedness of God and the world, also “rejects the sharp contrast of general and special revelation” as it attempts to combine philosophy (natural theology) and theology (revealed theology) to constitute a “philosophical theology.”¹⁷

Even the approach of some American Fundamentalist theologians fits into this category. Based on their belief that both the natural world and the Bible were authored by God, they firmly maintain that “true science” and revealed theology can go together and enrich each other, and that we should refrain from “locking them into two separate compartments in our minds.”¹⁸ This leads, for example, to so-called “scientific creationism”—a position which holds that the biblical account of creation can be established scientifically.

What Ted Peters calls the “consonance” between science and religion, which has recently drawn the increasing attention of serious scientist-theologians such as Arthur Peacocke in Britain and Robert John Russell in America, falls under the first category, too, because it is “an attempt to uncover the domain of inquiry shared by science and theology” based on the theistic

assumption that God created the world.¹⁹

A second, and entirely opposite tack for removing the distinction between revealed and natural theology is to not consider revelation at all. It enlarges the concept of the existence of the world of nature to such an extent that it covers the whole of reality, including God. In this case, theology is to know the truth of this whole of reality in which God is already wholly immanent. This immanentist approach was popular among radical schools of theology such as secular theology and the “death of God” theology in the 1960s.²⁰ It is somewhat ironic that this approach emerged under the influence of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a neo-Orthodox theologian who, in an attempt to abandon the *deus ex machina* (the convenient problem-solving God worshipped by irresponsible religious people) in favor of the God of the Bible (a God who helps us as we strive to tackle problems responsibly in the world), wrote from a Nazi prison that the world can be “religionless” because it has “come of age.”²¹ These radical schools attracted a lot of attention in the 1960s, but they have not developed much serious theology since then.

Both of these ways, whether liberal or conservative, hold the important presupposition that there is a close relationship between God and the created world of nature. From the standpoint of the Divine Principle, their popularity is a sign that the time is very near when humans can unite with God, overcoming their state of fallenness.

3. Faith and Reason

Then, what about the relationship between faith and reason, which are the two ways of human cognition appropriate to revealed and natural theology, respectively? If the distinction of the two kinds of theology can be removed, the distinction between faith and reason can also have to disappear. Before we discuss this matter, however, let us review four different historical views of the relationship between faith and reason: 1) faith without reason, 2) faith as a basis of reason, 3) faith and reason independent from yet related to each other, and 4) faith and reason harmonious.²²

The first view, maintaining that like oil and water, faith and reason are entirely separate from each other, emphasizes faith and excludes reason from the standpoint of Christian commitment. Its representatives include Paul, Tertullian, Luther, Kant and Kierkegaard. It is a well-known fact that Tertullian, who worked from the second to the third century, abhorred reason and philosophy. Thus he said: “What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church?”²³ This position is well represented by his famous dictum: *Credo quia absurdum* (“I believe because it is absurd”).²⁴

The second view appreciates reason a little bit, but it does so only in so far as it regards faith as a basis of reason. That is to say, reason functions properly only when it is grounded in faith. Its adherents include Augustine, Anselm of Canterbury and Barth. Their dictum is: *Credo ut intelligam* (“I believe so that I may understand”).²⁵ Although Anselm’s ontological proof for God’s existence uses reason, that work of reason is supported by faith, according to him. Barth, in spite of his rejection of natural theology, inherited Anselm’s position on the relationship between faith and reason.

Thomas Aquinas held the third position. Acknowledging the independence of reason from faith, he maintained that this reason could prove God’s existence. However, he also recognized the relationship of reason with faith in the following way. Reason precedes faith without contradicting it, in that before its encounter with faith, reason creates natural theology as a preparation for revealed theology. After revealed theology is reached by faith, reason is elevated so as to help us to better understand the content of revealed theology. That is to say, although faith and reason have their own independent domains, they are not contradictory but helpful to each other.

The final view is shared by Continental rationalists such as Spinoza and Leibniz and 19th century philosopher Hegel. They all highly regarded the power of reason, and proposed the unity of faith and reason based on their conviction that reason can understand all the content of faith. In the words of Hegel, “The substance of the Christian religion, the highest developmental stage of any and all religion, coincides completely with the substance of true philosophy.”²⁶ According to this view, reason can cover the role of faith, so that we can even do without faith.²⁷

Faith and Reason in the Divine Principle

How would the Divine Principle appraise the above four views? The Divine Principle teaches the eventual unity of revealed and natural theology, so that one would suppose it maintains that faith and reason should harmonize and unite with each other completely. Would the Divine Principle therefore wholeheartedly agree with the fourth view above of harmonizing faith and reason, i.e., the view of Leibniz, Spinoza and Hegel? That does not seem to be the case. In actuality, in the Unification Church the dicta of the first two views are preached to this day, i.e., “I believe because it is absurd,” and “I believe so that I may understand,” in order to emphasize faith.

For example, in much the same way as Tertullian, *Divine Principle* praises Noah as “the first father of faith”²⁸ because he built an ark on the top of a mountain in absolute obedience to God’s direction, which from a normal perspective would be considered “crazy” or “absurd.”²⁹ Also, echoing the second view that regards faith as a basis of reason, Rev. Sun Myung Moon says:

If you are confronted with something that you cannot rationalize with your common sense, what will you do? It is very necessary that you train yourself to be ready for such eventuality. Always be ready to accept and do any task. Sometimes you will not be able to see the logic even though you attempt to apply the Divine Principle, but then as you pursue the task you will see the logical explanation.³⁰

Also, in Thomistic fashion the Unification Church sometimes teaches that reason, which can be independent from faith, is a preparation for faith before its encounter with faith. Thus *Divine Principle* states that reason can lead to faith:

The ultimate purpose of religion can be attained only when one first believes it in one's heart and then puts it into practice. However, without first understanding, beliefs do not take hold. For example, it is in order to understand the truth and thereby solidify our beliefs that we study holy scriptures. Likewise it was to help the people understand that he was the Messiah, and thereby lead them to believe in him, that Jesus performed miracles. Understanding is the starting point for knowledge.³¹

Hence, the first three views distinguishing faith from reason can be seen in the Unification Church, as well as the fourth view that they are entirely harmonious. Then, what is the real view of the Unification Church? The Divine Principle appears to contain all the four views. If so, does that make its position entirely unclear?

Let us draw our conclusion here. The Divine Principle clearly teaches the *eschatological* unity of faith and reason. If humans perfect God's blessing and unite with him, their reason (intellect) will be a part of their original character of creation and will correctly "respond to" God's perfect intellect,³² so that the judgment of that reason will no longer be erroneous. In this case, cognition by reason and cognition by faith would coincide. Nay, it might be better to say that reason would be equal to faith in this situation. As was remarked at the outset of the present essay, therefore, *Divine Principle* says that cognition by faith and cognition by reason "become fully harmonized" as faith and reason "resonate together."

But it is not easy to reach this state of complete unity. Humans have been separated far from God due to the Fall. In order for them to reach the state of completion, they should go through the "growing period,"³³ by making "indemnity conditions."³⁴ The Fall began when Adam and Eve, the first human ancestors, abandoned God. So, in order for us humans to reach the state of completion, we must keep our faith, even though we might be abandoned by God and face tests and absurdities beyond reason. It is the indemnity course. From this point of view, we can understand the relevance of Tertullian's

remark. But as fallen humans gradually remove their fallen nature and grow spiritually through the growing period, their reason gradually becomes closer to the original character of creation. Therefore, it is also natural that the second and third views emerge to show an increasing appreciation of reason. Finally there emerges the fourth view, i.e., the harmony and unity of faith and reason. Thus we can appreciate and map out all the historical views in the Divine Principle's notion of the growing period.

The Divine Principle clearly teaches the unity of faith and reason. Yet it cannot wholeheartedly agree with the fourth view because that the fourth view only talks about an ideal state of unity of faith and reason, forgetting the need for making indemnity conditions in the course of the growing period. How difficult it is for fallen humans to acquire the divine reason that was their original birthright! In order to acquire it, unspeakable faith has been needed until today. If we forget about this point and praise reason uncritically in a quest for the unity of faith and reason, we might fall into Enlightenment-type humanism. An Asian theologian warns in his article "Revelation and Reason" that this mistake, coming from Hellenism, distorts religion in the name of the unity of faith and reason.³⁵ For the same reason, the Divine Principle, too, cannot wholeheartedly accept the fourth view.

But after all indemnity conditions are made in the course of the growing period, eventually the time of the genuine unity of faith and reason, and of revealed and natural theology, should come. I believe that when Hans Küng talks about the unity of faith and reason in the "postmodern paradigm" in his *Theology for the Third Millennium: An Ecumenical View*, he means this kind of unity, because he has considerable appreciation for the importance of faith antecedent to this unity.³⁶ When the time of the genuine unity of faith and reason comes, what will be the status of humans, and what will be the nature of theology? Thinking of these questions makes our hearts throb with excitement.

Notes

- 1 *Exposition of the Divine Principle* (New York: HSA-UWC, 1996), pp. 183-87. Henceforth this will be abbreviated as *Divine Principle*, and it is different from *Divine Principle*, the edition of 1973.
- 2 *Divine Principle*, p. 104.
- 3 *Summa Theologiae*, vol. 1, pt. 1, ed. Thomas Gilby (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1969), pp. 205-9.
- 4 *Ibid.*, pp. 67-70.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- 7 *Divine Principle*, p. 11.
- 8 *Divine Principle*, pp. 15-21.

- 9 *Divine Principle*, p. 15.
- 10 Herbert Richardson talks about this kind of systematic power and consistency of the Divine Principle in his "A Lecture to Students at the Unification Theological Seminary in Barrytown, New York," *A Time for Consideration: A Scholarly Appraisal of the Unification Church*, edited by M. Darrol Bryant and Herbert W. Richardson (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1978). See especially pp. 292, 295-98.
- 11 See the first two sections of the Principle of Creation in *Divine Principle*, pp. 15-32.
- 12 Vernon J. Bourke, ed., *The Pocket Aquinas* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1960), pp. 169-74.
- 13 *Divine Principle*, pp. 2-7.
- 14 *Divine Principle*, p. 105. See also pp. 3, 6-7.
- 15 *Divine Principle*, p. 40.
- 16 *Principles of Christian Theology*, second ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1977), pp. 53-54, 57, 89.
- 17 John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), p. 159.
- 18 J. I. Packer, *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God: Some Evangelical Principles* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1958), pp. 134-35.
- 19 Ted Peters, ed., *Science and Theology: The New Consonance* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1998), p. 1. See excellent works such as Arthur Peacocke, *Theology for a Scientific Age*, enlarged ed. (Minneapolis, Minn., Fortress Press, 1993); and John Polkinghorne, *Faith of a Physicist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
- 20 See, e.g., Harvey Cox, *The Secular City: Urbanization and Secularization in Theological Perspective* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1965); and Thomas J. J. Altizer and William Hamilton, *Radical Theology and the Death of God* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966).
- 21 *Letters and Papers from Prison*, enlarged ed., ed. Eberhard Bethge (New York: Macmillan publishing Co., 1971), pp. 280-82, 359-61.
- 22 This classification of four different views is a more or less commonly accepted classification. See, e.g., *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*, p. 486. See also Gordon H. Clark, *Religion, Reason and Revelation* (Nutley, N.J.: Craig Press, 1961), pp. 28-110; John A. Hutchison, *Faith, Reason, and Existence: An Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 97-99; and Ed. L. Miller, *God and Reason: A Historical Approach to Philosophical Theology* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1972), pp. 117-36.
- 23 "The Prescription Against Heretics," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, American ed., edited by A. Cleveland Coxe (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), p. 246.
- 24 Tertullian's actual statement was: *Credibile est, quia ineptum est* ("It is by all

- means to be believed, because it is absurd"). See his "On the Flesh of Christ," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 525.
- 25 *Fides Quaerens Intellectum* ("Faith Seeking Understanding"), the original title of Anselm's *Proslogion*, has the same meaning.
- 26 *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 3, ed. E. B. Speirs and J. Burdon Sanderson (New York: Humanities Press, 1974), p. 148.
- 27 Atheistic rationalists such as Diderot and D'Alembert in the 18th century went so far as to entirely neglect faith in favor of reason. But this atheistic rationalism is out of our consideration here.
- 28 *Divine Principle*, p. 199.
- 29 Sun Myung Moon, "I Shall Follow with Gratitude and Obedience," sermon preached at Belvedere, Tarrytown, New York, January 25, 1987.
- 30 *The Way of Tradition*, vol. II (New York: HSA-UWC, 1980), pp. 115-16.
- 31 *Divine Principle*, p. 6.
- 32 *Divine Principle*, p. 37.
- 33 *Divine Principle*, pp. 41-44.
- 34 *Divine Principle*, pp. 177-79.
- 35 Enkichi Suge, "Revelation and Reason," *Lectures on Dogmatics (Kyokai Kyogigaku Koza)*, ed. Toshio Sato and Toshikazu Takao, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan Publications, 1972), pp. 6-12.
- 36 Trans. Peter Heinegg (New York: Doubleday, 1988). Kung sees this importance of faith in Karl Barth's "theology of crisis" antecedent to the unity of faith and reason in the postmodern paradigm, when he appreciates Barth as the main challenger to the modern, rationalist synthesis of faith and reason. See pp. 188-91, 202-3, 271-75.

ENDOWED WITH A SENSE OF HISTORY

Thomas J. Ward

Communism, begun in 1917, could maintain itself approximately 60 years and reach its peak. So 1978 is the borderline and afterward communism will decline; in the 70th year it will be altogether ruined. This is true. Therefore now is the time for people who are studying communism to abandon it.

Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Paris, April 1972

Did Reverend Moon accurately predict the demise of communism? The many thousands who attended American Leadership Conference programs in the 1980s may recollect a final Conference presentation that predicted that soon the Conference's message would reach the Soviet Union. This prognosis did not originate with me, nor with any of the other lecturers at the Conference. It originated with Rev. Moon. Having heard him persuasively insist on the imminence of communism's demise, those around him gained confidence in repeating it. I, for one, wagered that the person who had identified the foundational errors of Marxism could also anticipate its collapse.

Reverend Moon's views on the inevitable downfall of communism remained consistent for the four decades prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union. These views were articulated, for example, in the 1966 text *Wolli*

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Kangron (Exposition of the Divine Principle). The 1973 English language translation of *Wolli Kangron* explains the downfall of communism as follows:

Those powers that persecuted religion all perished while those that protected and fostered religion prospered... the history of religion teaches us that the day will come, without fail, when the world of communism, which persecutes religion, will perish.¹

Rev. Moon also made a chronologically precise prophecy on the downfall of communism in a speech entitled "The Way of Restoration" delivered in Paris in April 1972:

Communism will fall in its 70th year. Here is the meaning of the year 1978. Communism, begun in 1917, could maintain itself approximately 60 years and reach its peak. So 1978 is the borderline and afterward communism will decline; in the 70th year it will be altogether ruined. This is true. Therefore, now is the time for people who are studying communism to abandon it.²

Communism at its Zenith

The 1970s were indeed a highpoint for communism. Following the 1975 collapse of the pro-American South Vietnamese regime in Saigon, communism quickly gained control in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Through cutting off all military aid and effecting a hasty, humiliating evacuation from Saigon, America had signaled that she was no longer willing to be the "policeman" to the world. The Soviets took advantage of American neo-isolationism to establish strong, pro-Soviet networks of influence in Southeast Asia and in the African states of Mozambique, Angola, South Yemen, and Ethiopia. In the Western hemisphere, Grenada was brought into the Soviet sphere of influence and a radical, pro-communist regime assumed power in Surinam. The anti-American Khomeini government assumed power in Iran, and Marxist guerillas gained an ascendant role in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Under President Jimmy Carter's well-intentioned but unbalanced human rights-driven foreign policy of the late 1970's, the United States State Department attacked right wing governments for failing to govern based upon the principles of modern democracy. Typically, when such nations balked at U.S. proposals for reform, they lost all or part of the U.S. foreign aid or trade privileges that they had received in the past. Yet the United States often did not apply the same scale of sanctions in dealing with many Leftist authoritarian or totalitarian states. We did little more than issue a communiqué expressing regret or "outrage," when the Soviet Union, East Germany, and Cuba squelched the rights of their citizens, resorting to outrages such as shoot-

ing their own nationals who dared to scale their walls in a desperate attempt to escape and sentencing internal dissidents to long and unbearable terms in an unsanitary, glacial or an insect-infested, tropical Gulag.

1978 as the High Mark of Communism

With hindsight, we can recognize that Rev. Moon was correct in foreseeing that 1978 marked the highpoint of communism. By 1978 the United States military had been severely debilitated. The United States military had suffered humiliation and defeat in Southeast Asia. “Vietnam syndrome” had emaciated American morale and her will to fight. The United States did not even “rattle sabers” when Soviet proxies established themselves in former anticommunist strongholds such as Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia.

Pressure mounted through the efforts of the influential Minnesota Congressman Donald Fraser to withdraw US troops from South Korea. The United States suffered a special humiliation in the case of Iran where a vehemently anti-American Ayatollah Khomeini violated international law and the sovereignty of the U.S. Embassy by seizing it by force and holding its employees and staff hostage for a total of 444 days. The situation further deteriorated when a rescue attempt for the hostages ended in failure, with United States forces taking significant casualties.

The Beginning of the End

If 1978 was, as Rev. Moon predicted, the highpoint of communism’s political, military and strategic influence, it is equally evident that 1979 marked the beginning of communism’s decline. With the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, international outcry against the Soviet Union erupted. In spite of its cosmetic assertions to the contrary, the Soviet Union had violated the sovereignty of a neighboring country and installed a puppet regime that would further Soviet interests. While some in the Kremlin might have celebrated the Afghan success, the reality was that in 1979 the pro-Soviet bloc had won two pyrrhic victories—Afghanistan and Nicaragua. An armed resistance would emerge in both of these countries that would incrementally win national and international support and embarrass the Soviets.

After almost a decade of fighting, the Soviet Union would be forced to withdraw from Afghanistan; soon after the Soviet-backed communist regime would topple in Kabul. In Nicaragua the Sandinistas would be forced to support free elections that resulted in them being removed from office in February 1990. In hindsight, it is evident that these events of 1979—the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the 1979 communist takeover in Nicaragua—directly contributed to the uncoupling of the pro-Soviet bloc and to the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself.

For France's usually tolerant intelligentsia, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan evoked memories of Prague '68 and Budapest '56. Stirred by Soviet military and political intransigence, a new generation and genre of anticommunists emerged in Paris, the apex of the world's cultural centers. Former Leftists and communists such as Bernard Henri Levy and Yves Montand would begin to refer to the Soviet Union of the 1980's as "Stalinist." Demeaning the Soviet reaction to the 1968 "Prague Spring" (Alexander Dubcek's "socialism with a human face"), Levy would refer to communism's political agenda as "barbarism with a human face." Parisians prided themselves on their new view of "chic"—*l'anticommunisme*.

By the 1980s, communism had become the brunt of jokes, not only in the Soviet Union but also in the West. Reflecting on the history of the Soviet Union, *Forbes* ran a cover story in its December 6, 1982 issue referring to the Soviet experiment as a "long march to nowhere." Borrowing from the blockbuster *Star Wars*, U.S. President Ronald Reagan referred to the Soviet Union as "the Evil Empire."

President Reagan, who had announced his candidacy in that fateful year 1979, was elected in 1980 with a strong commitment to ending Soviet bids for world hegemony. Following the election he and his staff—including Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and CIA Director William Casey—devised a strategy to confront the Soviet Union and effect a "roll back." Central to their efforts was the rebuilding of the American military. Reagan was not interested in the U.S. longstanding policy of "parity" with the Soviet Union. He wanted military superiority and achieved it early on in his presidency.

Finally, with the death of Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev in 1982, the Soviet Union began to cultivate a new more gentle and conciliatory identity. Brezhnev's successor Yuri Andropov did not remain in office for sufficient time to develop that persona, and his successor Yuri Chernenko reverted to Brezhnev-like stagnation. This all changed, however, with Mikhail Gorbachev's "election" as the Communist Party's General Secretary in 1985. In a speech to his followers shortly after Gorbachev's assumption of power, Rev. Moon explained that, regardless of the integrity of Mikhail Gorbachev's intentions or lack thereof, *glasnost* would lead to the undoing of the Soviet Union.

1988 and the Demise of the Soviet Union

Reverend Moon had indicated that communism would fall in its 70th year, yet the Soviet Union did not collapse until December 25, 1991. Was his 1972 prediction accurate? If so, what constituted communism's "fall" or being "altogether ruined"? There are clearly two ways to interpret Rev. Moon's prediction. One would be to assert that it meant the eradication of the Soviet state, as tran-

spired with Nazism in 1945. Clearly communism as a political reality did not totally topple in 1988, and communism even continues to exist in 2000 in various East Asian countries including China, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, and Vietnam. Nevertheless, there is another way to interpret this prediction, which is very much in line with Rev. Moon's ideas about the collapse of communism as expressed in *Exposition of the Divine Principle*. It maintains that communism can be defeated either militarily or it can be defeated internally or ideologically, but promotes the desirability of an ideological rather than a military victory for the obvious reason that all people, regardless of faith, are God's children.³

Indeed, a series of changes in Soviet policy and circumstances had transpired by 1988, which did sound the death knell to Marxism-Leninism as a leading world political philosophy. These included:

1. A change of attitude toward Marxism-Leninism in the Soviet bloc
2. The demythologizing of Soviet leadership
3. The undermining of the Marxist view of political economy
4. A new view towards religion and spiritual questions
5. Freedom of the press
6. Nascent political freedom
7. Changes in Soviet views on the arms race and approaches to the cold war
8. Abandonment of the Brezhnev doctrine
9. Abandonment of Soviet support for wars of national liberation
10. Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan
11. The uncoupling of the Warsaw pact and the re-emergence of the nationality question inside the U.S.S.R.

In what follows here I would like to elaborate on how each of these changes in Soviet policy irreparably compromised the viability of the Marxism-Leninism by 1988.

1. A Change of Attitude toward Marxism-Leninism in the Soviet Bloc

The Soviet Union was long guided by ideological purists who maintained that their decisions and actions were extensions of Marxist ideology. Communism's leaders were either portrayed or portrayed themselves as master exegetes of the ideology. Lenin's *Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism* served as a rationale for preservation of Marx's view of political economy. Lenin's *State and Democracy* (1917) demonstrated the ideological correctness of Lenin's opting for a dictatorship of the proletariat rather than the institutionalization of democracy in the USSR (as had been supported by the Mensheviks including his mentor George Plekhanov and fellow Marxists

George Martov and Karl Kautsky). Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Kim Il Sung all dedicated tomes to their interpretation of Marxism's views on history and social progress. Nikita Khrushchev had denounced Stalin's "terror" on ideological rather than humanitarian grounds. His criticism was not that Stalin had committed genocide, but that Stalin had eliminated people whose social background and lineage, according to Marxist genetics, would cause them to be classified as workers rather than as people of bourgeois or capitalist stock. Indeed, Khrushchev's fervent ideological commitment to Marxism led him to set dates for the emergence of a "Workers' Paradise" inside the U.S.S.R.; he had predicted that real communism would arrive by 1980.

Early in his presidency, Mikhail Gorbachev began to make statements that challenged the centrality of the Marxist dogma. Gorbachev openly questioned the view that Marxism-Leninism constituted all of the truth. By 1986 he opened the door for dissent when he contended that it was not normal that the communist movement "be unanimous on all the issues it confronted." By the 27th Congress, which took place in 1987, Gorbachev took the position that no single party could have a "monopoly of the truth." The evolution of Gorbachev's thinking had sufficiently advanced that when he met with Pope John Paul II in the Spring of 1989, he made the revolutionary assertion, "We no longer think that those who don't agree with us are enemies."⁴ By 1988 the official attitude toward Marxism-Leninism had changed. The Communist leadership had concluded that communism alone would not resolve their problems.

When he assumed power in 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev established policies that were meant to mark a new starting point for Soviet communism. The most significant of these were *glasnost*, *perestroika*, and *uskorennye*. *Glasnost* related to political openness. *Glasnost* made it possible for Soviet citizenry to share openly their views on existing government practices and even certain Marxist ideological principles. *Perestroika* was a restructuring of Soviet political and social institutions. Such reforms resulted in Mikhail Gorbachev being "elected" President of the Soviet Union;⁵ they resulted in genuine reliance on a written constitution rather than the Soviet leadership's *decision du moment*. *Perestroika* also facilitated election reform, allowing for more than one candidate to run for seats in the Peoples Congress.

The third aspect of reform under Mr. Gorbachev was known as *Uskorennye*. *Uskorennye* called for acceleration in the development and production levels of the Soviet economy. While the USSR under Gorbachev did foster political openness and some very significant structural changes in the Soviet Union's political landscape, Soviet economic growth did not accelerate but languished. This, more than anything else, contributed to a growing sense of disappointment with Gorbachev's policies.

2. *The Demythologizing of Soviet Leadership*

Immediately following the death of Lenin, the communist world began to deify its leaders. In the case of Stalin, Mao Zedong, Fidel Castro and Kim Il Sung, the national communist parties did not even wait for the leader's death to elevate them to sainthood. When in 1956 Nikita Khrushchev broke communist protocol and delivered a speech to the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) denouncing Stalin's crimes of mass murder and genocide, he defiled a quasi-religious icon and provoked a split in the communist world. Mao reacted by using the occasion as a pretext to distance himself from the Soviet Union. The communist world's adverse reaction to Khrushchev's 1956 speech would eventually undermine the Soviet General Secretary's rule. The replacing of Khrushchev by Brezhnev and Kosygin in 1964 represented the Soviet Union's return to a hard-line approach to communism and a repudiation of Khrushchev's attack on Stalin. Nevertheless, this return to "ideological correctness" would only succeed in delaying the inevitable for two more decades.

A reassessment of the myths surrounding Soviet leadership began full force in the 1987 Congress of the CPSU, when the legitimacy of Stalin's purge trials and acts of genocide were again challenged. In January 1988 Andrei Vyshinsky, the chief prosecutor in Stalin's show trials of the 1930's, was denounced in the Soviet publication *Literaturnaya Gazeta* as "a monster whose claws still defile our criminal procedure and legal system."⁶ Stalin's image was further undermined when in the summer of 1988 the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 with its secret protocols—which allowed for the Soviet annexation of the Baltic republics and freed Hitler up to attack Britain—was made public.⁷ In 1988 a mass grave was discovered in the Kuropaty Forest near Minsk containing the remains of some 30,000 people. Authorities admitted that, under Stalin, a "human slaughterhouse" had operated there.⁸

For years any effort to commemorate the victims of the Soviet Gulag—the communist detention and labor camps where millions of "enemies of the state" had been detained, brutalized, and often killed—was repressed through official crackdowns, arrests, and detentions. However in June 1988 Gorbachev lent the idea of a memorial to the victims of Stalin official legitimacy.⁹ On March 6, 1988, despite an official ban, a demonstration was held in Moscow's October Square to commemorate and mourn the victims of Stalin's terror. Although many of the demonstrators were detained, unlike in the past they were "speedily released."¹⁰ In November 1988 dissidents organized a week of conscience regarding "the Terror." In Moscow a "wall of memory" was erected, where photographs of victims of Soviet repression were exhibited. A huge map of the USSR was also put on display, which indicated the locations of the scores of concentration camps along the Gulag Archipelago.¹¹

3. *The Undermining of the Marxist View of Political Economy*

Central to the Gorbachev revolution was Alexander Yakovlev, who served as Soviet Ambassador to Canada from 1983 to 1985 and then became a key advisor to Mr. Gorbachev. Prior to 1983 Yakovlev had overseen the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In September 1988, soon after he was chosen as Chairman of the Central Committee Commission on International Affairs, he strongly endorsed the implementation of a market economy and democracy in the Soviet system.¹² In Yakovlev's view, the market was "not simply the only effective mechanism for the exchange of commodities and services in a large-scale modern society; it was also the foundation of democracy; as it provided the economic independence that made a dictatorship impossible."¹³

In September 1988 Gorbachev also took the dramatic step of appointing Vadim Medvedev, former rector of the Central Committee's Academy of Social Sciences, as head of the newly established Ideological Commission of the Central Committee.¹⁴ Medvedev did not see socialist ideology in a monolithic fashion. He contradicted traditional Marxism in his assertion that "lessons could be learned from the capitalist world." By 1989 Medvedev was quite upfront in his view that the market served as a "flexible instrument for reconciling production and consumption which could be adapted to the purposes of a wide variety of social systems."¹⁵ Yakovlev and Medvedev thus challenged the very underpinnings of Marxism, which posited that public control of the means of production was essential to assure an accelerated level of social and economic development.

4. *A New View towards Religion and Spiritual Questions*

Communism teaches that production relations serve as the basis for all social and cultural institutions. Lenin defined morality by explaining that that which advances the objectives of communism is "moral." However, Gorbachev challenged this utilitarian approach to morality, emphasizing that *perestroika* "must revive moral norms, honesty, and decency, without which man was merely a consumer of material values rather than a bearer and creator of spiritual values."¹⁶

By 1988 the Soviet Union had also taken a drastically different stand on religion. Religion was no longer viewed as an "opiate" as Marx maintained or "spiritual booze" as Lenin had once described it. By 1988 dramatic efforts were underway to arrange a meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Pope John Paul II, which would happen in the following year.

5. *Freedom of the Press*

In accord with the Soviet view of dictatorship of the proletariat, it was important to control the kinds of news and information that reached the Soviet cit-

izenry. For decades, the average Soviet citizen only had access to publications such as *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, and news and broadcasting programs from *Tass* and *Novosti*. Objective media coverage did not exist inside the U.S.S.R. Soviet dissidents had become skilled in reading between the lines of the official controlled press to know what was actually happening around them. The circulating of other “subversive” materials such as the *International Herald Tribune* or *Time Magazine* or listening to Radio Free Europe, the BBC, or Voice of America could result in serious sanctions and detention.

By 1988, because of President Gorbachev’s *glasnost* policy, changes occurred in this domain as well. Soviet newsstands were given permission to sell *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, and *The International Herald Tribune*.¹⁷ The Soviet underground press was also flourishing.

6. Nascent Political Freedom

In *State and Revolution* (1916) Lenin had elaborated on why there could not be democracy in Russia once the Marxist revolution had occurred. However, the year 1988 marked the first time since 1917 that Soviet citizens could choose between two candidates in local elections. British scholar Geoffrey A. Hosking has pointed out that by the autumn of 1988 it had become increasingly evident that a “mass mobilization against the party-state had a chance of success, and some of the country’s leading intellectuals had been drawn into the struggle.”¹⁸ May 1988 marked the founding of the Democratic Union, which would evolve into a political alternative to the Communist Party. By January 1989 the Democratic Union began to describe itself publicly as “a political party in opposition to the totalitarian structure of the USSR, aiming to bring about its non-violent transformation and the construction of law-governed states on the principles of humanism, democracy and pluralism.”¹⁹

7. Changes in Soviet Views on the Arms Race and Approaches to the Cold War

Peaceful coexistence constituted the official foreign policy of the Soviet Union vis-à-vis the Western powers since Lenin. In the Leninist lexicon, “peaceful coexistence” had two meanings. Publicly the Soviet Union advocated peace, but privately the Soviets promoted an enormous weapons build-up, including a massive deployment of tactical nuclear weapons that targeted Western Europe and East Asia. America’s monitoring of Soviet military and weapon deployments confirmed that in spite of the Soviets signing on to SALT I and SALT II, they had found the means to amass the world’s largest nuclear weapons arsenal. In 1962 during the Cuban missile crisis, the United States had approximately an 11-to-1 nuclear warhead superiority over the Soviet Union. Yet by 1980 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the Soviets had at least a 3-to-1 nuclear warhead superiority over the United States. Ronald Reagan recognized that although the official U.S. and Soviet adher-

ence to the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) may have reduced the immediate threat of nuclear war, it had permitted the Soviet Union to achieve nuclear parity if not superiority over the United States.²⁰ The Soviets had built such a powerful nuclear arsenal by the end of the 1970's that this was undoubtedly a contributing factor in the United States opting to accept the 1979 Soviet takeover of Afghanistan and limiting the American response to measured, symbolic expressions of disapproval such as marshalling a Western boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

Borrowing terminology from American football, the Reagan administration's development of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) could be said to be an "end run," increasing the odds that, even if the Soviets continued their nuclear build-up, the United States would eventually neutralize their growing nuclear superiority through building a top-of-the-line, space-deployed missile defense system.

Following the Soviet Union's controversial apprehension and subsequent release of American citizen and *Newsweek* journalist Nicholas Danilov, Ronald Reagan agreed to a summit meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev in Reykjavik, Iceland on October 11-12, 1986. At that time Gorbachev proposed that America continue with laboratory research on SDI, but he adamantly opposed testing and the eventual deployment of the SDI system. Reagan refused to agree to Gorbachev's terms on testing and deployment in spite of Gorbachev's proposal to begin a massive, unilateral reduction of the Soviet nuclear arsenal. Stephen White has described the Soviets' response to Reagan's hard-line stance:

It was at this point that the discussions broke down, as Gorbachev was unwilling to allow any element in his package to be agreed upon without agreement on all the others. The Politburo, at its meeting on 14 October, blamed the breakdown of negotiations on the Americans, but called for further meetings and discussions on the basis of the proposals that the Soviet side had put forward.²¹

In his memoirs, Ronald Reagan described his meeting with Gorbachev following the breakdown of the Reykjavik talks caused by Reagan's ongoing commitment to SDI. Reagan recounts that Gorbachev said to him, "I don't know what else I could have done." Reagan responded, "You could have said 'Yes.'"

Reagan's final words at Reykjavik may have had an impact upon President Gorbachev's thinking. Sarah E. Mendelson points out that when the third summit took place in Washington in December 1987, the conference "made no direct reference to SDI." In abandoning its resistance to SDI, the Soviet Union had thrown away the bargaining chip it needed to maintain military parity with the United States. Mendelson also observes, "Some of

Reagan's advisors appeared to be recommending SDI precisely because they thought the Soviet economy would collapse under the strain of attempting to emulate it."²²

8. Abandonment of the Brezhnev Doctrine

In 1988 the Soviet Union abandoned the Brezhnev Doctrine, which held that it was the responsibility of all socialist countries to "support" any one country that might wander from the socialist path. The Brezhnev Doctrine had first been utilized to justify the Warsaw Pact's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The Soviet Union also utilized this doctrine to justify the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. During the Gorbachev presidency, steps were taken to re-examine the validity of the Brezhnev doctrine. This was done both through official and unofficial channels, with Soviet dissidents strongly pressing the issue. During the summer and autumn of 1988 the Democratic Union demonstrated its opposition to totalitarian rule by a number of demonstrations, particularly one on August 21 that took place near Pushkin Square in Moscow. This demonstration was held to mourn the victims of the Warsaw Pact's 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, which had taken place on that date twenty years earlier.²³ Prior to this, Mikhail Gorbachev had already stated in Prague in April 1987:

The entire framework of political relations between the socialist countries must be based on absolute independence. Every nation is entitled to choose its path of development, to decide its own fate, to dispose of its territory, and its natural and human resources.²⁴

In 1988 there was vigorous debate in the Soviet Union on the Brezhnev doctrine and proletarian internationalism concerning the precedence of "international"—i.e., socialist bloc or Soviet—interests over national interests.²⁵ The reformulation of Soviet foreign policy was described as follows: "Many prominent theorists and policymakers now believe that national interests must take precedence and that non-interference and respect for national sovereignty are essential principles in the relations between socialist states to which insufficient attention has been paid in the past."²⁶ By 1988 Gorbachev himself maintained that every socialist state "has the sovereign right to resolve its own problems, to seek its own answers."²⁷ In a speech delivered at the UN in 1988, Gorbachev announced the withdrawal of 500,000 Soviet troops from Warsaw Pact nations and the removal of weapons and units capable of launching a surprise attack on neighboring NATO countries from the front line.²⁸

9. Abandonment of Soviet Support for Wars of National Liberation

By early 1988 the Soviet Union had also taken the first steps towards disengaging from a global policy of supporting Marxist-Leninist insurgencies in

developing countries in the name of “national liberation.” Lenin’s view of imperialism, as outlined in *Imperialism—The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916) and his *Notes on Imperialism* (1916), maintained that the reason capitalism had not been overthrown in the most industrialized countries, as Marx had predicted, was because capitalists had found new ways to maintain the capitalist system and thus continue to enrich themselves. They had done this, Lenin posited, through establishing political or economic colonies in the less developed world. Leninism teaches that the only manner to assure the overthrow of developed capitalism is to cut off capitalism’s markets in the less developed world through supporting wars of national liberation. The Soviet Union and its proxy nations such as Cuba were deeply involved in the national liberation movements that emerged in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central and South America.

By 1988 Gorbachev questioned the Soviet Union’s continued involvement in such efforts. Wars of national liberation had proven to be expensive, and the propping up of governments after communist takeovers was even more costly. There was a growing awareness in the Soviet Union that Third World conflicts would not easily be resolved by military means. There was also an inevitable loss of prestige when Soviet client states such as Afghanistan maintained political viability only through massive Soviet military and economic assistance.²⁹

Beginning in 1988, Soviet policy makers and theorists adopted an official position stressing that regional conflict can be resolved through dialogue, national reconciliation, and a demonstrated willingness to share political power rather than through endless and ubiquitous wars of national liberation. The Soviets maintained, “Resolution will be effective as long as arms are not supplied to the conflicting parties and there is no external intervention.”³⁰ When President Gorbachev spoke at the United Nations in December 1988, he outlined a new Soviet view on Third World regional conflicts, stressing that the United Nations rather than the Soviet Union should play the central role in resolving them.³¹

10. Soviet Troop Withdrawal from Afghanistan

In 1988 the Soviet Union took the unprecedented step of withdrawing its troops from a client state. It took place in Afghanistan when in April 1988, accords were signed for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from that embattled land. This was the first concrete manifestation of change in Soviet policy vis-à-vis Socialist allies or client states since the Soviet Union was founded in 1917. As per the accords, half of the Soviet forces were withdrawn between May and August 1988, with the remainder leaving within the following nine months. Withdrawals began on May 15, 1988 and were completed on schedule February 15, 1989.³² Afghanistan thus marked the first Soviet retreat since

the period immediately following World War II. The uncoupling of the Warsaw Pact in 1989, and the uncoupling of member republics from the Soviet Union in 1991, would follow in short order.

11. The Collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the Re-Emergence of the Nationality Question inside the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1988 opened the way to a general defection from the Soviet sphere of influence. This occurred in places such as Eastern Europe where even a few years earlier such a step would have defied common sense. For example, by the mid-1980's Poland's communist leader General Wojciech Jaruzelski operated under the assumption that due to threatened and real government crackdowns, Lech Walesa's Catholic Church-inspired Workers Union, known as Solidarity, was no longer a player in Poland's politics. However, when worker strikes broke out in April and May 1988, Jaruzelski soon realized that it was impossible to address this problem through existing channels. Jaruzelski was forced to solicit the assistance, counsel, and mediation of Lech Walesa.

These exchanges consummated in a reopening of negotiations between Jaruzelski and Walesa on August 31, 1988.³³ Those negotiations led to the official reinstatement of Solidarity as a political party inside Poland. Solidarity was publicly legalized on January 18, 1989, with Walesa and Solidarity actually assuming power in Poland six months later on June 4, 1989. Ironically, this had a "domino" effect. In Hungary the prescribed leading role of the Communist Party was removed from the constitution by the start of 1989. After a year of grave instability, the communist-ruled German Democratic Republic collapsed. The Berlin Wall fell on November 9, 1989. Bulgaria's communist government gave up power one day later. The ending of communist rule in Czechoslovakia and Romania followed within about one month's time.

The seeds for the splintering of the Soviet Union itself had also been sown by 1988. Early that year Gorbachev spoke of reopening discussion on the nationality question.³⁴ A working group on constitutional reform began in September 1988 to develop the notion of "republican precedence," by which the fifteen Soviet republics would assume authority over matters that had not been specifically transferred to the USSR government.³⁵ The Soviet Union had let "the cat out of the bag."³⁶ By 1988 there was growing pressure by the Soviet Republic of Georgia to obtain greater autonomy. By the summer of 1989 there were displays of the proposed flag for an independent, non-communist Georgia.³⁷

Conclusion

In 1978, just three years after the fall of Vietnam, the Soviet Union enjoyed its apogee of influence and power in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. It seemed realistic that communism would remain a long-term fixture in the developing world. It was a realistic scenario to conceive of the United States one day reduced to a hemispheric power threatened by a communist Mexico to the south. The potential urgency of protecting U.S. borders from a hostile and pro-Soviet Central America and Mexico would have provoked a partial or eventually a complete withdrawal of U.S. ground troops from NATO. With the weakening of NATO and Pacific alliances with the United States, Western Europe and Japan would have had no choice but to come to an “understanding” with the Soviet Union.

Amazingly, one year later, that scenario began to lose credibility. In 1979 the world felt betrayed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. There was also outrage when the democratically inspired revolution against Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza was “stolen” by pro-Soviet communists. In both of these countries a military resistance emerged that would wear down the Soviet-supported military machines.

Ten years later, in 1988, Soviet troops began to withdraw from Afghanistan. In that same year alternative political parties became part of the political landscape in the USSR and in the Soviet satellites of Poland and Hungary. A free alternative press began to compete with *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. The Soviet Union renounced its support of the Brezhnev doctrine and its support of national liberation movements. A new Soviet leadership was calling for adoption of a free market economy and freedom of religion. Such Soviet icons as Stalin and even Lenin were being openly criticized, for the first time, by Soviet citizens for the atrocities that they had perpetrated against their fellow citizens and the international community.

After seventy years of astounding growth and ubiquitous havoc, the Soviet dream had indeed been “altogether ruined.” Rev. Moon’s 1972 prognosis that in 1978 communism would reach its high point and that in 1988 communism would be “altogether ruined” proved to be astonishingly accurate.

Notes

- 1 *Divine Principle* (New York: Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, 1973), p. 107.
- 2 Sun Myung Moon, *God’s Will and the World* (New York: Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, 1985), p. 77. [The author was in Paris in attendance at this speech and was immediately impressed by it. The speech

- appeared first in 1972 in the Unification Church magazine *The Way of the World*.]
- 3 *Exposition of the Divine Principle* (New York: Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, 1996), p. 376.
 - 4 Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, *His Holiness* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), p. 473.
 - 5 Prior to Mikhail Gorbachev, the most important position in the Soviet Union was that of Secretary General of the Communist Party.
 - 6 Stephen White, *Gorbachev and After* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 78.
 - 7 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
 - 8 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
 - 9 Geoffrey A. Hosking, Jonathan Aves and Peter J. S. Duncan, *The Road to Post-Communism* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1992), p. 17.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 - 11 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
 - 12 White, *Gorbachev and After*, p. 225.
 - 13 *Ibid.*, p. 226.
 - 14 *Ibid.*, p. 224.
 - 15 *Ibid.*, p. 225.
 - 16 *Ibid.*, p. 226.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, p. 90.
 - 18 Hosking, Aves and Duncan, *The Road to Post-Communism*, p. 24.
 - 19 *Ibid.*, p. 19.
 - 20 The policy of Mutually Assured Destruction (M.A.D.) maintained that because both the United States and the Soviet Union understood that an unleashing of a nuclear attack by one of the two sides would result in an immediate response by the other side, neither side would resort to atomic warfare. This was one of the reasons used to dismiss the need for the building of an anti-missile defense system. The SALT accords signed by the United States and the Soviet Union put strict limits on the testing and deployment of anti-missile systems.
 - 21 Stephen White, *Gorbachev in Power* (New York: Cambridge University Press), p. 165.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, p. 164.
 - 23 Hosking, Aves and Duncan, *The Road to Post-Communism*, p. 19.
 - 24 Bernstein and Politi, *His Holiness*, p. 460.
 - 25 Reviewed in *Problems of Communism*, March and April 1988.
 - 26 Bovin, MEMO no. 7/1988.
 - 27 Martin McCauley, ed., *Gorbachev and Perestroika*, (New York: St. Martins Press, 1990), pp. 177-178.
 - 28 *Ibid.*, p. 187.
 - 29 *Ibid.*, p. 183.
 - 30 *Ibid.*, p. 184.
 - 31 *Pravda*, December 8, 1988, in McCauley, *Gorbachev and Perestroika*, p. 185.

- 32 White, *Gorbachev in Power*, p. 175.
- 33 Bernstein and Politi, *His Holiness*, p. 469.
- 34 White, *Gorbachev in Power*, p. 143.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 144.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 144.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

USE OF THE INTERNET IN THE UNIFICATION MOVEMENT

Sara Horsfall

We are in the midst of a revolution as great as translation of the Bible into vernacular, as great as the Reformation and the Industrial Revolution. The impact of the Internet is just beginning to be felt. The Unification Church¹ has adopted the new technology and embraced it with open arms. Web use by church members today has proliferated to such an extent that it is difficult to track it all.

It is important to remember that personal computers were developed less than 20 years ago and that only within the last ten years has use of the Internet become common. At each stage of Internet development, UC members were willing and ready to adopt new technology. Church officials in the New Yorker Hotel used word processors that preceded PCs in the 1970s. “Geeks” who kept them running enthusiastically envisioned future technological changes to an audience of wide-eyed assistants. In the late 1970s NewsWorld Publications utilized a mainframe computer—a gigantic contraption that required its own air-conditioned room and dedicated typesetters.

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Foreign correspondents for the *Newsworld* used UPI's international computer network to send their stories back to New York.

Unification Church leaders were among those that enthusiastically embraced the new technology. By the mid-1980s a state church headquarters was likely to have a computer for bookkeeping, operated by a Japanese woman in a tiny office somewhat set apart from the rest of the center. By the end of the 1980s computer savvy individuals connected with each other using less-friendly formats that required a dial-up modem connection such as Mosaic, Gopher, Archie, WAIS, Veronica and Jughead. During this period Gary Fleisher set up a bulletin board, accessible by one person at a time. Reverend Moon's speeches were among his first published material. In 1993 Damian Anderson, a computer consultant with NASA, began computer evangelizing on bulletin boards, mailing lists and usenet groups like alt.religion.christian. By 1994 he concluded that the Internet out-performed other media in terms of reaching numbers and varieties of people. Two years after he began, he set up his own usenet group, alt.religion.unification. (More on the last list later.) It was several years after Fleisher and Anderson set up their web pages that the Unification Church had an official presence online.

This paper looks at the current usage of the Internet by the Unification Church using a typology developed elsewhere.² Both public (official usage) and private use is examined. The Unification Church is not alone in its use of the Internet, and some brief comparisons are made to other religious groups.

1. Information Sharing

An important characteristic of computer use, hence of the Internet use, is the ability to manipulate and transfer vast quantities of information quickly and accurately. Information sharing is a major aspect of Internet use for everyone, including religious groups such as the Unification Church. Some of the shared information is shared is specific to religious groups, some is of general interest.

a. Publication of Religious Texts and Materials

For most Unificationists, Reverend Moon's speeches are a particularly important source of spiritual inspiration. In the 1960s and 1970s, members waited days, weeks or even months for transcripts of tape-recorded speeches. Official printed copies were snapped up as soon as they became available and were hoarded jealously. Today, almost every speech Reverend Moon has given (that has been translated into English) is available on the Internet, including some given as early as 1954. Speeches are available on pages maintained by Fleisher³ and Anderson.⁴ Anderson also has complete texts of other church publications, including some material previously considered appropriate only

for members (e.g. *The Tradition*).

Most Unificationists are also eager to hear news about other members and their activities. In the early days of the movement when there were less than 100 members in a handful of U.S. cities, news and encouragement came by mail on Xeroxed or mimeographed pages. By the 1970s *The Way of the World* magazine, published in Korea, was available in centers but generally not to individual members. By the 1980s the monthly *Unification News* was available for subscription in a newspaper format. Today among Fleisher's published material is an extensive collection of articles from the *Unification News*, complete with an index of authors. Whether or not it was intended to replace the printed publication, the Internet version is freely available to all interested parties, and as a consequence is read around the world.

In addition to speeches and news about member activities, commentary on almost every topic imaginable is published on the Internet. Unification commentary is published by *Journal of Unification Studies*.⁵ Non-church publications supported by Rev. Moon also have a heavy dose of commentary: *Middle East Times*,⁶ *Washington Times*,⁷ *Insight magazine*,⁸ *The World & I*,⁹ *International Journal on World Peace*,¹⁰ and *Zambesi Times*.¹¹

But Internet commentary is not limited to posting official publications. Members' homepages often contain comments by such notables as Rush Limbaugh, Dr. Laura, and Charlton Heston. Many members are not shy about publishing their own views as well, on topics including Heaven's Gate, Allen Ginsburg, Charles Schultz and Tiger Woods. Some members have devoted their entire web sites to commentary. Peter and Kim Brown's "FutureRealm Productions"¹² site on morality is intended for public consumption. Taku Ikemoto's "Moral Issues"¹³ site has a series of exposes. William Stoertz¹⁴ includes commentary on the Unified Field Theory. And there are others.

Publication of vast quantities of material online appears to be a mark of religious use of the Internet in the new millennium. Complete texts of most religious groups are now available to Internet users, some in convenient downloadable formats.¹⁵ As to commentaries, a plethora of religious views represent every conceivable viewpoint on virtually every topic imaginable, including entire sites devoted to theology and apologetics.

b. Study Aids – Search Functions

Another important computer use, albeit somewhat less obvious, is the ability to find particular references quickly and easily. The search function has become a vital link in handling large amounts of information. Computer technology has made the earlier study aids such as a concordance of the Bible child's play. For the most part, search functions are found wherever texts are published. And if they are not incorporated into the site, an Internet user can

easily develop one using basic word-processing commands. Both Anderson's and Fleisher's pages offer search functions, allowing users to cross reference speeches with the Divine Principle or other material.¹⁶

2. *Internal Communication*

A second characteristic of Internet use is communication. Among religious groups there are two distinct types of Internet communication—communication between members and communication between members and non-members. Proselytizing and public relations comprise a big part of the latter, which will be dealt with later. Communication between members consists of both informal exchanges between individuals and formal directives between church leaders and members.

a. Directories, Addresses and Contact Information

Computers are ideal for keeping address lists, primarily because they are so easily updated. With a few more keystrokes, the updated lists can be published online. In some ways Internet directories are more convenient than a hard copy publications. They are ever available. You don't have to remember to bring your directory with you when you need it—it is already there, online. The ease in updating tends to make them more accurate. And, because the World Wide Web is world wide, Internet directories are less likely to be restricted to a particular locale.

There two comprehensive and widely used directories for the Unification Church.¹⁷ An international church directory maintained by Paul Ettl¹⁸ in Europe has addresses, phone numbers and, most recently, email addresses for national headquarters around the world and state headquarters within the U.S. Peter Wettstein, who has collected email addresses of members worldwide for several years, maintains an e-directory¹⁹ that has grown to 1500 members and is frequently updated.

b. Official Dissemination of Material

The Internet is an ideal way to inform members of policy decisions and directives. It is convenient, immediate and inexpensive, especially for an international membership.²⁰ It doesn't take much imagination to realize how this method of communication is changing the relationship between church officials and members. The latter are, on the whole, more informed and less reliant on someone else's interpretation of church directives.

The Korean Family Federation web site²¹ is a major source of official information, available in both Korean and English. The English language page is more sophisticated than the official U.S. site and has more church material of interest to members, including a history of the church (with pho-

tos), a description of worldwide missionary work, and a biography of Rev. Moon and his achievements. The Korean language page has a missionary login page that requires an ID and password, and a page devoted to travel in Korea. Demonstrating its capability with the newest technology, the Korean site broadcasts special church events such as holiday celebrations and blessings. Internet users can find times for the broadcasts on Anderson's WorldTies mailing list. In theory, broadcasting over the Internet allows people everywhere to participate. In reality, receiving the broadcasts requires sophisticated equipment and computer savvy that still limits its reception.

Official directives for Unificationists are also found on the sites maintained by current projects, such as the American Leadership Conference, New Hope Farm Brazil, the Pure Love Alliance, and the True Family Values Ministry, which have pertinent information about their particular efforts. Another source for official directives is a subscription to WorldTies. The mailing list regularly posts news notes, directives, announcements and explanations from church leaders.

c. Discussion among Members

News groups and bulletin boards are important means of communication for computer users wanting to exchange ideas and discuss current issues online. Email, mailing lists and listservs²² provide a less public, and if the lists are monitored, less offensive means of discussion.²³ Today most Unificationists communicate in the latter, less public means.

Oneworld.com, set up by Dallas Stafford, was one of the first Unificationist listservs. At its peak it had approximately 100 subscribers. But many of the contributors were opposed to the church and postings negative to the church were not monitored. So the list was abandoned and reformed as Global Village International (GVI). After spending some time at Chung Pyung Lake in Korea, Stafford relinquished control of the list to Terry Lester, who later passed it on to Forrest Wright. GVI is known as the most "liberal" of the three Unificationists listservs. Active church members describe it as "negative theology" written by "old, tired and cynical members and a lot of ex-members."

Earlier, some members participated in newsgroup discussions, but like Oneworld.com, the unrestricted comments by ex-members and others negative to Unification ideals discouraged member participation. An early newsgroup formed by Anderson, alt.religion.unification, for instance, was gradually taken over by non-members. As one church member commented recently, "Such a place needs a moderator, someone who can rule the site with strict discipline. Alt.religion.unification became a whipping boy for Unificationists, simply because there was no moderator and anybody said whatever they could dream up."

Home Harbor Inn (HHI) is another listserv available to Unificationists. Monitored by two church members, Ron Beatteay and David Payer, it is most often described as “middle-of-the-road” in its theology. Anti-church postings are not allowed, although constructive criticism is. It is an active list with a threshold of 65 posts per day.

The most conservative of the three Unificationist listservs is Unification Evangelism, maintained by Anderson. Basically for members only, it has close to 700 subscribers. The stated purpose is for evangelism but it includes lively discussions, criticisms, testimonies and international activity reports. Anderson’s monitoring assures that postings are basically supportive of the church.

Other listservs have been set up for select groups of people. Subscribers to the NM list are primarily western members holding the position of National Messiah. Official directives and nationality differences are frequently discussed. Another list for members associated with Japan, called Japan IFA (International Family Association) list. Teenagers and young adults of the second generation communicate on their own list. Some local churches maintain mailing lists to keep their members informed. Local DC residents maintain a list called DCVision.

In addition to Unification Evangelism, Anderson maintains four mailing lists. The most well known list is WorldTies, mentioned above, which sends church news, announcements, reports, testimonies and sermons to members and other interested persons. It has more than 1900 subscribers and serves as a quasi-official means of communication. (Most church announcements are posted to the mailing list.) A second mailing list, TrueFamilyValuesNews (TFVN) keeps its approximately 1560 subscribers abreast of national and international developments that impact or relate to church morals and goals. The third mailing list, UnificationTexts, has more than 900 subscribers who each receive speeches of Rev. and Mrs. Moon on a daily basis. Anderson wrote his own program to be able to maintain the list. And finally, WorldScripture has 500 subscribers who receive one section of *World Scripture*²⁴ daily. A recent tally indicates that Anderson’s listserv and mailing lists all grew by at least 25 percent during the first few months of 2000,²⁵ indicating a growing interest in them and an increasing use of the web by Unificationists. According to Anderson the subscription rate went up sharply once he published a web sign-up sheet for all of the lists.

An increasing number of members also have private email addresses and keep in touch with each other that way. Members also have their own smaller versions of mailing lists. It is not uncommon to receive postings sent to a number of members regarding commercial opportunities, prayer requests, or inspirational notes. Members who lost track of each other over the years and frequent moves get each other’s address through Wettstein’s e-directory

and catch up on the changes in their lives (marriage, children, community participation) through email messages. National boundaries are no obstacle to Internet communication; it is no surprise for someone in the U.S. to receive a message from someone in Australia, or Gabon.

Members in countries in the C.I.S. with poor communication services have turned to email as more reliable, not to mention quicker and much less expensive, than regular mail, telegraph or even telephone. Some National Messiahs communicate with members in their country almost exclusively through email. Through the 1990s members in Russia used email extensively, without much worry about privacy due to the presumed inability of the government to monitor the new technology. As a result, for several years a major portion of official communication took place via the web.

d. Published Testimonies

Related to discussion among members is publication of testimonies by members. These non-interactive accounts are generated primarily for internal consumption and for the purpose of conversion. Internet testimonies are found in formally published materials, in letters between members, in letters to non-members, published on individual pages, forwarded to listservs and mailing lists. There is an experiential quality to testimonies, even though they do not appear in "real time." As a standard part of religion, testimonies are intended to inspire others to a deeper faith and commitment.²⁶

Among Unificationists, a major forum for testimonies has been Anderson's WorldTies mailing list. For example, in the late 1990s there were numerous stories of members who were successful in giving the blessing. Usually such testimonies began with "I wasn't too keen on the idea..." and ended with a success story.

e. Sharing Resources/Web Resources

A major use of the Internet is to share resources. This use ranges from individuals who sell various products online to helping others set up web pages and information on using the Internet. Members of religious groups share economic ventures, clipart and web page tools, bulletin board announcements, information about other web sites and programs, and real time interaction. One frequently shared item is information about filters, developed and sold by Christian parents and organizations.²⁷

For Unificationists sharing resources means lively email interaction between members. On listservs and on individual homepages, members keep each other informed of interesting economic opportunities. Unificationists wanting to set up their own web page go to Fleisher's web site, where they find photos of Rev. Moon and his family, photos of church events, church logos, directions for putting logos on a web page, and links to other computer infor-

mation. Fleisher's stated purpose is the "free exchange of information," so he invites users (presumably members?) to submit favorite links or other information to be published on his page. Both Fleisher and Anderson have extensive links to other Unification sites. A student in England, Stewart Webster, also maintains a comprehensive page of Unification links.²⁸

Another interesting example of resource sharing is found on Ettl's page: words and music to forty holy songs, with downloadable Midi files. Some centers have reproduced the files and play them in the background or for Sunday service.

Isolated members make use of all the Unification resources. One Western member living in Japan with a Japanese wife recently discovered Anderson's page. He wrote, "Needless to say, I don't know much about anything that's happened in our movement in the last 8 1/2 years. I feel a bit like Rip Van Winkle waking up from a 100-year sleep without a clue as to what has happened during my sleep. Your work, with the various lists and the Unification Church Home Page, is my lifeline to our Movement. I'm incredibly grateful."²⁹

Sale of material is standard all over the Internet. The HSA Bookstore and OneCosmos.com (Accord Bookstore) sell Unification books and paraphernalia. Specialty books and souvenirs are also available on pages of the related organizations, such as Paragon House Publishers,³⁰ Unification Theological Seminary or the Kirov Academy of Ballet.

Member pages also offer things for sale. Curtis and Sanae Martin³¹ have turned their home page into a spiritual bookstore, with additional recommendations of non-church publications available for sale elsewhere. Dan Fefferman³² and other musicians have pages devoted to the sale of their original recordings. Members with businesses offer a variety of products for sale online. One enterprising missionary, Michael Kiely,³³ sells web space and email addresses to raise money for his mission in Africa. A student at the Unification Theological Seminary operates a site called HERO services,³⁴ which offers assistance in planning outdoor adventures.

Other Unification member pages tend to be family oriented, with lots of pictures, especially of the webmaster's family. Pages generally include something about the teachings, although the content varies. It is not unusual for member pages to have links to spiritual, religious or moral sites not directly connected with the Unification Church. Some of the church's second generation have their own sites as well, publishing a youthful collections of talk, advice, testimonies and email addresses of other church youth.

f. Education

A shared resource that deserves separate mention is that of education. The Internet is especially important as a source of educational materials for those who homeschool their children. Interested parents have set up pages to help

children navigate the huge arena of web sites to find suitable pages for their young minds. There are also meeting places for homeschool parents and homeschool children on the Internet. Parents and teachers not involved in homeschool make use of the Internet for dissemination of Sunday school material and other educational opportunities with the particular moral bent that is important to them.

Unificationists' Sunday school material for children has been available online since the early 1990s. And for those interested educational institutions there are pages for New Hope Academy,³⁵ New Eden Academy,³⁶ University of Bridgeport,³⁷ Sun Moon University,³⁸ Unification Theological Seminary,³⁹ and the Asia University Federation.⁴⁰ For parents of teenagers, there are a number of sites relating to abstinence such as Free Teens,⁴¹ Pure Love Alliance,⁴² Terri Lester's Healthy Love campaign,⁴³ and Peter and Kim Brown's Hearthread page.⁴⁴ There is also a page devoted to the Religious Youth Service.⁴⁵

As regards distance learning via the Internet, the Unification Theological Seminary first offered an Internet course in the summer of 1998, to make seminary education available to members living in distant US cities or even in other countries. The University of Bridgeport has had a distance learning program for several years.

g. Daily Inspirations/Prayer Requests

Mailing lists for daily inspirations deserve a separate mention because of the dynamic they inspire. So far as I can tell, most religions have at least a few of these, maintained either by an official group or an individual member who takes it upon him or herself to do so. Sending out a quote or some inspirational reading on a daily basis simulates a group prayer, even though individuals "participate" at different times. Like the testimonies, although not in "real time," they have an experiential intent to inspire the reader to a deeper faith or increased commitment.

For Unificationists, two of Anderson's lists fit this description: UnificationTexts and WorldScripture. Subscribers to the former receive readings for daily devotions, called Hoon Dok Hae.

3. External Communication

The second type of religious communication found on the Internet is communication between the religious group and non-members. This includes evangelism and public relations. Although there is some overlap, these types of communication are generally different from communication between members because the emphasis is on making a good impression. For religious groups, it includes conversion efforts, an impulse that is almost second nature to many of their members.

a. Evangelical Outreach

Almost all of the official religious sites have some evangelistic element displayed on their homepage. Each group, however subtly, advertises a way of life and a religious practice that it thinks is superior and to which others are invited. Some groups have been very successful in their Internet outreach, receiving many inquiries and user visits. It is not clear whether people are converted through their Internet contact, however. It is more likely that these online materials, including testimonies and other accounts, provide the impetus for an uninitiated individual to seek personal contact with someone. In fact, many webmasters make it a policy to refer the individual to local congregations, or encourage them to visit a particular "real time" locale.⁴⁶

On the other hand, simply having a web presence brings some inquiries. Many Internet users first look for information about a group on its official web page. The ad hoc publishing of web pages is reflected in the variety of titles for the official Unification web sites. The official U.S. web site is entitled "Unification Church," whereas the Korean site is entitled "Family Federation for World Peace and Unification," as is the UK site. The French page is entitled "Unification Home Page"; the Austrian page is entitled "Unification Movement," and the Russian is "Religious Federation." There is no apparent consistency among the approximately 25 official sites originating in different countries and using different languages, possibly reflecting different legal situations around the world as well as the independence of webmasters.⁴⁷

The official U.S. web site⁴⁸ is primarily for nonmembers. It has information about the church that is usually included in PR booklets and press kits. There is information about Rev. and Mrs. Moon, a slide presentation of the teaching, current evangelism projects, a description of the global outreach, links to projects, education and current events, and a bibliography of church publications available for purchase online. For members, there is Korean language page and a list of links to member pages. It describes Anderson's site as the "most complete" unofficial news source, and Fleisher's site as a "Library of Unification Resources."

Paul Ettl coordinates most of the European sites,⁴⁹ although some of the national pages have separate webmasters and different layouts. Pages are available in 12 different languages including English (UK), German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Hungarian, Norwegian, Swedish, Japanese and Korean. The European page has mirrors of both Anderson's and Fleisher's sites in the U.S. In addition to the European sites, there are at least 14 more international church web sites. All use the Church symbols and have photos of Rev. Moon and his wife, but otherwise they reflect the personality and technical sophistication of the national webmaster.

Most of the church-related organizations (many already mentioned) also have official web sites, some quite sophisticated and extensive. Organizations

affiliated with the church usually have links to the official church sites, whereas independent organizations do not (*The Washington Times*, *The Middle East Times*, Paragon House Publishers).

Local church pages are often utilitarian with no apparent effort at attractive layout or graphics. Sites maintained by individuals, on the other hand, are often evangelical. As is the case for many religious groups, the official sites were published long after individuals (e.g. Fleisher and Anderson) had pioneered the way. In March of 1995, Anderson set up his first web site with a commercial provider. His first postings were the *Divine Principle* and *God's Will and the World*. Over time he developed his strategy to get others to his site by advertising his page on news groups. Being concerned about the moral environment of the web, Anderson also kept tabs on activities of others. In February 1997 he decided to improve the web environment by deleting porno newsgroups. He was successful for a few days, but as a result, lost his web site when his provider disapproved of his actions. Today he has his own server.

Underscoring the international character of the church, Anderson⁵⁰ has links to church sites in 19 different languages: Chinese, Dutch, Farsi, French, German, Estonian, Hungarian, Japanese, Italian, Kiswahili, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Turkish, and Thai. Anderson originally set up these language pages, but now he simply hosts them on his server. Nonmembers as well as members often contact Anderson online to thank him for his material. Fleisher has a different approach. He asks people to contact him, submit links, quotes and other material. He also offers to deliver a message to Reverend Moon, either by hand or by forwarding email.

Other evangelistic pages maintained by members include the Family Education Resource page⁵¹ maintained by Puay Lam Teo, Ron Beateay's Unificationist Perspective,⁵² and Larry Barber's True Family Values page.⁵³ The strategy of one European member to get people to visit his site demonstrates typical evangelistic enthusiasm. "You have to think global and act local. In other words, you should be on the ball on local violations of religious freedom, etc. Then you should get on the mailing lists of various organizations. Furthermore, I send regular short updates to hundreds of addresses... heavenly spamming."⁵⁴

b. Publicity/ Public Relations

Closely related to evangelism is public relations strategy. Some official sites (e.g. Latter-Day Saints and the Vatican) have a Press Office link prominently displayed on the first page. But even those without such a link have material about the group easily accessible—basic facts, summary of beliefs, summary of history, news about current projects and events.

An important aspect of publicity is countering negative publicity. Groups that receive negative publicity, for whatever reason, can tell their side of the issue in a format that reaches far more people than any other communication medium. They have a chance to “set the record straight” through the use of the Internet in a way that they cannot do elsewhere. This is more obvious on some pages than in others.⁵⁵ Unificationists have made use of the Internet to counter negative publicity. The official U.S. page has news about anti-cult activity. Anderson has a multi-volume “Responses to questions about Unificationism on the Internet” where he counters a variety of charges.

Another important aspect of publicity is activism—campaigns and promotion of values important to the group.⁵⁶ Unification sites promote family values as much or more than the Divine Principle. Much of this has already been mentioned above under education and sharing resources. But some official pages actively promote particular values: World Culture and Sports Festival, Women’s Federation for World Peace, American Leadership Conference,⁵⁷ International Relief Friendship Foundation, Interracial Sisterhood Project, True Family Values Ministry, Professors World Peace Academy, Summit Council for World Peace, International Coalition for Religious Freedom,⁵⁸ Religious Freedom in Singapore.⁵⁹

While not directly promoting a campaign, other related sites reflect an intent to bolster a public image through activity: International Highway Project,⁶⁰ Kirov Academy of Ballet, World University Federation, World Media Association, and others.

Conclusion

Less than thirty years ago, Unification missionaries working in remote countries felt isolated and alone. International communication was mainly carried on through mail, even though it was common knowledge that not all the letters were delivered. (*Newsweek* subscribers reportedly missed every fourth issue.) There was always the telephone, but an international call was expensive and reservations had to be obtained hours, or even days ahead. The missionary had to remain on hand for the operator to call back. Once connected, old telephone wires and parts required him to shout at the top of one’s voice to be heard—making the conversation anything but private. An urgent report might be sent via telegraph, but that required a trip to the telegraph office where the entire message was retyped. Receiving church news by any means was like Christmas. All printed church materials were hand carried into the country and were highly valued, carefully preserved, and generally outdated.

All that has changed with the Internet. Today even in countries where mail is sporadic or non-existent, it is possible to communicate with people privately, relatively inexpensively and virtually instantaneously. Missionaries no

longer have to wonder what the latest directives are, or if someone's interpretation of a speech is accurate. Photos and reports of recent events are readily available to everyone around the world shortly after they happen.

The Internet is changing religious groups including the Unification Church in some subtle and not-so-subtle ways. Published texts are readily available, so at least members are more informed. Members can communicate easily, discussing private life events as well as church directives and their significance. This can have both positive and negative impacts. It is positive in that members get more information more quickly and more accurately without having to rely on others. But just as more information can strengthen one's faith, it can also be a catalyst for weakened faith. The very ease of availability may make the same material, once preciously kept, less valuable.

Another change brought by the Internet is the community one interacts with. No longer are one's daily companions limited by their physical presence. A member can be counseled by someone from another country. He can witness to someone in another country, and even "raise" him long distance. Availability of leaders' reports and testimonies make them seem more accessible and more personable, too. More than ever before, the membership can be a "world family." On the negative side, it is possible to spread rumors around the world in a few minutes. Dissenters can more easily find others of like mind.

As important as Internet meetings may be, they are unlikely to replace real-life religious experiences. Members who "meet" over the Internet are likely to establish their legitimacy through common real life experiences—acquaintances, events, and group activities. Material on the web can be an important aid to someone who is making an important decision, but it is in itself unlikely to lead to a conversion experience. On the positive side, the larger world community may make testimonies more dramatic and convincing, and encourage believers to a greater faith.

The exception to the need for real-life links may be cyber devotionals, such as Anderson's Unification Texts. Their effects are unclear. Will they replace traditional devotional practices, such as morning prayer meetings? For those with a busy schedule, they might be a stand in on occasion.

The worldwide network of communications appears to be the ideal medium for the members of the Unification Church. The national boundaries and physical distance that once divided people around the world are no longer significant due to the ease of electronic communication. But whereas members are more accessible worldwide, they are also more informed, with more resources at their disposal. And like the revolutions of the past, the changes brought by this latest technological revolution may well bring new and unanticipated challenges.

Notes

- 1 Although the official title is Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, because the name change came after the advent of the Internet, and because some online pages still identify the group as Unification Church, that is how it is referred to here.
- 2 "How Religious Organizations Use the Internet: A Preliminary Inquiry," by Sara Horsfall, in *Religion and the Internet*, Jeffrey Hadden and Douglas Cohen, eds., JAI Press, October 2000.
- 3 <http://www.tparents.org/>
- 4 <http://www.unification.net/>
- 5 http://www.uts.edu/journal/journal_open.html
- 6 <http://www.metimes.com/>
- 7 <http://www.washtimes.com/>
- 8 <http://www.insightmag.com/>
- 9 <http://www.worldandi.com/>
- 10 <http://www.pwpa.org/IJWP/index.html>
- 11 <http://members.aol.com/Babinmedia/zambezi.html>
- 12 <http://futurerealm.com/>
- 13 <http://www.hi-ho.ne.jp/taku77/>
- 14 <http://www.stoertz.org/>
- 15 The Mormons (<http://www.lds.org/>) have the complete Book of Mormon and other volumes online, as well as research information and genealogical files. The Falun Gong (<http://falundafa.org>) has several volumes of their founder's words in a variety of languages. Christian Bibles include ONLINE BIBLE (<http://www.onlinebible.simplenet.com>), JESUSaves (<http://JESUSaves.com/bible/>), World Wide Study Bible (<http://ccel.wheaton.edu/wwsb/>), Bible Gateway (<http://bible.gospelcom.net/>), Etexts at University of Virginia (<http://etext.virginia.edu/rsv/browse.html>), Online Chinese and English Bible (<http://ccim.org/~bible/>), and Virtual Church (<http://www.internetdynamics.com/pub/vc/bibles.html>). There are also Bibles in Greek, Hebrew and other ancient and modern languages. The Apocrypha, Dead Sea Scrolls and other texts such as St. Augustine's *City of God* are also available in their entirety.
- 16 Bible Searches include Bible Gateway (<http://bible.gospelcom.net/>), Bible Browser (<http://www.biblesearch.com>), Univ of Virginia etexts (<http://etext.virginia.edu/>), Unbound Bible (<http://unbound.biola.edu/>), and Search the Bible (<http://super-net.net/~chrisd/home/bible.html>).
- 17 Christian Internet directories are heavily used and varied: member addresses of national organizations; denominational lists; interdenominational directories of web pages; directories of adherents to particular dogmas; and directories for churches, online or not. Apparent members use is to locate particular churches, whether for a mailing address, for visitation, or for reference to a third party.
- 18 http://www.etl.co.at/unification/misc/uc_directory.html
- 19 <http://members.xoom.com/eaddresses/>

- 20 An interesting example is the Vatican site (<http://www.vatican.va/>) which devotes many pages to Vatican news, archives, directives and decisions of Catholic officials. The Mormons also report decisions made at their semi-annual General Conference, in many languages. Last year they had “real time” video broadcasts of the Conference, as well.
- 21 <http://tongil.or.kr/ENG/CH/enindex.htm>
- 22 For those unfamiliar with computer terminology, a listserv is a sort of community email. Any subscriber can send a message, which is then received by all other subscribers. A mailing list is a one-way communication set up from the list owner to all subscribers.
- 23 Catholics have 60 or more identifiable listservs on topics ranging from Campus Ministry to Home Schooling, to Charismatic Catholics, to Former Nuns, LesBiGay, and Prayrosary. An LDS (Mormon) Resource site lists 24 mailing lists, 14 chat rooms, 10 message boards and several well-used newsgroups.
- 24 International Religious Foundation, *World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts* (New York: Paragon House, 1991).
- 25 On November 12, 1999 Anderson gave the following subscriber numbers: WorldTies 1315, TFV News 1288, Unification Texts 678, World Scripture 406, Unification Evangelism 556.
- 26 Other religious groups make use of testimonies in a variety of forums. An interesting example is that of Falun Gong, a group severely persecuted by the Chinese government. Their “Witness Page” has testimonies from members currently residing in China, or recently returned from China. Because of the unregulated nature of the Internet, even the Chinese government has been unsuccessful in blocking all communication between Falun Gong members in China and elsewhere.
- 27 Related are web hosts eager to help churches put up web pages, or receive email: <http://www.netchurch.com>, <http://church-online.com/>, <http://www.churchlink.com/>, <http://www.churchesontheweb.com/>
- 28 <http://www.jimmy.qmced.ac.uk/usr/im95webs/subjbook.htm>
- 29 WorldTies, Feb. 2000
- 30 <http://www.paragonhouse.com/>
- 31 <http://www.hometown.aol.com/curtis721/index.html>
- 32 <http://hometown.aol.com/fefferdan/music/index.htm>
- 33 <http://www.bfam.net/>
- 34 <http://www.citlink.net/~heroservices/index.htm>
- 35 <http://www.geocities.com/newhopeacademy/index.html>
- 36 neweden@erols.com
- 37 <http://www.bridgeport.ecu/>
- 38 <http://www.sunmoon.ac.kr/> For English see <http://jangmi.sunmoon.ac.kr/~gms/>
- 39 <http://www.uts.edu/>
- 40 <http://jangmi.sunmoon.ac.kr/~auf/index.html>
- 41 <http://www.freeteens.org>
- 42 <http://www.purelove.org/>

- 43 <http://people.delphi.com/tglit/index.html>
- 44 <http://futurerealm.com/>
- 45 <http://www.rys.net/>
- 46 Individuals inquiring about Falun Gong, for instance, are usually encouraged to go to a public park where the other practitioners meet in the early morning.
- 47 This is not the case for all other religious groups. Scientology, for instance, maintains a very tight reign on the use of their name, logos and materials.
- 48 <http://www.unification.org/>
- 49 <http://www.ettl.co.at/unification/>
- 50 During the first three months of 2000 there were an average of 6,330 hits a day on Anderson's site.
- 51 <http://www.geocities.com/heartland/village/6503/>
- 52 <http://www.divineprinciple.net/>
- 53 <http://www.members.xoom.com/trufam/>
- 54 NM listserv, March 2000
- 55 It is impossible to miss Scientology's "side of the story" about the persecution in Germany or their explanation that they are persecuted because they are "politically incorrect." The Mormons address misconceptions (mainly polygamy). The Falun Gong publishes material about activities in China and states their side of the current controversy.
- 56 Mormons have a Family Resources Link. The Vatican page features links related to Lent and Jubilee Events. Scientologists promote their causes in a variety of places and ways on their site.
- 57 <http://www.leadershipconference.org/>
- 58 <http://www.religiousfreedom.com/>
- 59 <http://members.tripod.com/~teopl/>
- 60 <http://www.ijjnet.or.jp/IHCC/>

NICHOLAS OF CUSA: HIS IDEA OF THE COINCIDENCE OF OPPOSITES AND THE CONCEPT OF UNITY IN UNIFICATION THOUGHT

Klaus Rohmann

Nicholas of Cusa was a harbinger of a new era. His family name was Cryftz, which means 'Krebs' in contemporary German or 'crab' in English; but he was called after his native town Cues on the Moselle, where he was born in 1401. He attended school in Deventer in the Netherlands run by the Brethren of the Common Life, whose so-called modern way of piety (*devotio moderna*) influenced him deeply. He then studied law at Heidelberg, Padua, and Cologne, becoming an expert in canon law. Having practiced law for several years, he studied theology and became a priest. He attended the Council of Basel in 1432 in the name of his bishop. Originally a supporter of Conciliarism, he entered the service of Pope Eugenius IV in 1437 because he considered that only this Pope could guarantee the unity of the church at that time. He was sent as a papal envoy on missions to Constantinople and later to ecclesiastical diets in Germany. Made a cardinal in 1448, he engaged in reforming the monasteries in Germany and the Netherlands. When he was appointed Bishop of Brixen he became involved in a political conflict with Sigismund, Duke of Tyrol, who finally forced Nicholas to resign. Nicholas of Cusa died in 1464 in Umbria and was buried in Rome.

The rich library that he bequeathed to the hospital of his hometown, Cues, testifies to the scholarship of Nicholas of Cusa. He actively took part in the classical studies of his humanist contemporaries. Besides many sermons

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and a rich theological literature, he composed philosophical treatises, which reveal him as one of the most potent and inspiring thinkers of his time. His central issue, as discussed in his main work, *De Docta Ignorantia (On Learned Ignorance)*, was the problem of the knowledge of God or of the Absolute Infinite.

Nicholas held that the Absolute Infinite cannot be conceived by finite thought. Hence, in theology, only negations can be assumed as true. Although positive theological statements are inevitable in order to think about God, they are inadequate. Paradoxically, one can reach the incomprehensible God only by knowing his incomprehensibility. This is the meaning of the term “learned ignorance.” In the end, both negative and positive theology must be dissolved into inexpressibility; God is ineffable beyond all affirmations and negations. This is the extreme climax of a philosophical theology where the infinite distance between God and the finite has come to a head. More exactly, human beings cannot touch God through knowledge at all, but at the very most only by our yearning for Him.

Nicholas of Cusa calls infinity “absolute,” as it must be understood in a full and unrestrained sense. Hence, the sphere of an independent and self-sufficient finite cannot exist beside it, otherwise infinity itself would actually be finite and restricted. “There cannot be an opposite to the ineffable Infinite,” says Nicholas. “It is also not the whole, to whom a part could be opposed, nor can it be a part... The Infinite is above all that.” (*De Visione Dei*, VIII¹) Above all opposites, the Infinite—God—is beyond all multitude as well. Thus, Nicholas calls Him the “Absolute Unity and Oneness,” which is prior to all and includes all. In this sense, he speaks of God as the “coincidence of opposites.” Everything is enveloped in God and developed in the universe, though God must not become mingled with the finite reality in any way. “You, O God, are the antithesis of opposites, because you are infinite; and because you are infinite, you are infinity. In infinity, the antithesis of opposites is without antithesis... Infinity does not tolerate any otherness beside itself; for, as it is infinity, nothing is external to it. The Absolute Infinite includes all and encompasses all.” (*De Visione Dei*, VIII)

The term “coincidence of opposites” is the best known of all the phrases Nicholas of Cusa coined. Even people who have no idea of his philosophy are sometimes familiar with this term. But Nicholas not only played an important role as an actor in church policies and an inspiring natural scientist, as a theologian and philosopher in his own time; he was not only a great thinker at the boundary of the Middle Ages and modern times who overthrew scholasticism; he also greatly influenced the course of theology and philosophy for centuries to come. Being himself indebted in many respects to the traditions of ancient Platonism, especially to the school of the Neo-Platonist Proclus and to the teachings of the medieval German and Dutch mystic Master Eckhart,

his own concept of the Infinite exercised a strong influence upon Giordano Bruno, upon Spinoza, and finally upon German classical idealism. Through the wide distribution of his ideas—chiefly through Giordano Bruno—he prepared the way, though unintentionally, for the Reformation.

1. *Nicholas of Cusa and Paul Tillich*

In our time, his traces can be found, for example, in the thought of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and more importantly, Paul Tillich. Tillich engaged his mind with Nicholas from his Licentiate thesis up to his *History of Christian Thought*, though he never explicitly quoted him. However, Tillich admitted that this medieval thinker had greatly occupied his thought. He asserted that the method of the *coincidentia oppositorum* is essential to all metaphysics. The idea that the infinite is present at each point of the finite, according to Tillich, pervades modern times since Nicholas of Cusa. Moreover, the “coincidence of opposites” may be seen in analogy to Luther’s doctrine of justification. Tillich maintains that the concept of both thinkers totally differs from the usual opinion that God is in heaven and only acts in the world by means of his deeds. Both considered the relationship between God and the world as interpenetrating. The Divine is present in all that is natural and human. It is not a realm transcending life, but a dimension of life itself, claims Tillich.

Striking evidence of the influence of Nicholas of Cusa is found in Tillich’s essay *Gläubiger Realismus (On Faithful Realism)*. In that essay, Tillich asserts that the ultimate mightiness of Being, the Ground of reality, exists in concrete situations and reveals the immeasurable depth and the eternal meaning of the present. But this can only be conceived paradoxically, that is by means of faith; for presence itself is neither conditional nor eternal. The more it is seen in the light of the unconditional, the more it shows itself as questionable and devoid of eternal meaning. Thus, the mightiness of reality will be both affirmed and negated if it becomes transparent to the ground of its mightiness, the ultimately Real.

Pointing out the philosophical background of his theology in 1960, Tillich explicitly confesses his indebtedness to Nicholas of Cusa, whom he called his “master.” He asserts that the unity of infinite and finite is the fundamental principle of his doctrine of religious experience. However, he realizes the danger that human beings may develop the false feeling of dwelling in the center of the Infinite itself. So the real nature of finite reason must also be emphasized, as Tillich asserts in his *Systematic Theology*. Learned ignorance not only accepts the finiteness of reason, but also is unable to comprehend its immeasurable ground. By acknowledging this condition, however, one will also perceive the Infinite, which is present in all finite being, though transcending it. The way in which the unfathomable ground is present in all

being is the “coincidence of opposites.” Thus, the problem of the unity of the Infinite and the finite has kept both thinkers busy. Tillich’s theology of correlation would have been unthinkable without the influence of Nicholas of Cusa. To this day, Tillich represents the climax in the efficacious history of the thought which Nicholas of Cusa had initiated. I propose that the ideas of Nicholas of Cusa can also revitalize contemporary theology in many ways.

2. *Nicholas of Cusa and Unification Thought*

In the following I want to examine whether the concept of unity as formulated by Nicholas of Cusa may explain or even clarify Unification thought. I recall that the Divine Principle uses Asian models to illustrate the relationship between God, the world and human beings, namely the polarity of *yang* and *yin*—in Korean, of *yang* and *eum*—and the corresponding structure of *sungsang* and *hyungsang*. This way of making originally Christian doctrines indigenous and of implanting them into another cultural context prompts critics of Unification thought to judge it as syncretism. One might ask whether Nicholas of Cusa did the same when taking into service Neo-Platonic philosophy, though not in the same way. Many Westerners are doubtless fascinated by ideas from the Far East. However, it is very likely that their understanding of the Eastern mentality is inadequate, even though they may not at all be aware of the fact. Their lack of understanding is not simply caused by a lack of knowledge; one probably has to ‘breathe Asian air’ to completely understand the Asian mind and mentality. So it might be helpful for Westerners to delineate the Principle in a way that is more indebted to Western culture, as Dr. Young Oon Kim has done in her way. I want to propose that Nicholas of Cusa and his conceptions may be able to clarify the Principle and to reveal to Westerners a richness which might hitherto have been concealed.

Nicholas of Cusa and Sun Myung Moon have in common the passion for unity in many aspects of life. Their concern is far from being a mere theoretical enterprise. I would like to call to mind the fact that Nicholas conceived his idea of the “coincidence of opposites” when he sailed back from a mission in Constantinople. It was not just the majestic experience of the Mediterranean Sea that stimulated Nicholas to think of God as the Absolute Infinite embracing all things. He was also animated by his wish to unite humankind in a common belief. He painfully felt that humanity was divided, and passionately tried to find a common base for belief in Christianity, Judaism and Islam. In this context, one of his later treatises must be studied, entitled *Cribatio Alkorani (Examining the Koran)*, written between 1460 and 1461. Of course, Nicholas of Cusa was endeavoring to preserve or restore ecclesiastical unity, for example, the reconciliation of Conciliarism and papal supremacy. All this proves that the idea of the coincidence of opposites did

not arise merely from scholarly reasoning, but from practical affairs. In a similar way, Sun Myung Moon is concerned with the unity of religions, with the unity of the sciences, of science and religion, of economy and religion, and the unity of all mankind in peace.

3. Significance of Numbers

There is another striking similarity between Nicholas of Cusa and Moon which perhaps appears odd to a modern Western mind: both have a decided liking for the symbolism of numbers.

According to the Divine Principle, the numbers two, three and four are of particular importance. There is a polarity within God: the relationship between His *sungsang*, which represents His mind, and His *hyungsang*, which means His external attributes and the origin of substance and form of all created beings. Man, who is created in the image of God, and all things, which resemble God symbolically, are in a similar polar position, in a reciprocal relationship of giving and receiving. Within this “give-and-take action” all beings are in reciprocal *subject-object* positions. The origin of both subject and object and their resulting union set up four beings, with each taking a subject relationship to the other three. Thus, the *three objects standard* is formed. When God as the origin of all, the divided subject and object, and their union accomplish their three objects standard, they build a *four-position foundation*. This foundation finally involves six different give-and-take relationships. I quote *Outline of the Principle, Level 4*:

The four position foundation is also the basis of the frequent use of the numbers *three, four, seven, and twelve* in the Bible and the dispensation for restoration... The four-position foundation must be established through the three-stage process of origin-division-union action. Since the realization of the four-position foundation is through a three-stage process, there are also three stages in the growing period... and “three” is the number that represents completion. From a structural point of view, the four-position foundation consists of four elements. This is the basis for the number ‘four’ symbolizing the structure required for the realization of God’s ideal.

Since the four-position foundation consists of four different elements and is realized through a three-stage process, it is also the basis for the frequent symbolic use of the numbers “seven” and “twelve.” “Twelve” is also the number of different directions of movement, in the give and take relationships between the four entities in the four-position foundation. The numbers ‘seven’ and ‘twelve’ represent perfection or completion of the four-position foundation.²

The bias of Nicholas of Cusa to the world of numbers was not only due to his studies of biblical symbolism. He was deeply interested in mathematics and attached great value and certainty to mathematical knowledge. Having intensively contemplated the issue of infinity, he is considered to be an important primogenitor of infinitesimal calculus.

Let us take a look at his thought on the meaning of numbers. A number, according to Nicholas, is the peculiar image of the unity of man's mind. Numbers are the first product of human reason. Man has called them into being as God did with His creations. Through numbers, it becomes evident that the human mind has the power to virtually create. Without numbers, our spirit is unable to conceive of anything. No composition could be known; yet all finite things are compositions. Their parts must be countable.

Some numbers of a series, according to Nicholas, have by nature a specific symbolical meaning. If we add to the number "one" one unit after the other, we could proceed to infinity. However, after reaching the number "four," we come to a certain completion, to a particular end of development. $1 + 2 + 3 + 4$ add up to 10. With "ten," the natural power of the first unity is unfolded. With a similar procedure we reach the next unity of this kind: $10 + 20 + 30 + 40$ adding up to 100, and again $100 + 200 + 300 + 400$ adding up to 1,000.

Among all numbers, the number 1 has a particular significance. It is not only the first unity in a long chain, but the basis of all. All other numbers issue from 1. But the number 1 itself is not the basis of a square or a cube; 1×1 is still 1, nothing else. If we consider the relationship between these numbers, we see that the number 10 is, as demonstrated above, derived from 1. 10 is the square root of 100 and the cube root of 1,000. In each operation, we sum up to *four* numbers. There are, however, only three essential operations. The rest is repetition. (Cf. *De Coniecturis* I n. 3, 10-11.)

4. Unity, Polarity, and Trinity

By means of the symbolic content of numbers, which Nicholas had so derived, he demonstrated four metaphysical levels. The first is the highest and simplest spirit, God. The second level is the realm of intelligence. This metaphysical unity corresponds to number 2, which does not contain a mathematical root but is the square root of the number 4. By further involution Nicholas locates the soul and, finally, corporeal being. It would be going too far here to report the corresponding calculations, which, of course, may be puzzling, and I am afraid that the reader might become bored. To put it briefly: by means of arithmetical potentiating Nicholas demonstrates the way of development from the unique "one" to an increasing multitude. Multitude means a lack of one-

ness and a loss of power. Again by arithmetical consideration, Nicholas demonstrates that the process of development, on reaching its utmost completion, is by its inner nature bound back to the original “one.”

In order to discern the different unities, Nicholas introduces the term “otherness” (*alteritas*). What does this term mean? The highest unity is only one. To all other unities the otherness increasingly accumulates. The outcome of otherness is multitude, diversity, divisibility and transitoriness. Again, Nicholas demonstrates this in a mathematical way. A descent from the highest form of unity proceeds by adding otherness to oneness. This process results in ever more divisibility and separation into opposites in all created entities. Nevertheless, there is no being without any unity. Unity brings about the coincidence of opposites in each being. It is because of unity that beauty requires diversity. It is not that multiplicity and variety cause beauty; rather, beauty is the coincidence of the diverse entities in harmony. This coincidence, however, occurs at differing levels. In accordance with the measure of otherness, there is a series of levels or a hierarchy of coincidences in created entities.

Among all numbers with symbolic meaning, two of them have a particular significance: the numbers 1 and 3. *One* is indivisible; it contains no root; it is the basis of all other numbers; and is the fundamental unity in all. And, as we have seen, there are only *three* operations to bring every process of unfolding to a certain completion (i.e. the processes from 1 to 10, from 10 to 100, and from 100 to 1,000). According to Nicholas, both the numbers 1 and 3 are the most important tools to explain the world and to disclose the relationship between God and creation. His most significant categories are *unity* and *trinity*.

At first glance, it seems that the Divine Principle essentially differs from this system of symbolic numbers. It looks like Nicholas of Cusa and Sun Myung Moon, in this respect, have nothing in common. The Divine Principle presumes polarity to be the structure of all. Polarity presupposes duality and, consequently, otherness. Polarity is even in God Himself, namely between the Original *sungsang*, which represents the mind of God and embraces emotional and intellectual forces as well, and the Original *hyungsang*, which means God’s external attributes and is the origin of the substance and form of all creatures. They are related to one another as subject and object because they are involved in a give-and-take action. The subject–object relationship is founded in God Himself and is all-pervasive. Hence, otherness seems to be a reality even within God. According to the Divine Principle, there is undoubtedly a grading in creation. The reason for this is that man was created in the image of God, while all other things resemble God symbolically and thus are only symbolic substantial objects of God. But the grading is not apparently conditioned by the increase of otherness in creation. To sharpen the issue: the Divine Principle marks out a fundamental *polarity*, while Nicholas of Cusa

passionately maintained primordial *oneness*. Both positions seem to contradict each other.

There is one more problem: Nicholas tries to combine the absolute oneness of God with a Trinitarian conception. (We shall later see whether he succeeds without self-contradiction.) A Trinitarian perspective, as understood by mainstream Christianity, however, does not appear to be acceptable to Unification thought. Indeed, Young Oon Kim, in her *Unification Theology*, points out that “the myth of the incarnate God” cannot be found in the New Testament and, thus, creedal Trinitarianism appears to be inadequate. She ends up by stating: “Let us therefore conclude with a distinctively Unificationist teaching.”³³ With Unificationists she believes in a triune God above us, with us and in us. Moreover, she concedes a Trinitarian way in the history of salvation: “Because *Divine Principle* is especially concerned with the restoration of the divine sovereignty over creation, we stress the Trinitarian way by which the kingdom of heaven will be established upon earth... Restoration, then, can take place when a triadic relationship of love and respect is established between a new Adam and Eve based upon their God-centeredness.”³⁴

In my opinion, one has to emphasize that in Unification Thought a triad can also be seen prior to restoration “within” God Himself. There is not alone a polarity. As the *Outline of the Principle, Level 4* puts it, it should be stressed, “God’s Original Sung Sang and Original Hyung Sang do not exist as independent entities, but in harmonious reciprocal relationship with one another.”³⁵ We must accordingly assume a third datum: a “reciprocal relationship,” i.e. a movement *between*. Polarity in its dynamic force actually does not mean duality, but more exactly, a triad. We can also perceive a triad among created entities: subject and object and a third: the give-and-take action between, which reflects the “Universal Prime Force” and is sustained by it.

Following this line of thought, we come very close to the Trinitarian conception of Nicholas of Cusa. Following St. Augustine, he distinguishes between *unitas*, *aequalitas* and *conexio*, unity–equality–connection. He traces a triad structure everywhere in creation that, in his opinion, hints at the Holy Trinity. And he is concerned to demonstrate the Trinity in a dynamic way: he emphasizes that “Unity generates the equality of unity, and the connection comes forth from unity and the equality of unity.” (*De Docta Ignorantia*, I, 16) Unity is always equality in relation to itself. And unity and equality are interrelated. In this way, Nicholas tries to conceive of unity and Trinity being closely connected, moreover as identical.

In restatements, he also speaks of “undividedness, differentiation and connection”: “Where distinction is indistinctness, there trinity is unity, and vice versa: where indistinctness is distinction, there unity is trinity.” (*Sermon IV, h XVI*) Thus, unity and Trinity are the same in certain regards. The con-

nection between both is love, as Nicholas explains elsewhere (*De Visione Dei*, XVII). Or to put it in the words of the Divine Principle: the connection is giving and receiving. So Nicholas also expressively exposes the triad of the loving, lovable and their connection, *amans, amabilis et nexus*. In this context, he sometimes speaks of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as he also does in his sermons. But it might be astonishing to realize that Nicholas of Cusa, a cardinal in the Roman Church, is very reserved toward the Trinitarian language of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, when he remarks that those who use these names are less close to the Trinity than those who “call the Trinity unity, equality and nexus.” (*Directio Speculantis Seu de non Aliud*, 13)

5. Seeking the Face and Heart of God

Following this train of thought, you might suspect that Nicholas of Cusa was nothing but an extreme rationalist. On the contrary he was a fervent mystic. I mentioned above that he was deeply influenced by the so-called *devotio moderna* of the Brethren of Deventer. And he remained a man of emotional piety for his whole life. If his language appears to be very abstract, the reason for this is that he was always anxious to attach finite attributes to the Infinite. However, God must be infinite, if He is the object of the deepest yearning of our heart, which is restless as long as it has not reached its goal of infinite bliss. Nicholas is almost obsessed to prevent this truth from becoming obscured. This is why his language seems to be so abstract and without emotional fervor.

But we should note that in Nicholas’s frequent use of analogies, he does not limit himself to those of mathematical nature. Often he illustrates his thoughts with images of daily life. He always takes the particular character of his audience into account, and thus was a popular preacher and a favorite even among rural uneducated persons. When the monks of the monastery of Tegernsee, for whom Nicholas was a very close friend, asked him for a treatise on the knowledge of God, he sent them an essay entitled *De Visione Dei* (*On God’s View*), that was to become one of his most famous dissertations. The genitive case of the title must be understood in a subjective sense and an objective as well. ‘God’s view’ means how God looks upon us and also how we look upon Him.

To illustrate his thoughts, Nicholas added to his essay the painting “The All-Seeing Eye” by Roger van Weiden. He invited the monks to regard the painting from different positions. When they change their point of view, they get the impression that God is still casting His gaze upon them. When they move, God’s eye accompanies them. Furthermore, a spectator gets the impression that God is looking at him and him alone. In the accompanying text, Nicholas praises God for His eternal gaze:

Your seeing, my Lord, is loving; and as You do not take your eyes off me, You do not avert Your love, because Your love is always with me and is nothing else than You Yourself loving me. That is why You are always with me, my Lord; You do not leave me. You keep and preserve me from all sides, because You care for me with utmost attention. Your Being, O Lord, does not leave my being. As far as You are with me, thus far I exist. And as Your seeing is Your Being, I am because You look upon me. If You avert Your eyes from me, I would not survive at all. But I know that Your look is the utmost goodness, which cannot but communicate itself to all who are capable. Therefore, You cannot leave me as long as I am capable of receiving You. It is up to me to make myself ever more capable for You. But I know that this capability, which is the presupposition of union, is nothing but similitude. Incapability results from dissimilitude. When I have made myself similar to Your goodness in all possible ways, I shall conceive the truth in accordance with the degree of this similitude. (I, 6).

This is the language of praise and prayer. After an introduction, Nicholas uses this language exclusively throughout this book. When addressing God by words, he dares to be very concrete. If we attentively consider the quotation, we shall note that, according to Nicholas, the movement of God's eyes is not only caused by our imagination: He in fact looks upon me; and His gaze really follows me. At the same time, His view is nothing but calm. Since His view is identical with His love, the movement of His eyes is not external but essential to God, as is love. By His look we came to be. And we only exist as long as God looks upon us. Our sight of him is also made possible by His look; and it evokes our love for Him. Thus, there is a mutual relationship between God's loving and merciful gaze and our view of Him and our love.

But Nicholas asserts that abstract reasoning can never result in seeing God: "Whoever strives to see Your face is as far away from it as his concept. For each concept of a face is less than Your face, and all beauty that can be imagined is less than the beauty of Your face." (I, 6) Furthermore, there cannot be a direct view of God anyhow in our present life. We can compare this situation with the light of the sun. It can be seen as it reflects, for example in the stars and the colors. But if you try to look into the face of the sun directly, your eye may darken. "The deeper it recognizes the darkness, the more surely it reaches the invisible light in the darkness. By this and no other way, O Lord, is it possible to arrive at the unreachable light, the beauty, and shine of Your face." (I, 6)

But how is it possible that so many persons try to see God, and God sees them all and each of them? A preacher, Nicholas of Cusa states, can be seen by numerous people, but he cannot see them all individually. For God, it is quite different: in Him, such interrelations as to see and to be seen, to hear and to be heard, to touch and to be touched, to savor and to be savored, are

one. The future and the past coincide in the present. In this way, Nicholas introduces the monks to the mystery of the coincidence of opposites. He guides them to the insurmountable “wall of paradise” which is “guarded by an angel,” where coincidence takes place and where God dwells.

According to Nicholas, it is logically necessary to assume such coincidence. For the infinite God tolerates neither any otherness nor contrary. Otherwise His infinity would only be a *privative* infinity, which means an infinity that is only factually without confines and, therefore, may not yet have reached its bounds and, thus, might have otherness outside itself; it does not *positively* exclude any limits. God’s infinity includes all. All that is finite and opposite is the development (*explicatio*) of what God has enveloped in Himself. Nevertheless, God is not simply the coincidence of opposites, as a pantheistic interpretation may suggest. The absolute unity of God is truly “beyond the wall of coincidence,” as Nicholas sometimes puts it. But he hesitates somewhat to put it this way. Probably, he is anxious that God might be misunderstood as the contrary of the coincidence of opposites. In this case, the coincidence would mean otherness in God, which Nicholas consistently rejects. So he mostly speaks just of the coincidence of opposites. Yet God’s unity is the primordial unity that precedes the coincidence of opposites. This primordial unity is, however, not conceived as being separated from the world and lying within itself, but is conceived of as a unity that unifies all.

The last essay of Nicholas of Cusa, *De Apice Theoriae (On the Summit of Vision)*, written one year before his death, reports a dialogue with Peter von Erkelenz. He asked therein if there is a particular name for the reality “beyond the wall of coincidence.” The term *ability-itself (posse ipsum)* had now become decisive for Nicholas. In contrast to the concept of infinity, the relatedness of ability-itself to the created world can be better shown. Ability-itself not only means the ability to do this or that, but the ability behind those abilities. Its character is dynamic. This force “behind the wall” empowers the abilities to love, to think, to want and to plan, etc. “Ability without further attributes” describes the ground of all abilities. Nicholas of Cusa ends his essay by stating: “This is the bliss that alone satisfies the highest longing of the spirit.”

Is there anything in Unification Thought that may correspond to “ability-itself” as conceived by Nicholas of Cusa? I think that the position and function of the term is represented by “God’s Heart” in Unification Thought. Heart is the inner kernel of God’s nature. It is not only beyond the Original *Hyungsang*, God’s external attributes, which include the Universal Prime Energy and matter, but also the Original *Sungsang*, which embraces emotion, intellect and will and as well law and concepts. “The most essential of God’s internal characteristics is heart,” as *Outline* puts it.⁶ In a footnote, the *Outline of the Principle* explains:

Heart (*shimjung* in Korean) is the essence of God's personality—the essence of His *sung-sang*. Heart is the most vital part of His nature, such that all other attributes in Him are what they are and act solely because of this attribute. Heart is the impulse to love and to be united in love with the objects of its love. For this reason, heart is said to be the source of love, and at the same time is the chief motive behind love. God's heart has within itself its own purpose; so it is through God's love, through His heart, that the Principle (*logos*) is expressed and the creation comes into being and achieves fulfillment.⁷

Regrettably, this text of Divine Principle gives only a footnote remark on the issue of the Heart of God. I think that it is greatly desirable to contemplate God's Heart more intensively, if only to refute a certain critique of Unification theology. Some critics maintain that there is a rupture within the Unification doctrine of creation. This doctrine is said to be on the one hand fundamentally monistic. Creation is but the edge of God himself. They usually refer to such statements in *Divine Principle* as, "Before creating the universe, God existed as the internal masculine subject, and He created the universe as his external feminine object;" and, "We have learned so far that each and every creation is God's substantial object, which is the manifested form of the invisible essentialities of God."⁸ They assert, on the other hand, that there is a break between an impersonal Asian creation principle and the biblical personal Creator, one that cannot be bridged. I think that the best way to confront this accusation is to delineate the nature of Heart, which, as I understand it, transcends the Original *Sungsang* and the consequent process of origin-division-union action. It is the personal source of all.

In the second, 1987 edition of her *Unification Theology*, Young Oon Kim added a chapter on the Heart of God. This chapter is certainly a fine piece. But Kim only centers on God's feeling and asserts that all theological deliberation must start with this. She does not feel at ease with the traditional attribute of God's omnipotence. She obviously associates this term with apathy or impassibility. Therefore, she pleads for the conception of a God who is concerned and shares the feeling of our loneliness and intense grief, and who can be hurt by afflictions.

Kim certainly knows that the biblical term 'heart' (*lev* in Hebrew) means the core of a person and embraces all inner forces such as emotion, intelligence and will as well. In contrast to Dr. Kim, the short footnote mentioned above refers to the Heart of God in this broader context: "Heart is the most vital part of His nature, such that all other attributes in Him are what they are and act solely because of this attribute." All other attributes whatsoever are conditioned and sustained by this force. The expression "the most vital part of His nature" comes very close to the "ability-itself" of Nicholas of Cusa, which imparts the power of existence, life and love to creation. Nicholas also avoids

the use of the term “omnipotence” and even the concept “potency.” He deliberately chooses the verb form instead of the substantive, *posse* instead of *potentia*. Nicholas not only aims to name the maximum power to do something and all, but also to name the ability to be affected and even to suffer. “For with God nothing is impossible.” (Luke 1:37)

But how can absolute and infinite ability be affected by finite creatures? Ability-itself suffers and sees all in the ground and source of all abilities, that is, in itself. In other words: If God endures all in Himself, where all is enveloped, and if there is no otherness in God, because it would contradict His infinity, as mentioned above, then God senses and suffers all sufferings within Himself, who is the Non-other (*non-aliud*). Grief and pain, then, are not only feelings of *other* beings, but also the emotions of the one who is called the Non-other. Though ability-itself transcends all concrete abilities, it is not separated from them; on the contrary it is within them. Thus, God in His inner core comes as close to His creatures, to their power and weakness, as is thinkable. Nicholas thus pushes the possibility of human thinking so far that it must end up as and turn into adoration.

In my opinion, no Christian theologian comes as close to the Unification doctrine of God and creation as does Nicholas of Cusa. So I would recommend that theologians and philosophers of the Unification Church read and study the work of this scholar, perhaps starting with *De Visione Dei*, the essay I personally like the most. It is, especially, advisable to turn to Nicholas of Cusa, who was a harbinger of a new era in the history of Christian theology and philosophy. Considering that critics of Unification Thought have objected that this religion is but a syncretism between Asian and Protestant thinking and, therefore, a heretical Christian sect, it would seem advisable to demonstrate links to one of the greatest philosophers and theologians in the tradition of mainstream Christianity. Furthermore, he may stimulate Unification philosophers in so far as he was greatly interested in the natural sciences and in mathematics; and Unificationists are themselves concerned with the unity of religion and science.

Notes

- 1 All translations by the author.
- 2 *Outline of the Principle, Level 4* (New York: HSA-UWC, 1980), pp. 21-22.
- 3 Young Oon Kim, *Unification Theology* (New York: HSA-UWC, 1980), p. 205.
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 *Outline of the Principle, Level 4*, p. 11.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 7 *Loc. cit.*
- 8 *Divine Principle* (New York: HSA-UWC, 1973), p. 25.