

## Religiocide in Korea: The Attempted Assassination of a Faith

09/20/2025 MASSIMO INTROVIGNE

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I came to Korea not to observe only but to stand. The assault on the Family Federation should be called for what it is: religious persecution.

*by Massimo Introvigne*



*Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.*

Let us speak plainly. If Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon is arrested, it will not be the arrest of a woman—it will be the attempted crucifixion of a religion. The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, formerly known as the Unification Church, is not merely under scrutiny. It is under siege. And the name for what is happening is religiocide—the deliberate attempt to kill a religion, a term coined by scholars who have seen this pattern before.

This is not about bribery. It is not about political donations. It is not about legal technicalities. It is about extermination.

What we see in Korea did not start there. It started in Japan. In March, the Tokyo District Court ordered the dissolution of the Family Federation, citing decades-old civil cases and vague notions of "social appropriateness." This is not justice—it is liquidation. If upheld, the ruling (which is under appeal) will strip the movement of its legal status, confiscate its assets, and silence its voice. Japan, the country where the Family Federation achieved its greatest missionary success, now seeks to erase it from public life. The assassination of Shinzo Abe, a friend of the movement, was seized upon as a pretext, though the assassin was never a member. The real motive lies deeper: a decades-long campaign by leftist lawyers, anti-cult activists, and Protestant deprogrammers who have found common cause in hatred.

The campaign, the same, has now extended to Korea, where the assault is more visceral. The special prosecutor has requested the arrest of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, accusing her of bribing the disgraced former First Lady Kim Keon-hee with luxury gifts. Twenty witnesses say otherwise: that these were the rogue actions of a single Church executive. The idea that Dr. Moon—whose initiatives have drawn presidents and prime ministers, including Donald Trump—would need to bribe a Korean leader for small favors and ceremonial seats at a presidential inauguration is not just implausible. It is insulting.

The second charge? That Dr. Moon supported the conservative People Power Party (PPP) through donations, help in the elections, and church devotees who became party



members. Even if true, it is not a crime. It is a constitutional right. Yet the Korean government now seeks to criminalize religious political engagement, targeting not only the Family Federation but jailing other religious leaders who supported former President Yoon or the PPP. This is not law—it is purge.

Who are the architects of this religiocide? Three forces converge in Korea as they did in Japan. First, Protestant fundamentalists, who see the Family Federation as heretical and sheep-stealing. Second, leftist intellectuals and politicians, who loathe its anti-Communist and pro-family stance. Third, Chinese Communist Party operatives, who covertly support anti-cult campaigns to destabilize anti-Communist religious movements in Korea and Japan.

The irony is grotesque. Evangelicals who claim to be anti-Communist now collaborate with pro-China activists to destroy a fellow religious movement. They have entered a pact with the Devil, and in Korea, it has backfired. Evangelical leaders who cheered the persecution of the Family Federation, but supported the conservative PPP, now find themselves behind bars.

Make no mistake: this is not a scandal. It is a scandalization. It is not a prosecution. It is a persecution. The charges against Dr. Moon are not about justice—they are about annihilation. The goal is to decapitate the movement in Korea and bankrupt it in Japan, while media campaigns abroad amplify the narrative.

But history teaches us: religiocide fails. From the catacombs of Rome to the gulags of Siberia, persecuted religions do not die. They rise. They grow. They endure.

I am in Korea in these days; not to observe only, but to stand. To bring comfort to the afflicted, and to remind them: this is not the end. It may be the beginning. The Family Federation has weathered storms before. It will weather this one. The Roman persecutions taught emperors more powerful than a controversial Korean president that the blood of martyrs is the seed of faith. And the fire of persecution often forges the steel of conviction.

Let the persecutors beware. You may dissolve an organization. You may jail a leader. But you cannot kill a faith that lives in the hearts of its believers.

You cannot kill a religion.

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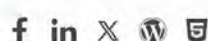


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**Massimo Introvigne** (born June 14, 1955 in Rome) is an Italian sociologist of religions. He is the founder and managing director of the Center for Studies on New Religions ([CESNUR](#)), an international network of scholars who study new religious movements. Introvigne is the author of some 70 books and more than 100 articles in the field of sociology of religion. He was the

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