

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Holy Mother Han Trial Parrots Communist Show Trials

Juraj Lajda
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Mother Han trial echoing communist show trial. Illustration: ChatGPT - Images of persons inserted in illustration from left: Dr. Juraj Lajda ca. 1973, Alžbeta Danišková in 1972, and [Mother Han](#) in 2025



Juraj Lajda today (2024)

When democratic South Korea seeks a much harsher sentence than Communism - a former East European political prisoner reflects on Mother Han trial

by PhD. Juraj Lajda (Doctor of Philosophy), lecturer and publisher, former political prisoner under the communist regime in [Czechoslovakia](#).

Prague, 16th July 2026 - I was truly shocked when I heard the news that special prosecutors in South Korea had [requested a 13-year prison sentence](#) for 83-year-old [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자), the co-founder of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) and a spiritual leader whom I hold very dear.

I was astonished that prosecutors in a democratic country would seek a much harsher punishment than the one imposed on me and [17 fellow young members](#) of the [Family Federation](#) by an East European communist regime in 1974. The [draconian sentence requested](#) in South Korea makes the three- and four-year prison terms we received in former Czechoslovakia seem almost "mild". I myself was sentenced to three years and two months behind bars, while Alžbeta (Betka) Danišková, then the national leader of our [movement](#), received four years and four months.

The communist regime was well aware that many aspects of our teachings were incompatible with communist ideology.

During the Cold War, members of the Victory Over Communism movement, founded in 1968 by [Sun Myung Moon](#), were actively engaged - primarily in Japan, South Korea, and Western democracies - in exposing the true nature of communism and Marxism-Leninism while presenting their own alternative vision.

Despite opposition from left-wing groups on university campuses and in the media, our activists in democratic countries were able to continue their activities.

The situation was very different in communist countries. Members who spread [Rev. Moon's](#) teachings

soon came into conflict with regimes founded on Marxism-Leninism, which generally regarded religion as the "opium of the people."

Before long, [Rev. Moon](#)'s followers in communist Czechoslovakia came into conflict with the authorities. They were arrested, interrogated, prosecuted, and convicted. In the main trial against a group of young believers, [18 individuals](#) received lengthy prison sentences in what was clearly a show trial. It was evident that the proceedings were politically motivated.



In communist prison 4 years and 4 months, despite serious health condition: Alžběta (Betka) Danišková, here in February 2024

Years later, this was confirmed by the defense attorney representing the principal defendant, Alžběta Danišková. He recalled that when he was assigned the case, he initially assumed that some mistake had been made. More than 20 young people had been taken into custody without sufficient evidence. When he argued before the court that there was no justification for such severe repression or prolonged pretrial detention, his objections were dismissed.

Over time, he came to understand that this was a political trial in which the evidence was ultimately irrelevant. It had already been decided that these young people would not escape punishment.

In July 1974, the court of first instance handed down its verdicts against [18 members](#) of the group.

Danišková, the principal defendant, was sentenced to four years and four months in prison, with no possibility of early release. This inevitably invites comparison with the sentence now being sought against [Hak Ja Han](#). If we do the math, the prosecutor's [request for a 13-year prison term](#) is almost exactly three times the sentence imposed by a communist regime on Alžběta Danišková, despite the fact that South Korea is a democratic country. Thirteen years is equivalent to three times four years and four months.

Upon learning of the sentence sought against [Hak Ja Han](#), Danišková shared the following reflections:

"I am deeply upset that Dr. [Hak Ja Han](#), the Mother of Peace, has to face these accusations.

In the past, when communism ruled Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1989, we - students and young people - were accused of anti-communist activities and sentenced to a combined total of [50 years in prison](#). We fought for democracy and freedom. One member of our [movement died in prison](#) at the age of 24.

It seemed that such things could never happen in a democracy.



Živná (1973)

[Died in communist prison](#) under mysterious circumstances: Marie

More than fifty years have passed since [our arrest in 1973](#), and now, in democratic South Korea - the homeland of our movement's [founder](#) - his [wife](#), the mother of his 14 children, and a woman who has dedicated her entire life to promoting peace based on the ideal of the [Kingdom of](#)

[Heaven](#), faces imprisonment.

What an incomprehensible twist of history!

We believe in the justice of the judiciary of the Republic of Korea, considering Dr. [Hak Ja Han](#)'s lifelong contribution to building a peaceful future for humanity."

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Text: Dr. Juraj Lajda (Doctor of Philosophy), lecturer and publisher, former political prisoner under the communist regime in [Czechoslovakia](#).

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Using Abe’s Assassination Against Unificationism

July 16, 2026 • The News Desk

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*How the politics of reframing
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Tokyo, 8th July 2026 – Published as an article
in the Japanese newspaper *Sekai Nippo*.

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[Interview]

Losing Sight of the Real Issue by Shifting the Focus

Four Years Since the Assassination of Former Prime Minister Abe

by Yoichiro Miyata (宮田陽一郎)

The justification for ordering the dissolution of the Family Federation



Flower offering for Abe Shinzo 8th July 2023 at Osaka
Gokoku Shrines in Japan. Photo: Photo memories 1868 /
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8th July marks four years since the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三). The shocking incident – in which a former prime minister who had led the longest-serving administration in Japan’s constitutional history was killed while delivering a campaign speech for the House of Councillors election – led to intense public criticism of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)) after it became known that the defendant’s mother was one of its members. This ultimately culminated in the [Supreme Court’s confirmation](#) of a [court order](#) to dissolve the [religious organization](#).

Why did this lead to what the interview describes as an infringement of the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion? We spoke with writer Fumihiro Kato (加藤文宏).

Interviewer: Yoichiro Miyata (宮田陽一郎)

“How do you view the four years since Abe’s assassination?”

I think they have been four years during which we lost sight of the essence of the issue. The starting point – and ultimately the conclusion – of losing sight of the real issue was that the shooting was reframed as a problem concerning politics and religion.

As a result, Japanese society came to feel compelled to justify the [dissolution order](#) against the [Family Federation](#) and human rights violations committed against its members. These four years have been marked by the contradiction that people have become unable to criticize those developments.

Even regarding the issue of religion and politics, there has never been any evidence that the *Liberal Democratic Party* was forced by the [religious organization](#) to adopt particular policies or submit specific bills, nor any evidence that the public actually suffered harm as a result. Yet society as a

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public security suffered harm as a result. Society as a whole was swept along nonetheless.

In the end, even the judiciary found itself embracing contradictions in order to legitimize the prevailing social atmosphere and political decisions, and those contradictions ultimately took the form of the [dissolution order](#) against the [Family Federation](#).

In that sense, we continue to lose sight of the true nature of the issue that began with Abe's assassination.



Tetsuya Yamagami given life sentence. AI illustration: Chat GPT 25th January 2026.

“On 21st January, the [Nara District Court](#) sentenced [Tetsuya Yamagami \(山上徹也\)](#), who killed [Abe](#), to life imprisonment. Although the defense appealed, do you think the case has now been resolved?”

I think it remains far from resolved because the judiciary, politics, and society as a whole have lost the ability to make fair judgments and assessments about the case. Even on appeal, the defense team will essentially have no choice but to make the same arguments they presented in the district court.

Immediately after Abe was assassinated, the discussion was shifted to the relationship between religion and politics. Then, using the keyword “donations”, it was shifted again into an issue of religion and [consumer problems](#). The subject changed once, then again, becoming something entirely different.

More about “consumer problems”: [Terms from Consumer Law Used to Rob Faith](#)

Even if the appeal leads to a new trial in the High Court, the issue will simply continue to be reframed repeatedly, so we will never get any closer to the core of the matter. Nor will it become an opportunity for society to reflect on what happened.

The framing of the issue as one of religion and [consumer problems](#) is something that Yamagami himself rejects. It was not that he was unable to attend university; rather, he had become so disillusioned with society at the time that he simply did not want to go.

His mother reportedly told him, “I’ll find whatever money is necessary, so please go to university. It’s fine even if you have to spend another year preparing.” That is beyond doubt.

Therefore, I do not believe the defendant himself was a victim of religion. Instead, the defense team’s courtroom publicity campaign led society’s understanding in the wrong direction, and it has become very difficult to correct that perception.





The scene of the assassination of Shinzo Abe in front of Yamato-Saidaiji Station in Nara City, Japan. Photo: (撮影) 一般社団法人板垣退助先生顕彰会 (アップロード) / Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC ASA 4.0 Int](#). Cropped

“After Abe’s assassination, the media harshly criticized the Family Federation. What do you see as the problems with that coverage?”

The sensational reporting and entertainment-style scandal coverage directed at what was then the [Unification Church](#) during the 1980s and 1990s was simply repeated after Abe’s assassination. The essential nature of the reporting did not change.

From the 2000s until the incident in 2022, the [Family Federation](#) had largely faded from public attention as a religious organization, and people generally did not criticize its members. Public memories of those who had been the subject of controversy in the 1980s and 1990s had also faded.

After Abe’s assassination, the issue was reframed as one involving religion and [consumer problems](#). However, because there were no such controversies in the 2020s, critics of the [Family Federation](#) had no new means of attacking it.

As a result, they had little choice but to recycle the gossip and scandals from the 1980s and 1990s.

There were, however, two important differences from that earlier period.

The first was that Abe’s public assassination was an extremely shocking event that had already created an atmosphere of widespread public shock.

The second was that the idea that ordinary people could easily become victims of severe [consumer problems](#) was presented as though it were a reality, by making use of Yamagami and other so-called “second-generation” members [\[See editor’s note below\]](#) of religious groups.

Profile: Fumihiko Kato

Fumihiko Kato (加藤文宏) was born in 1964 in Shizuoka Prefecture. In addition to publishing novels under the pen name *Fumi Kato*, he founded the magazine *Monthly IJ*, where he interviewed people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Following the *Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant* accident, he focused on reputational damage and issues affecting voluntary evacuees, paying particular attention to what he describes as “information disasters” caused by media coverage.

He has contributed analytical articles and essays – primarily concerning media-related issues – to opinion journals and other publications.

His book *Examining Runaway Media Coverage* organizes and analyzes developments from the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三) through the government’s request for a dissolution order against the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (formerly the [Unification Church](#)).

Featured image above: Fumihiko Kato (加藤文宏) being interviewed. Photo: [Sekai Nippo](#)

[Editor’s note: The term 宗教2世 (*shūkyō nisei*, literally “second-generation religious believer”) generally refers to people who were raised in a religion by parents who

belonged to a religious organization, rather than joining it themselves as adults.]

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