

## FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Bizarre Atlantic Magazine Report Condoning Terror

Knut Holdhus  
October 26, 2023



*The immediate aftermath of the assassination of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in the vicinity of Kintetsu Yamato-Saidaiji station northern entrance on 8th July 2022*

### Condoning terror in Japan reveals what extreme leftwing views The Atlantic can peddle

*The Atlantic* According to AllSides Media Bias Rating, the American monthly magazine The Atlantic, is known for its left bias and consistent sensationalism. This becomes obvious in the article [The Bizarre Story Behind Shinzo Abe's Assassination](#), penned by Robert F. Worth in the October 2023 issue.

#### Obvious disinformation

In fact, the bulk of the article is simply Worth echoing the disinformation story told by an extreme leftwing group of activist lawyers, a network put together in 1987 in order to destroy the [Unification Church](#), now called the [Family Federation](#).



*Shinzo Abe in 2017*

Few days after the terror attack that killed Shinzo Abe 8th July 2022, the network of lawyers set up a press conference where they blamed the [Family Federation](#) for the hideous crime. And the media bought the story.

Some observers were astonished to find that no one bothered to inquire into the network of lawyers, what they stood for, and their past.

And it seems like Robert F. Worth haven't bothered either. In his long report, the lawyers are simply referred to as lawyers, when in fact they are at the same time fanatical activists against the [Family Federation](#). Worth is of course well aware of it, but still he omits to mention this crucial fact for painting an objective and truthful picture.

#### Condoning terror



He has clearly bought their disinformation story, to the extent that he is not only blaming the [Family Federation](#) for the terror, but is actually condoning terror and making the assassin a hero. The terror is excused, as Worth describes terrorist Yamagami as being "among the most successful assassins in history."

Worth writes,

"Counterintuitively, the reputation of Yamagami, his [Abe's] alleged assassin, may not suffer. There is an old tradition in Japan of reverence for the doomed hero, the man who undertakes a suicidal quest and becomes a figure of deep nobility [...]."

Worth has obvious sympathy for the terrorist and writes about "the purity of his motives" and describes nationalists who killed two former Japanese prime ministers in an attack in 1936,

"Their sincerity and patriotism are what matter to their admirers, not the cruelty of their act or its ramifications."



### Outright lie

Retelling the story of fanatical activists, the way Worth does, lands him in obvious trouble as he is also vouching for outright lies. He writes,

"The church was then [1961] 'organized' by the founder and director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, Brigadier General Kim Jong-pil, according to an American CIA report written two years later, though it is not clear exactly what role the Korean agency played."

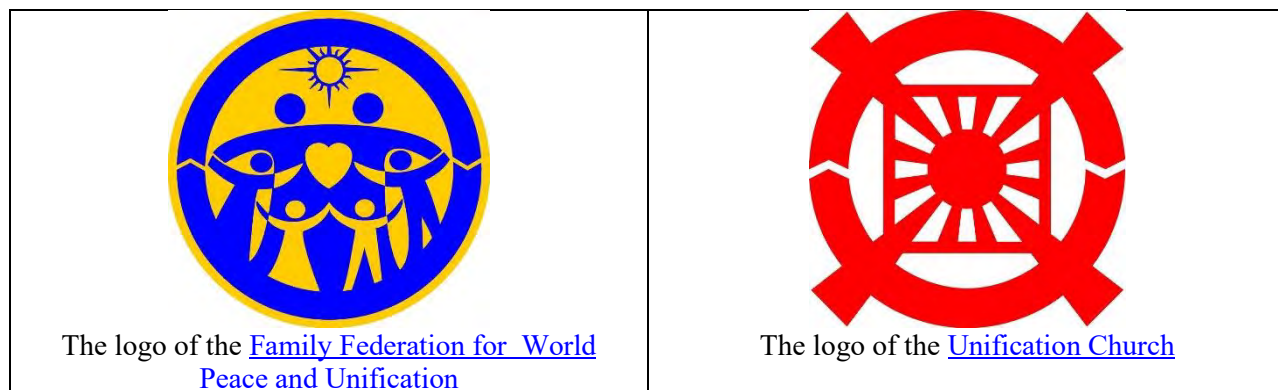
This false accusation came out of an investigation into the [Unification Church](#) by the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Subcommittee on International Organizations. 15th March 1978, Subcommittee Chairman Donald Fraser (Minnesota Democrat) told reporters there was evidence that the [Unification Church](#) was founded "as a political tool" by Korean Central Intelligence Agency Director

Kim Jong-pil.

However, this claim was later found to be from a "raw" (unsubstantiated) field intelligence report. After 18 months of searching, the Fraser subcommittee eventually had to admit in its final report that "the [Moon](#) organization was not an agent of influence for the ROK government".

The subcommittee had made a big grandstanding announcement. But it was followed by zero evidence. Still, there was no apology except a terse admission that their original claim was false.

Although leftwing politician Donald Fraser admitted that his claim was false, the network of activist lawyers and similar organizations still circulate the story today, 45 years later as if it were true.



### Lie about name change

Another wild claim, retold unquestioningly by Worth, is about the name change from [Unification Church](#) to [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#). The Atlantic writes,

"But the Abe administration does appear to have gone out of its way to do them at least one big favor. In 2015, the government took the controversial step of allowing the church to rename itself, to the outrage of its longtime critics. This was a matter of real import, because since the mid-'90s the words [Unification](#)

[Church](#) had been tainted in Japan. The church now advertises itself under the more anodyne banner of [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), though most outsiders still use the old name."



*Yoshifu Arita in 2014*



*Eito Suzuki, born as Kiyofumi Tanaka*



*Hiroshi Yamaguchi, activist leftwing lawyer and leading member of National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales*



*Masumi Fukuda, Japanese investigative journalist*

The network of hostile leftwing lawyers alleges that the name [Unification Church](#) was dropped because it had been "tainted". Just to show how fanatical the lawyers are, and how they twist things, Worth depicts their reaction to the name change, "the government took the controversial step of allowing the church to rename itself, to the outrage of its longtime critics."

In reality, the name change had nothing to do with Japan. The founder of the [Unification Church Sun Myung Moon](#) declared already in 1996 that the [Unification Church](#) had outplayed its role. He stated that we'd had thousands of years with religions emphasizing individual salvation. Now, there is a distinct need for a movement that works for what he called "family salvation". Hence, the [Family Federation](#) was founded that same year by [Sun Myung Moon](#) and his wife [Hak Ja Han](#). In most countries the movement took that name - [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#). But in Japan it proved quite difficult to change the name because of fanatical claims made by hostile lawyers.

### **Ideas borrowed from hostile lawyers**

The long Atlantic report is heavily biased against the [Unification Church](#), now called the [Family Federation](#). Most of the content is ideas and viewpoints borrowed from an extremely hostile network of lawyers, the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales.

Page up and page down are devoted to disinformation statements by lawyers and journalists associated with the network, or like-minded activists - lawyer Hiroshi Yamaguchi, journalist Eito Suzuki, lawyer / politician Yoshifu Arita. They are all leading figures of the attack on the [Family Federation](#) launched by the network of activist leftwing lawyers. Yamaguchi founded the network. Another anti-cultist Worth interviews in his report is Pascal Zivi. An experienced writer / journalist like Robert F. Worth must be well aware of what those activists represent. But he just describes them as lawyers or journalists. That is foul play and hiding essential parts of the story.

Award-winning author and investigative journalist Masumi Fukuda writes,

"Almost all of the lawyers in the Network were affiliated with the former Socialist Party and the Communist Party, who [...] were connected with extremist groups and North Korea, and were ideologically leftists and self-styled atheists. In contrast, the former [Unification Church](#) is an anti-communist and conservative organization that opposes atheism. It is clear that this was an ideological battle between the two camps." (The Truth About the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales, article by Masumi Fukuda in the monthly magazine Hanada, republished in English in [Bitter Winter](#) 30th March 2023)

Lawyers worked with deprogrammers

In the same article, Fukuda explains how some of those lawyers worked together with professional deprogrammers to have more than 4,000 members of the [Unification Church](#) kidnapped and forcibly detained in order to break their faith,



"There were lawyers who became rich through these cases, as did deprogrammers and Christian pastors involved in the abductions, who received substantial amounts of money from the relatives of the believers they deprogrammed.

When the lawyers were consulted by the believers' parents, they first introduced them to the deprogrammers. If and when deprogramming was successful, the lawyers took over from the deprogrammers as 'handlers' of the former believers, made them plaintiffs, and filed lawsuits. The anti-[Unification-Church](#) group, including Attorney Kito and journalists Yoshifu Arita, and Eito Suzuki, still

defends deprogramming to this very day, and claims it was performed to 'protect' the former members of the [Unification Church](#)."

It is a well-known fact that the activist leftwing lawyers has made a lot of money by portraying the [Unification Church](#) / [Family Federation](#) in a negative light. These experts profit from making religious movements appear as problematic as possible. They often twist facts to fit their narrative.

Hate speech responsible for terror

According to famous Italian sociologist of religion Dr. Massimo Introvigne, so-called 'cult experts' had been in contact with terrorist Tetsuya Yamagami before he assassinated Abe. While the experts did not directly suggest that Yamagami shoot Abe, they did encourage and fuel his hatred towards the [Unification Church](#) and its allies.

Jan Leonid Bernstein, investigative reporter, writes,

## The European Times

"We should never minimize the influence of hate speech on people. And definitely, we should not apply double standard based on which religious affiliation are

the killer and the victim. Terrorism is terrorism. Abe's murder has a terrorist component and the hate speech directed for years at the [Unification Church](#) by some anti-cult groups may certainly be somewhat responsible for what happened, whatever personal grievance the killer would have had." (Shinzo Abe's assassination to be called terrorist, article in The European Times 16th July 2022)

Introvigne explained in a previous article,



*The Journal of CESNUR Nov-Dec 2022*

"While the weak mind of the assassin had clearly been excited by anti-[Unification Church](#) campaigns by militant lawyers and anti-cultists, the latter succeeded in persuading most media, both in Japan and internationally, that rather than being a victim the [Unification Church](#) was somewhat responsible for the homicide, in a spectacular reversal of both logic and fairness." ([The Assassination of Shinzo Abe and the Unification Church](#), The Journal of CESNUR, volume 6, issue 6, November - December 2022, pages 74 - 96.)

Fukuda also writes,

"The Network would not hesitate to use all means to destroy the former [Unification Church](#). They are willing to tell all sort of stories, including lies, to achieve what they believe is a righteous purpose. They often throw the words 'anti-social' and 'cult' at the former [Unification Church](#), but considering their involvement in the abduction and confinement of believers, one may wonder whether they are not more deserving of these labels themselves." ([Sayuri Ogawa: When 'Apostates' Slander the Unification Church](#).)



5. [Why the Story Is Not Believable, Bitter Winter](#) (6th March 2023)

**Grand statements from mentally unstable person**



Front page book cover of Sayuri Ogawa's book in Japanese.

Another person Worth relies heavily on to paint a black picture of the [Family Federation](#), is an apostate using the pseudonym Sayuri Ogawa. The text makes many false claims about her. She is presented as a 26-year-old woman. Ogawa has a long history of mental disorders, and it is surprising that Atlantic would publish grand statements from a mentally unstable person.

Above-mentioned Fukuda conducted extensive investigations into Ogawa's claims and reported.

**BITTER WINTER** "Her parents' testimony and the 'Hanada' magazine's investigation clarified that what Sayuri told the media may not conceivably be true." (['Sayuri Ogawa': When 'Apostates' Slander the Unification Church. 5. Why the Story Is Not Believable, Bitter Winter](#) 6th March 2023)

**Donations**

Another claim, retold unquestioningly by Worth, is that the [Family Federation](#) is pressuring members to make large donations. This is a standard allegation from the network of leftwing lawyers. Dr. Massimo Introvigne criticizes such a claim,



Dr. Massimo Introvigne, April 2023

"In its general principles, the [Unification Church](#)'s theology of donations is surprisingly similar to its Catholic and Protestant counterparts. [...]"

Ultimately, the problem is theological and philosophical. For a believer, donations may be deep spiritual experiences. For an atheist, or somebody who believes that groups such as the [Unification Church](#) are not 'real' religions, no caution would be good enough, and no donation would ever be recognized as the fruit

of a free and reasonable choice." ([The Abe Assassination. Donations to the Unification Church: Separating Facts from Fiction](#), [Bitter Winter](#) 3rd Sept. 2022)

Masumi Fukuda explains the origin of many of the donation claims,

"Unfortunately, however, even if the donors are convinced at the time of the donation that they are donating freely, as time goes by, their faith may wane. Their relatives may rush to the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales to recover the donation.

The donors may be persuaded by lawyers from the Communist Party of Japan or the former Socialist Party that they have been 'deceived', and a lawsuit against the religious organization for the return of the donation may follow. In fact, there are many cases in which relatives consulted with the Network on how to force the donors-believers to sue." ([The Plot to Destroy the Unification Church in Japan. 3. Fraudulent Lawsuits](#), written by Masumi Fukuda, published in [Bitter Winter](#) 26th June 2023.)

### **Derogatory terms**

The lengthy Atlantic report uses several derogatory terms about the [Family Federation](#), such as referring to it as the "Moonies". It is denigratory and demeaning and is used by some to make fun of and belittle the [Unification Church](#), now called the [Family Federation](#), and its members. This term is often used by leftwing and anti-religious activists.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, "Moonie" is a pejorative term. Major US media outlets such as the New York Times and Chicago Tribune have also stopped using this term for the same reason.

"Bizarre Atlantic Report Condoning Terror" - text: Knut Holdhus

More about condoning terror: [Deliberate Lies Caused Abe Assassination](#)

Even more about condoning terror: [Le Monde Diplomatique Excusing Terror](#)

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# BITTER WINTER

A MAGAZINE ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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## "Sayuri Ogawa": When "Apostates" Slander the Unification Church. 5. Why the Story Is Not Believable

03/06/2023 MASUMI FUKUDA

A+ | A-

Her parents' testimony and the "Hanada" magazine's investigation clarified that what Sayuri told the media may not conceivably be true.

by Masumi Fukuda

Article 5 of 5. Read [article 1](#), [article 2](#), [article 3](#), and [article 4](#).



Ogawa (right) during a TV show with one of the leading anti-Unification-Church lawyers, Masaki Kito (center).

During my interview, Yoshihiko, Sayuri's father, tried his best to speak calmly, but there was only one moment when his face flushed and his voice became choked up. That was when he was talking about his daughter's criticism of the adoptions that had been conducted by the members of the Family Federation for a long time. She said, "It is almost like human trafficking."

"I assume that someone is making her say that. We have been talking to our daughter previously how we felt when we gave my daughters up for adoption, and I am sure she understands that... As for our second daughter, we once gave her up for adoption, but she came back after six months because the family were not confident enough they could raise her due to their difficult circumstances. We talked to our second daughter about this around September last year, before this issue hit the media, and she understood."

Sayuri testified, "I cannot forget my sister's expression when she cried and said, 'Mom, why did you give me up for adoption?'"

But Yoshihiko strongly denies this: "It's impossible. I asked my second daughter and she said she has no idea of this."

"My wife and I were lucky enough to have many children. We wanted to help families who were unable to have children. We decided that if we would have a fifth and a sixth child, we would give them to families who were in desperate need of children. None of this was mediated by the church."

"There is a strange criticism, he said, that 'Arranging the adoption before birth is treating the child as an object and violating human rights.' However, we have formed a trusting relationship based on faith with the future adoptive parents even before the birth of our children who were later adopted, and we cooperated with them until the day of the birth. The two families raise the child together for one month, then the child is adopted. What is the problem with that? After that, the two families continue to interact with each other, and the siblings have a good relationship with one another. In fact, our third daughter is particularly concerned about us and her sister [Sayuri] now."

Currently, Sayuri and her parents are communicating again via LINE, and the communication seems to work. The parents hope to meet their daughter in person to make sure of the facts and clear up any misunderstandings, as their



memories of past events differ so much. And until then, they ask her to refrain from appearing in the media. Sayuri says, "Okay, let's talk about it." But she would like at least one of her parents to appear in a documentary that Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) is currently planning to feature her, and she says she would like to have a frank talk with them, to work out their misunderstandings.

Yoshihiko replied, "I do not want to have such an important talk in the public media to clear up misunderstandings between parents and child. Why do we need the media to repair a parent-child relationship?"

Her parents continue to ask Sayuri to send them her past bank transaction history but each time she refuses, claiming that she cannot send it because her lawyer would not allow her to do so or because the former Unification Church would misuse it.

Sayuri mentioned a lawyer. In fact, there is a trial she is involved in right now. Noriko Ishigaki, a member of the House of Councilors [the Upper house of the National Diet] for the Constitutional Democratic Party, posted a video of the hearing held by the party with Ogawa on her YouTube channel.

However, on November 2, 2022, the Family Federation requested a provisional injunction from the Tokyo District Court ordering the deletion of the contents, claiming that they were factually inaccurate and constituted defamation against the church.

The part of Ogawa's testimony that the Family Federation finds specially objectionable is the following: "During the collective wedding in which my parents were married, the founder Reverend Sun Myung Moon said, 'Even if you need to borrow money or sell your body, Japan, the country of Eve, must give donations to Korea, the country of Adam.' Echoing these words, dad, who was the head of his local church, said the same thing to his flock during the service."

According to the church, Reverend Sun Myung Moon was speaking in Korean to his male Korean believers at that time, and he did not say, "The Japanese who are from the country of Eve –" or anything like that. In particular, the phrase "even if you sell your body" is a literal translation from Korean. The original meaning is completely different. It means "even if you have to work very hard," and it is derived from the theological principle that "even if you work hard, it is always insufficient in the presence of Heaven." Therefore, Yoshihiko, who was the head minister of the church, would never give such a sermon to his believers.



*Reverend Moon speaking in Japan in 1973. Source: FFWPU.*

The response from Councilor Noriko Ishigaki to this provisional injunction was extremely insincere. The first trial hearing was scheduled on December 6, but prior to this, the court was contacted by Mr. Takashi Yamaguchi and other lawyers belonging to the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales, representing Councilor Ishigaki. They asked to postpone the first hearing because Ogawa was suffering from irritable bowel syndrome and could not attend.

However, I checked Ogawa's Twitter feed and found out that she regularly posted on Twitter every day. She even posted a video featuring herself. On December 4, she announced that she would appear on a live webcast program of the Tokyo Broadcasting System, titled "Houdou 1930," scheduled to be aired on December 6. How can a sick person appear on a live program that requires mental and physical strength? In other words, she showed no signs of illness at all.

On the other hand, the court decided that waiting for too many days would be against the purpose of the provisional injunction, and the first hearing was held on December 6 as scheduled. At that time, Attorney Yamaguchi offered many weak excuses, such as "We only met with Ogawa a week ago, so we have yet to hear her story," and "It takes time to listen to her."

What I can assume from this is that it is the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales itself that is using Ogawa to further its own agenda, even if they may be very much aware of the lack of plausibility of her statements. Therefore, they try as far as it is possible to avoid bringing her to the forefront.







Press conference against the Unification Church/Family Federation by lawyers of the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales on July 29, 2022, featuring attorneys Yasuo Kawai, Hiroshi Yamaguchi, and Masaki Kito. Screenshot.

This can be assumed from another fact. I was eager to talk to Sayuri as well, so I requested an interview through Yoshihiko by e-mail. However, the reply came from Attorney Takashi Yamaguchi.

The answer was “no interviews,” and he even refused to be interviewed himself about her. Therefore, I replied to him that, “I now understand that Attorney Yamaguchi and the National Network of Lawyers Against Spiritual Sales do not care about the facts.”

The Network would not hesitate to use all means to destroy the former Unification Church. They are willing to tell all sort of stories, including lies, to achieve what they believe is a righteous purpose. They often throw the words “anti-social” and “cult” at the former Unification Church, but considering their involvement in the abduction and confinement of believers, one may wonder whether they are not more deserving of these labels themselves.

The facts are quite simple. Sayuri Ogawa was not a victim of the former Unification Church, nor was she subjected to religious abuse by her parents, who were members of the church. Her parents raised her with sufficient love. If there was some trouble between parents and daughters, even if I accept most of their claims, it was purely a family problem.

In the first place, it is easy to notice that there are many contradictions in Sayuri’s statements if you just listen a little bit carefully. However, the media and politicians did not verify her statements, did not pay any attention to the contradictions, and continued to use Ogawa as their convenient tool. As a result, misinformation was spread, and the honor of the parents and the Family Federation was severely offended. And the most serious problem is that national politics was distorted by her false statements.

Her father, Yoshihiko, said, “But I am sure that one day my daughter’s misunderstandings will be cleared up and she will come back to herself. Then, my daughter might be criticized. That’s what I worry about. And moreover, this is an important time for both my daughter and her baby in the postpartum period. We are capable of resisting slander thanks to the training we have undertaken as part of our life of faith, but it would be unbearable for us that our daughter will be spoken ill of. My daughter has been constantly saying lately that it is dangerous for her to see us, but who is it that makes her say arch things? Who says she can only speak in front of the media? I pray that my daughter will not be used any further by the media. ‘Sayuri Ogawa’ is not who she really is. I want to talk to X (Sayuri’s real name). My daughter is, at heart, a good girl who loves her parents.”



TAGGED WITH: APOSTATES, JAPAN, UNIFICATION CHURCH



### Masumi Fukuda

**Masumi Fukuda** was born in Yokohama in 1956. She graduated from the Department of Sociology of Rikkyo University. After working for a specialty magazine and a magazine production company, she became a freelance journalist. She has reported and written about crime, Russia, and other topics. Her books include “Stalin: A Portrait of His Family” (Bungei Shunju), “Russia, an Assassination State: In Search of a Missing Journalist” (Shinchosha), “The True Nature of Political Correctness” (Hojosha), and others. In 2007, she won the 6th Shincho Documentary Award for “Fabrication: The Truth About the ‘Murder Teacher’ in Fukuoka” (Shinchosha).

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