CHAPTER 5

Tzu-Chi and the 'Moonies': New Religious Movements in Taiwan and South Korea

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Is religion a product of society, merely a human intervention and projection? Is it an impulse? A response perhaps to specific external variables? What happens when two culturally different societies follow similar economic, political, and socio-cultural paths? This latter question forms the basis of this edited volume that explores the similar pathways taken by South Korea (hereinafter Korea) and Taiwan. In the two case studies presented in this chapter, it is argued that new religious movements, or NRMs, are part of the very fabric of modernisation theory. In the absence of state-led welfare, it often falls to grassroots-level organisations to provide assistance - religion playing a key role here. In societies marked by economic imbalance between the rich and the poor (a product of an emerging middle-income group), it is at the grassroots level that more organisations, charities, and foundations tend to form.

In the 1950s and 1960s, in both Korea and Taiwan, the emerging middle-class—which would prove instrumental in the later democratic movements in both locations—would see the establishment of two religiously motivated organisations, the chief aim of one of which is charity. However, both have been accused of engaging in cult-like practices. The Tzu-Chi Foundation founded in Taiwan and the Unification Church (UC) in South Korea have a number of similarities that warrant further investigation.

It may be argued that producing a like-with-like reduces a study to what Marcel Detienne disdainfully called '*comparer l'incomparable*'.[1] Yet, the differences can easily be discerned—Tzu-Chi was founded on the principles of Buddhism, while UC is an interpretation of Christianity. The height of the success of Tzu-Chi was principally found after democratisation.[2] In contrast, the highlight of the UC was during the period of dictatorship. What is more, the Buddhism practised by Tzu-Chi is not esoteric, whereas UC arguably is, since it keeps parts of its doctrine secret from non-members: A practice known as the 'heavenly deception'. Thus, a principal motivation for the comparison lies in the consideration that both were established during a period of high economic growth in the countries on which this edited volume is centred. Both hold their teachings to the concept of 'fallen humanity'. For Tzu-Chi, all humans are considered in essence equal, but it is the human heart that has fallen. For UC, it teaches that humanity has fallen and can only be restored through a messiah (a new Adam). UC argues that Jesus was a messiah, but his execution was premature in that he fathered no children. As a result, this was passed onto Sun Myung Moon (the founder of UC). Both have been accused of being a cult (discussed in more detail below) for the manner in which they have practised their beliefs. It is true that other organisations could have been proposed as a comparative for the study of religion in Korea and Taiwan, and it is important to note that alternatives could have easily been made elsewhere. Good examples could perhaps have been made on the role of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and Korea, or a focus placed on the role of *Juche* in North Korea. An even more rigorous comparison could perhaps have been made in exploring the role of

[1] Marcel Detienne, *Comparer l'incomparable*. *Oserexpérimenter et construire* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2009).
[2] Richard Marsden, *Democracy's Dharma: Religious Renaissance and Political Development in Taiwan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 17.

Conservative Christianity and the American military presence in both locations. A factor, thus, for this comparison lies foremost at the central importance they place on welfare, charity, and international relief efforts.

In Korea and Taiwan, as in other parts of Asia, the two most recognised features of religion are diversity and inclusiveness as people could belong to more than one religion at the same time. This also means that they can seek various advantages from different religions and philosophies—"education from Confucianism, offspring from Buddhism, and protection from dangers and evil forces through the mediation of a shaman.[3]"[4]

Since religion is deeply rooted in many communities in the countries under discussion, it therefore makes sense that faith-based NGOs would be established and begin work in those communities. The problems that are frequently identified revolve around the practice of religious conversion: This is especially true in South Korea and Taiwan, where Buddhism is widely practiced. However, the practices and social performance of Tzu-Chi and the UC are in the minority. This is not to say that religious NGOs play no role as social service providers. On the contrary, evidence shows that a faith-based approach has the ability to develop deeper relationships with communities in the developing world.[5] This ability to foster deep connections should not be overlooked. Faith-based NGOs have the ability to fight for the marginalised. Yet, certain faith-based NGOS—and this is especially true of Christian evangelism—are often conflated with colonialism. Their primary goals being economic and political exploitation and conversion by manipulation. Both the UC and Tzu-Chi offset this to some degree as being non-Western faith-based groups. Nevertheless, the faithful of both organisations have shaped and moulded the socio-political landscape of New Religious Movements (NRMs) in their respective nations. In the context of humanitarianism, religion has been a double-edged sword. Aid can be seen as an entrée to spreading doctrine with specific aid being withheld until specific practices have been stopped. An example of this were the suggested guidelines (no alcohol or meat consumption, no smoking, and no chewing betel nut) that Tzu-Chi imposed on the indigenous communities in the relocation project that followed Typhoon Morokot in Taiwan.[6]

The link between notions of welfare and religious practice is well-documented. Religious groups play a key role in determining how well a country's welfare system has developed.[7] Their reach includes education, medical care, and other social services. In an East Asian context, unlike the dominant European welfare models, they lack uniformity. This is instead frequently centred on informal provision at the community level rooted in strong cultural-religious values.

It is within this provision of welfare that often an individual decides to follow a *Path* and set out a new *Way* to develop spiritualism. In the context of this research, both organisations are peripheral and have been born and socialised from a society's dominant religious culture. As a result, both Tzu-Chi and the UC can trace their roots to part of a wider religion, while remaining distinct from pre-existing denominations. These NRMs either push for embracing individualism and the idea of individual responsibility (as in the case of Tzu-Chi) or they seek a tightly knit collective ideal (the UC). Since they are built upon a religious base, they frequently face a hostile reception from other religious organisations and secular

[3] While the role of the shaman in Korea is mostly hereditary and performed by women, the case in Taiwan is different, the shamans are mostly men.

[4] Peter Clarke, *New Religions in Global Perspective* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 292.

[5] Wendy Tyndale, "Idealism and Practicality: The Role of Religion in Development," in *Development* 46, no. 4 (2003).

[6] Chiaoning Su, "An Alternative Chronicle of Natural Disaster: Social Justice Journalism in Taiwan," *International Journal of Communication* 13 (2019): 3330.

[7] Birgit Rommelspacher, "Religion and Welfare," *European Journal of Social Work* 20, no. 6 (2017).

institutions. The extent of this criticism is generally over the lack of agency given to its members. In other words, they are perceived as having been indoctrinated and are members not by their own choosing by rather through a process of coercion.

The phrase 'exercising excessive control over members'[8] is often found in the standard dictionary definition of the word 'cult'. The sinister connotation and the lack of a standard usage makes the claim of cult difficult to define.[9] This lack of a common denominator makes an analysis of UC and Tzu-Chi as being cult-like a mooted line of enquiry. Yet the criteria used by Campbell[10] addresses three markers: (1) deviance (2) individualism, and (3) mysticism. It is here that this chapter can address the similarities between UC and Tzu-Chi in the context of accusations made against them. Before doing so, it is important to note that when referring to 'cult' in a theological rather than a sociological sense, typically the term is applied to all religious movements with which a writer disagrees. This is typical of Christian writers who apply the term 'sect' or 'cult' synonymously to separate the 'my church' from 'your church' concept.[11] A key factor for a number of concerns would be the issue of 'influence'. Moreover, not all would demonstrate intolerance of other faith systems. In the case of Tzu-Chi, as a cultural institution in Taiwan, there have been attempts on the part of Tzu-Chi to mould Taiwanese society in its own moral image, while maintaining a degree of tolerance for other faith systems, particularly the Abrahamic religions. Membership, however, is counted on the regularity of donation. The accusations, thus, come largely from the claim of having four million members in Taiwan, and, therefore, an ability to exert significant social and political influence. The allegations of being cult-like generally refer to the recruitment of volunteers and doctors in their hospitals not on merit, but rather on how they display appreciation for the group's founder, Cheng Yen, and on the size of their donations.[12] It is in the enactment of their mysticism and the individualised prostration to the founder, coupled with coerced donations that centres the accusations of it being cult-like or having cult-like practices. The charisma of the group's leadership and the ability to attract converts on a significant scale is important. Yet when this clashes and disrupts traditional socio-cultural concepts of family ties and values, this leads to accusations of indoctrination and brainwashing. This is especially true in the cult labelling of the UC. The allegations made against the UC are far more numerous than those against Tzu-Chi. Stories of being 'brainwashed' blossomed in the 1970s as people (mainly in the United States) spoke out on the 'cult problem' and 'cult techniques of recruitment' employed by the UC.[13]

Societal responses to NRMs are revealing. They highlight the difficulties of state regulation of religious practice and religious NGOs. This is particularly true in cases when the NRMs threaten perceived values and institutional structures, as was the case of the UC in the 1970s. Resistance was perhaps inevitable given the fear that change initiated by these movements would threaten existing power structures. Most notable is the role of the media. To give an example, in 1981, the UC sued the *Daily Mail* for libel against their accusation that they ended marriages and brainwashed converts. The case was dismissed by the court, and this resulted in a decline in UC activities within the UK.[14]

In a book that assesses the landscape of the studies of Korea and Taiwan, this chapter brings a comparison of two NRMs in the study of links between religion and welfare. In so

[8] Oxford English Dictionary 2013
[9] Colin Campbell, "Clarifying the Cult," *The British Journal of Sociology* 28, no. 3 (1977): 377.
[10] Campbell, "Clarifying," 379
[11] Geoffrey Nelson, *Cults, New Religions and Religious Creativity* (London: Routledge, 1987), 116.
[12] Pau Pernghwa Kung, "A Curious Case in Tzu Chi Foundation's Recent Scandal," *Part News*, accessed 17 May, 2019 (2015), https://partnews.mit.edu/2015/03/17/a-curious-case-in-tzu-chi-foundations-recent-scandal/.
[13] David G. Bromley, and Anson D. Shupe Jr., *'Moonies' in America: Cult, Church and Crusade* (London: Sage, 1979), 211.
[14] Geoffrey Nelson, *Cults, New Religions and Religious Creativity* (London: Routledge, 1987), 117.

doing, it argues that both Tzu-Chi and the UC were founded during a period of rapid economic growth and in the welfare needs of the accompanying growing gap between those that have and those that have not.

Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation

Dharma Master Cheng Yen was the religious innovator of the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation. Since its founding in 1966, the foundation's mission has been to make a humanistic contribution to the improvement of social and community services, while providing medical care and education, both within Taiwan and abroad. Its role, therefore, is similar to that of Christian Aid in Taiwan's post-war period.[15] It was founded on 'the two-cent savings' model, which encouraged homemakers (predominately women) to put aside a bit from their daily grocery money. In many ways, this means that the active participants, who call themselves *huiyuan,* are part of an organisation that, in its initial form, was similar to the mutual-aid associations that provided support to local communities. These were common elite-driven social organisations that arose in a number of developing countries, and their formation was in part prompted by insufficient state-led public support programmes.[16] It is from this phenomenon that the religious movement now has volunteers in 50 countries, with 502 offices globally.

The core belief of those running the foundation is that suffering is not caused by material deprivation, but rather by spiritual poverty. During a period of high economic growth in the 1970s and 1980s, relative poverty (defined as the number of households receiving 50 percent less income than the average household) increased, whereas absolute poverty did not. This can be described as 'relative deprivation' since the people living in this category are not living in abject poverty, but rather than enjoying the exact same standard of living, they lack specific provisions.[17] This could be a television, clean clothes, or access to specific kinds of education. This state of deprivation could be permanent. Specific families that are trapped in a low-income category would stand no chance of social mobility. The emphasis for Tzu-Chi was not to look at material gain, but rather spiritual enlightenment. The term 'help the poor and educate the rich' was thus a guiding principle. By focusing on aid, Tzu-Chi employ what they refer to as the 'Four Major Missions': Charity, Medicine, Education, and Humanity. If we add to that the ongoing efforts in bone marrow donation, environmental protection, volunteerism, and international relief, these eight campaigns are collectively known as 'Tzu Chi's Eight Footprints'.

The emphasis on the rejection of economic materialism and its replacement with a collectivist lifestyle reinforces the mystical notions. A core belief of Tzu-Chi is that it is only possible for the rich to find happiness and meaning in life when they give to the poor. There is, therefore, a subsequent understanding that this would then translate downwards to the poor being motivated to help those even less fortunate than them. This downward giving is not always financial (though donations to the foundation are compulsory for uniformed volunteers). Often this is done by non-uniformed volunteers (*weiyuan* commissioners) who collect donations and distribute resources in hospitals and other day-care hospices. Volunteers

[15] Niki J.P. Alsford, "We Believe in Life Before Death: The Christian Aid Movement in Taiwan, 1970–78," *Journal of Historical Archaeology & Anthropological Sciences* 3, no. 2 (2018a).
[16] Niki J.P. Alsford, *Transitions to Modernity: The Spirit of 1895 and the Cession of Formosa to Japan* (London: Routledge, 2018b).
[17] Gordon J. Melton, "Unification Church," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed 28 December 2019 (2017) https://www.britannica.com/topic/Unification-Church.

would often wear vests to indicate their role, and they may be accompanied by the blue-and-white clad uniformed volunteers, the *weiyuan*).

The medical mission side of Tzu-Chi was founded in 1972 by Cheng Yen. Opened as the Tzu-Chi Free Clinic for the Poor, it took on a role similar to the Presbyterian Church medical missions of the late nineteenth century.[18] In 1986, the Hualien Tzu-Chi General Hospital opened, and this was later followed by hospitals in Yuli, Guanshan, Dalin, Taipei, and Taichung. To foster the development of future medical professionals who share the moral collective ideals of the foundation, Cheng Yen established the Tzu Chi Nursing College in 1989. This college had a particular focus on addressing the lack of employment opportunities for indigenous women in eastern Taiwan. In July 2000, Tzu-Chi formally completed its education mission by establishing a series of programmes that offered a complete curriculum, from preschool to university. The objective of Tzu-Chi schools is to enhance collective moral value based on the principles of the foundation.

These values, according to Tzu-Chi, are based on its mission of 'Humanistic Culture' that is designed to purify the human mind and pacify society.[19] Its mission is to create 'a new history for mankind' (Tzu-Chi Organisation, Mission of Humanistic Culture). This culture is predicated on compassion. Often in the spirit of *daai* (Great Love), the principal culture for Tzu-Chi is self-cultivation.[20] The charisma of leadership, however, means that principally all literature on the methods of self-cultivation and on the interpretations and practices of religious teachings is written by its founder, Cheng Yen. This means that uniformity exists in what are defined as the moral values of the movement.[21] Much like the UC, it is this charismatic leadership that has aided in the group's transnational mobilisation efforts. Tzu-Chi is able to provide goods and services that states, and private companies have been unable, or unwilling, to provide.

On the night of April 29, 1991, one of the deadliest tropical cyclones recorded struck the Chittagong district of south-eastern Bangladesh, with wind speeds reaching 155 mph. The storm killed 138,866 people and left as many as 10 million homeless. The global emergency response to this marked Tzu-Chi's first international relief effort. Beyond the donation of food and clothing, Tzu-Chi aided in the rebuilding of houses and schools, connecting these to a water supply, and setting up medical clinics. Given its origins as a local charity in Taiwan,[22] Tzu Chi is considered a broad-based humanitarian organisation. In 2003, it became the first non-government organised charity group in Taiwan to attain association status within the United Nations Department of Information. According to Lee and Han,[23] there has been a recognisable shift in the way that two of Tzu-Chi's periodicals (*ciji yuekan*, Tzu-Chi Monthly; and *jingdian yuekan* Rhymes Monthly) refer to environmental awareness. There have been a series of shifts in the frequency with which references to environmental protection, recycling, and climate change appear.

'Environmental protection', as a concept, appears first and follows a lecture given by Cheng Yen in 1990. This appears as a result of communal implication, as she stated that Tzu-Chi should concentrate not just on 'teaching the wealthy' and 'assisting the poor', but also on

[18] Niki J.P. Alsford, *Chronicling Formosa: Setting the Foundations for the Presbyterian Mission, 1865–1876* (Taipei: Shung Ye Museum, 2015).
[19] Richard Marsden, *Democracy's Dharma: Religious Renaissance and Political Development in Taiwan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 22.
[20] Arnold Lindros Lau, and Jayeel Serrano Cornelio, "Tzu Chi and the Philanthropy of Filipino Volunteers," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 43: 376.
[21] Marsden, *Democracy's Dharma*, 16.
[22] Yu-Shuang Yao, *Taiwan's Tzu Chi as Engaged Buddhism* (Leiden: Global Oriental, 2012), 1.
[23] Chengpang Lee, and Han Ling, "Recycling Bodhisattva: The Tzu-Chi Movement's Response to Global Climate Change," *Social Compass* 62, no 3 (2015).

promoting the 'task of environmental protection'.[24] This then shifted to the role of 'recycling', and again this had links to the writings of Cheng Yen, who wrote that the goal of environmental protection is living in comfortable and clean neighbourhoods by helping to save resources through the act of frugality and the process of recycling. Today, the average Taiwanese person produces 850 grams of waste per day. This is down from 1.2 kg just 15 years ago. Recycling rates now exceed 50 percent, and many of Taiwan's incinerators run below capacity.[25] The most recent reference in the periodical, according to Han and Lee[26] is 'climate change'. The first reference to this followed Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Cheng Yen urged members to reduce unnecessary consumption in order to lower their carbon footprints. The discourse on environmentalism and climate change within Tzu-Chi clearly follow other global movements. They not only provide a call to action but are also directly involved in environmental practices. In many ways, Tzu-Chi is considered an organisation rather than a religious movement. Having looked at Tzu-Chi in the case of Taiwan, this chapter will next look at Sun Myung Moon and the Unification Church.

Unification Church and Social Welfare

The Unification Church is one of the new religious movements that has generated a great deal of controversy since its establishment, however, it has been also enormously active in all kinds of social, educational, political, and other types of activities, with the stated goal of making a harmonious society. This part of the article presents an analysis of the life and work of its controversial founder, Sun Myung Moon, focusing on the range of UC-affiliated organisations, especially those involved in social welfare, and presenting their purposes and activities. Reverend Moon was well-known as a religious figure; he was also motivated to establish many groups that are not strictly religious in their purposes. Moon was not directly involved with managing the day-to-day activities of the numerous organizations that he indirectly oversaw, yet all of them can attribute the inspiration behind their work to his leadership and teachings.

Although two of the main features of Korean religiosity are diversity and inclusiveness, when Christianity arrived on their shores, it significantly changed the religious outlook. It also reduced the level of multiple religious belonging, as Clark[27] points out. Christianity has become a really influential religion in South Korea, with the number of believers in the various denominations of Catholicism and Protestantism increasing, including the new religious movements. Whenever the discussion turns to new religious movements in Korea, the focus is immediately on the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (HAS-UWC, 1954–1994): a name that was later changed to the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU, 1994–). This organization is, of course, known widely as the Unification Church (UC), or the Moonies, after the name of founder Sun Myung Moon. As such, it is based on one man's charisma.[28] While this is the most widely

[24] Lee and Han, "Recycling Bodhisattva," 3019.
[25] Marcello Rossi, "How Taiwan Has Achived One of the Highest Recycling Rates in the World," *Smithsonian Magazine*, accessed 16 June, 2019, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/how-taiwan-has-achieved-one-highest-recycling-rates-world-180971150/.
[26] Lee and Han, "Recycling Bodhisattva."
[27] Clarke, *New Religions*, 292.
[28] An exact number of members is extremely difficult to obtain. The UC does not publish official statistics for outsiders, explaining that the media may use these statistics against the organization. Membership is estimated at 1–2 million worldwide, with the largest number in Korea, and a US membership of approximately 10 to 30 thousand. (Unification Church History website)

known and discussed Korean movement in the West, the country has several hundred other NRMs,[29] all of which have millenarianism features as a core component of their message.[30]

Unification Church (UC) (T'ongil-gyo) was founded in Korea in May 1954 by the Reverend Sun Myung Moon,[31] who was born into a Presbyterian family in 1920 in what North Korea is today. The UC is also strongly millenarian in orientation, believing that in these last days, the Lord of the Second Advent will appear to complete the mission left unfinished by Christ, and establish the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.[32] Moon claims that, that after praying near Mount Myodu, Jesus Christ appeared to him and asked him to take on a special mission on Earth having to do with Heaven's work. At the beginning of the Korean War (1950–1953) he escaped to the South Korean port city of Pusan and began writing and teaching the Divine Principle. In 1960, he married his second wife, Dr Hak Ja Han Moon, and together they founded an array of religious, academic, educational, arts, and peace organisations working in more than 190 nations (Rev. Sun Myung Moon website). In 1994, Moon declared that the era of the HSA-UWC had ended, and he inaugurated a new organization: the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU). This new group would include HSA-UWC members as well as members of other religious organizations working toward common goals, especially on issues of morality and reconciliation between people of different religions, nations, and races.[33]

Unlike most of the other minor religious groups in Korea, Unificationism was unique in having spread beyond the peninsula's shores: first to Japan and the United States in 1959; in 1972 to the United Kingdom and Europe; and by 1975 a UC presence had been established in 120 nations.[34] The Unification vision of the creation, fall, and restoration of humanity is not unique, however. Robbins[35] presents Reverend Moon's movement as an attempt at a

[29] Another such NRM is the World Mission Society Church of God (WMSCG) which is very similar to the UC in that it involves relief programmes and volunteering. This group has also been very successful in achieving its goals, having been conferred the UK-based Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2016 (WMSCG). WMSCG was established by Ahn Sang-hong in 1964 and claims to have '1.7 million members and established 2,200 local churches in 150 countries in just half a century' (WMSCG 'Home page'). It is also based on the charisma of one man, who even proclaimed himself to be a second Jesus, while also believing in God the Mother, who is his wife herself and living in South Korea. The WMSCG recruits people on the street, later proselytizing to them about their church and their importance in the world. (WMSCG; interview with a member)

[30] Clarke, *New Religions*, 293.

[31] Sun Myung Moon studied engineering, first in Korea and later in Japan, where he became involved in the Korean independence movement and was arrested for his political activities. Moon returned to Korea in 1945 and concentrated on developing the Divine Principle, the UC's most authoritative sacred text (Barker 1984). Moon's ideas were rejected as heretical by Christian groups in the South, so he moved to North Korea to preach his message of the imminent arrival of the Lord of the Second Advent, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth—an activity that was construed by the authorities in the North as espionage on behalf of the South. He was imprisoned and tortured more than once, and even spent time as prisoner No. 596 in the notoriously repressive labour and concentration camp at Hungnam for inciting 'social chaos'. Hungnam was liberated by UN troops at the start of the Korean War in 1950, and Moon fled to Pusan, where he continued preaching. In 1952, he completed the draft of the Divine Principle at Pusan and founded the Unification Church. Soon afterwards, he was imprisoned again, this time for alleged illicit sexual practices, a charge that was later dropped. The UC was given legal status by the South Korean Government in 1963. (Clarke 2006, 296–97)

[32] Clarke, *New Religions*, 296.

[33] see Melton, "Unification Church"; Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, accessed 20 January 2019, http://familyfedihq.org/about/.

[34] Georg D. Chryssides, *The Advent of Sun Myung Moon: The Origins, Beliefs and Practices of the Unification Church*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), 21.

[35] Thomas Robbins, Dick Anthony, Madeline Doucas and Thomas Curtis, "The Last Civil Religion: Reverend Moon and the Unification Church," *Sociological Analysis* 37, no. 2, (Summer 1976): 111, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3709685.

totalitarian response to the cultural fragmentation of society. There are many controversies surrounding the UC, sometimes derided as the 'dark side of the Moon',[36] the most well-known of which is undoubtedly their mass weddings where hundreds or even thousands of couples are married. Moreover, the UC's teachings are viewed unfavourably by most mainstream Christian churches, and those who join are allegedly subjected to 'heavenly deception'[37] and various brainwashing techniques, and thus the UC is denoted as a cult. The public controversy over the group's methods raises questions as to whether this movement should even be treated as a religion.[38]

The 1990s appeared far more favourable to the movement than the 1970s and 1980s, when accusations of brainwashing, heavenly deception, and tax evasion were levelled at the UC by anti-cult groups in various parts of the world, and Reverend Moon was jailed in the United States on charges of tax evasion.[39] Held together by the reverend's charismatic authority, the Unification Church and Movement have so far avoided serious fragmentation. There are, however, signs of routinization and a loss of motivation among some long-term and second-generation members. Some of the former regret having dedicated so much time and energy to the neglect of their families and friends. They no longer have a sense of commitment and remain involved as much for practical reasons as out of conviction.[40] Today, seven years after Reverend Moon's death in 2012, his work is being continued by his widow, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon (who is known as the True Mother), and some of their children, and many of the organisation's operations are still flourishing all around the world.

There are many social, educational, political, media and other types of organisations that have been founded in the name of the UC. The Unification Church has also developed into an international crusade, known as the Unification Movement (UM), that is spread through education at a few universities in United States and South Korea, a Theological seminary, and even the Bolshoi Ballet Academy in Washington, DC.[41] Likewise, the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA; see website) is an educational organisation that supports the academic community's role in the pursuit of world peace. It can be considered social action in the sense that it strives to unite science and values and seeks to apply scientific knowledge to the betterment of the human community.[42] The group's involvement in the media is apparent in its establishment of many newspapers worldwide,[43] and there is also a political wing of the UM, like CAUSA[44] whose principal function has been to undermine communism by publishing some treatises.[45]

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[36] Rachael Bletchly, "Dark Side of the Moon: How Megalomaniac Moonie Leader Built a Billion-dollar Business Empire Through Sinister Cult," *Mirror,* (September 4, 2012), accessed 15 January, 2019. https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/Cworld-news/inside-the-sinister-moonie-cult-how-1301689.

[37] Eileen Barker, "Living the Divine Principle. Inside the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church in Britain," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 23, no 45.1 (Jan.–Mar., 1978): 75, http://www.jstor.org/stable/30124308.

[38] As Chryssides (1991, 3) points out, some new religious movements like the UC are fronts for political organisations or business operations, and for that reason they are depriving the new religions of the right to a specific religious identity. This can also raise the methodological question of how to study this new religious movement, whether the normal canons of religious scholarship can be applied, while the sociological approaches to understanding the Unification Church cannot provide a single answer to the question of what is the sociological problem of the UC (Beckford 1978, 98; see also Parsons 1989, 209–10).

[39] Clarke, *New Religions*, 299.

[40] Clarke, *New Religions*, 299.

[41] Clarke, *New Religions*, 298.

[42] Richard Quebedeaux, ed. *Lifestyle: Conversations with the Members of Unification Church* (New York: Unification Theological Seminary, 1982), 83.

[43] Like the *Washington Times*, as well as the Korean daily *Segye Illbon*, the *Sekai Nippon* in Tokyo, and the Latin American daily *Tiempos Del Mundo*, published in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

[44] Confederation of Associations for the Unity of the Societies of America.

[45] Clarke, *New Religions*, 298.

As a Korean War refugee himself, Reverend Moon understood first-hand the importance of humanitarian relief in situations of war, disaster, and poverty. Following his vision of living for others, Moon has founded several worldwide humanitarian organizations. A unique feature of these relief organizations are programs of personalized service: service internships and volunteer programs that provide opportunities for thousands of individuals to go and personally serve in places of need.[46] While social welfare[47] is defined as a means to provide organized public or private social services for the assistance of disadvantaged individuals, church-based social welfare is founded upon the Christian philosophy as proposed by theologians. Su Kang[48] introduces the term 'Church social welfare' and defines welfare as 'An enjoyable condition consisting of good health, abundant life, and easy environment.' Kang adds that people involved in social welfare not only help other people but also experience personal satisfaction—an assertion that can be confirmed by some members of the UC as well. As such, the Family Federation's Social Welfare ideology of UC is based on interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universally shared values. That kind of society is a community, 'where God is in the centre and all the members of the society live together, prosper together, and live a life of ethics. A perfect society is God's purpose of creation and that is a society of welfare'.[49] The aim and purpose of Family Federation's social welfare are to realize a welfare state that is 'a Heaven on Earth'. They are trying to solve the problem of poverty for members by creating jobs, helping immigrant women and multicultural families with economic and educational support for children and adults, running counselling programs, offering professional training, and providing health, economic, and family therapy to maintain and restore the family.[50]

Furthermore, the best known and most widespread organisation promoting world peace and solving conflicts through interreligious initiatives—and whose aim is to strengthen the family as the basic unit for the wellbeing of society beside FFWPU (or UC) itself—is the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), otherwise known as the International Interreligious Federation for World Peace (IIFWP)[51], whose goal is to achieve an ideal world of peace—proposed by Sun Myung Moon through his messages on eliminating borders and building a

[46] Rev. Sun Myung Moon: His Works, accessed 26 January, 2018, http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org/works_humanitarian.html, see also Hwang Po Kun 황보군, "Segyepyeong hwatong-il gajeong-yeonhab bogjij eongchaeg-e gwanhan yeongu – gyeong-gi bugbugyoguleul sungsim-eulo 세계평화통일가정연합 복지정책에 관한 연구 – 경기북부교구를 숭심으로 (A Study on the Welfare Policy of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. Centered on North Kyeonggi Region)," PhD Thesis, (Gyeonggi: Seonhak UP Graduate School, 2017).

[47] Generally, social welfare is a generic term for various social services such as social policy, social security, public health, medical treatment, housing, employment, and education, all of which provide protection, promotion, guidance, treatment, and rehabilitation for those who are unable to do so on their own, and it also guarantees health and happiness for all citizens. In other words, social welfare helps people to satisfy the basic human need for food, housing, and clothing, including profit, health, knowledge, leisure, and cultural desires. Social welfare is also legislation, programs, and services that are arranged to help a person to maintain a healthy relationship with family and companions at work (Kang 2010, 18–19).

[48] In Su Kang, "Church Growth through Social Welfare in South Korean Churches: Its Situation and Reformation Plan," PhD Thesis (Lynchburg, Virginia: Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010), 16–17.

[49] Hwang, "Segyepyeong," 22.

[50] Hwang, "Segyepyeong," 22.

[51] Founded in 1999, IIFWP is an NGO that has Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. One of its most important aims is the establishment of an interreligious council of the leaders of the world's religions and political leaders to advise and support the United Nations in its efforts for world peace. (UPF website)

peace bridge.[52] This organisation also has a global reach in its provision of humanitarian aid. In response to natural disasters, UPF provides donations and volunteers to help with immediate relief and longer-term clean-up. After the tsunami in Japan, UPF-affiliated youths cleaned debris from homes. When Thailand was struck by floods, volunteers brought food and water to stranded survivors, and cleaned an Islamic school. Other projects aided people in Haiti, Pakistan, Russia, and India,[53] which is another example of how many charitable efforts were initiated by the churches and by Sun Myung Moon's influence on the emerging social work profession.

Today some church-related organizations have secularized, dropping their former church affiliation. Others have maintained these ties, often wondering how to balance demands from both secular and religious sectors.[54] Most of these organizations are independently incorporated and non-profit organizations. Some are completely staffed by Unification people; others are mixtures; others still are non-Unification but are substantially funded or otherwise aided by the Unification Church. Another big and widely known organization is The International Relief Friendship Fund (IRFF), which has been active in sending aid to underdeveloped countries. It is an independent public foundation funded by members and non-members alike. IRFF now has operations in 27 countries. It works with various organisations through which it can provide social services overseas to help people struck by disaster, poverty, famine, and war. The IRFF aims at improving humankind's physical health; the pharmaceutical and machine tool companies owned by Reverend Moon aid in creating a prosperous society.[55] To address these problems, IRFF has established programs of rural development, educational and technical training, urban and community service, and emergency disaster relief.[56] As they explain on the website, short-term relief assistance, IRFF provides shipments of supplies to alleviate the hardship of people left helpless by disasters. Mobile medical teams were formed to provide emergency service to troubled areas. Their mission statement is 'IRFF provides immediate humanitarian relief to individuals and families devastated by poverty, illness, natural disasters, and conflict while also providing opportunities for long-term sustainable development through educational and economic opportunities.'[57]

There are a few other groups providing services that were established in the United States, like Project Volunteer, which is the social services entity of the California Unification Church. They have distributed tons of food to people in need and are involved in recycling, vocational training, and many other community projects. They are innovative; they deal with networking resources for the benefit of local community needs.[58] A similar group is called New Society Social Programs, which is a project-based in Harlem, New York. It is run by Unification people from Harlem and elsewhere who feel that God wants them to help in that

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[52] An Yonhee 안연희, "Munseonmyeong seonsaeng-ui isangsahoelongwa segyegongdongche bijeon: 'guggyeongcheolpye'wa 'pyeonghwaui gil'eul jungsim eulo 문선명 선생의 이상사회론과 세계공동체 비전: '국경철폐'와 '평화의 길'을 중심 으로 (Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Thought of Ideal World and Vision of World Community)." 평화와 종교 3 (2017): 155–85.

[53] Rev. Sun Myung Moon; Universal Peace Federation, A global Network of Peacebuilders, accessed 18 January, 2019, http://www.upf.org/.

[54] Ellen F. Netting, "Church-related Agencies and Social Welfare," *Social Service Review*, (September 1984): 404–5.

[55] Chryssides, *The Advent of Sun Myung Moon*, 174.

[56] George D. Chryssides, and Margaret Z. Wilkins, eds., *A Reader in New Religious Movements: Readings in the Study of New Religious* (London and New York: Continuum, 2006), 278.

[57] International Relief Friendship Foundation, accessed 20 January, 2019, https://www.irff.org/.

[58] Quebedeaux, *Lifestyle*, 82; see also Chryssides and Wilkins, *A Reader*, 278.

particular situation. Their services have been very successful and include distribution; they are widely recognised.[59]

The Reverend Moon had an interest in medical service as well, specifically in the implications of his divine principle for holistic health and the relationship between acupuncture, chiropractic, shiatsu, and other traditional medicines and thus established the group World Medical Health Foundation, which holds conferences and seminars and has plans to open clinics in the near future. An institution called Isshin Hospital Medical Teams, founded in 1978 in Japan, sends out medical teams to crisis areas in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.[60] Bringing together people from long-time enemy nations, such teams help overcome national prejudices to serve the greater good, thus embodying Moon's vision of service projects that help others and also heal divisions of nationality, race, and religion.

The following two organizations provide care for the elderly, children, and women. Aewon Voluntary Service Foundation (AVSF), which was founded in 1994 in Korea, works primarily in Korea and runs programs for the elderly, needy children, orphanages, and the disabled. It is an active member of the Korea Council of Volunteer Organizations. Founded in 1992 to promote the value of women, the Women's Federation for World Peace Service Projects (WFWP) runs humanitarian aid and service projects, the most famous and important of which began in 1993 when WFWP sent teams of 10 Japanese service volunteers to serve for three years in 60 of the world's neediest nations.[61] Another group involved in providing services to children is Religious Youth Service (RYS). Founded in 1986 to respond to post-modern disillusionment and promote the twin ideals of interreligious harmony and public service, RYS is a unique service organization where youth leaders of various faiths work on-site together to serve a needy community, like reforestation and the building of schools and clinics.[62]

The establishment of these social organisations that provide services to people in need is seen as a restoration of themselves and humanity from divine principle, which requires tangible actions; it should show how solutions should be approached and executed in the real world of particular political situations and social complexities. The research into the many relief organizations that spread out of the UC shows the enormous influence and inspiration of Reverend Moon and, according to UC members, the Principle.[63] There are people inspired by Him who are seeking answers in prayer and in their personal lives, within the racial and cultural admixtures that their communities represent. As Stark[64] points out people are drawn into these organizations by searching a way to practically achieve the goal of restoration and personal satisfaction, which give them the energy to commit with volunteering and as results can be personally awarded, but they can also be paying a high price for their membership. However, when commitment levels are high, groups can undertake all manner of collective actions and these are not limited only to the psychic realm.

Conclusion

[59] Quebedeaux, *Lifestyle*, 82.
[60] Quebedeaux, *Lifestyle*, 83.
[61] WMSCG, accessed 21 July 2019, http://watv. org/.
[62] Chryssides, *The Advent of Sun Myung Moon*, 168; see also RYS Brochure, accessed January 18, 2019 (2013), http://www.upf.org/transfer/2013-upf-pr-kit/rys-brochure-1024-11a-vw.pdf.
[63] Quebedeaux, *Lifestyle*, 75, 83,
[64] Rodney Stark, "Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail: A Revised General Model," *Cults and New Religious Movements. A Reader*, edited by Lorne L. Dawson (Malden, MA, et al.: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 263.

It is said that one purpose of these non-sectarian organizations is to pursue social respectability, as Moon and his followers believe that their authoritarian reconstitution of the civil religion will optimally communalize the whole of society. The UC has been able to envision and substantially begin a network of non-profit organizations. They are run by persons who, while not primarily interested in personal fulfilment, are trying to be unselfish and are serving at a high level of freedom and authenticity. Service has to do with reaching out to the genuineness of humanity and human nature. It exists to address the human condition. These service projects founded by Moon were designed to meet emergency needs in times of natural disaster, disease, poverty, and war, and they have brought hope and relief to millions of people across national, racial, and religious boundaries, and as such they also assert people's need to create order in the world. However, a civil religion which may maintain their plausibility only by actively attempting to control secular institutions and which provides rationales for sacrificing individual interests in favour of the common good may appear superfluous[65] and—with its rhetoric of achieving world unification—also utopian, as Hendricks[66] points out.

Tzu-Chi is the largest and most influential Buddhist organisation in Taiwan. Its impact extends far beyond this boundary and is a clear influencer in many other countries. The multiple angles from which one can look at Tzu-Chi makes the organization hard to define. The charisma of its leader and the emphasis on conforming to moral values has meant that Tzu-Chi can be considered a cult. Its base as a form of Buddhism—but not coherent to any school—has given it the label of a New Religious Movement. The exclusive emphasis on Cheng Yen's teaching and interpretation has given the organisation the title of being a charismatic movement. What is more, the uniformed volunteers—those who have financially donated—has given rise to a belief that Tzu-Chi is simply a middle-class movement.

Given the position of Tzu-Chi and its comparison with the UC, it is argued here that Tzu-Chi's efforts in international humanitarian relief makes it less comparable with the UC and perhaps more comparable with the Red Cross or Christian Aid. Comparisons can be made in terms of the charisma of these groups' respective leader-founders, and their incoherence as to specific schools within their respective faiths. No other church follows the principles of the UC, just as no other Buddhist organisation follows Tzu-Chi. The similarities in the economic development of both South Korea and Taiwan make a case that a comparison could be made of the middle-class element of donation and membership between the two.

[65] Robbins et al., "The Last," 123,

[66] Tyler O. Hendricks, 2004–2005, "Unification Politics in Theory and Practice," *Journal of Unification Studies* 6, https://journals.uts.edu/volume-vi-2004-2005/57-unification-politics-in-theory-and-practice.

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