

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Sang Hun Lee's First Critique Of Marxism's 50th Anniversary

Knut Holdhus
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The cover of "Communism; A Critique and Counterproposal" published 1973.

"Communism: A Critique and Counterproposal" Turns 50

50 years ago, in the autumn of 1973, "Communism: A Critique and Counterproposal" was published by the Freedom Leadership Foundation in Washington DC, USA.



Dr. Sang-heun (Sang Hun) Lee (1914-1997)

The 240-page book is written by Dr. Sang-heun (Sang Hun) Lee (1914-1997) and was originally published in Korean in 1972. The publication does more than revealing the radical errors of communist theory.

As explained in the preface,

"An effective critique of communism requires the presentation of a counterproposal because communism is not mere philosophy, but a guide for behaviour and a plan for practice. Communism is a theory for action designed to gather and organize the masses of people, especially young people. Therefore, without a new theory for action we cannot expect to make a radical critique of communism [...]."

The counterproposal that Dr. Lee presents, is based on the [Unification Principles](#), the fundamental teachings of [Sun Myung Moon](#).

In the book summary on the back page of the cover, the [Principles](#) underlying the counterproposal are introduced as,

"a contemporary, spiritual, scientific and historical view of man and the universe, offering a positive alternative to Marxist ideology. It shows scientifically that cooperation and harmony - not contradiction and struggle as Marxism asserts - are the motivating forces of human progress. It proclaims nuclear family unity, centered on [God](#), as the dynamic center of a moral revolution which can create a truly harmonious world."

The critique is summarized as,

"For the first time a thorough analysis and in-depth critique of Marxist theory is presented in such a way that completely reveals the undeniable shortcomings and errors in an outdated, materialistic doctrine."



Karl Marx (1818-1883)

In the concluding chapter, Lee summarizes what he calls the grave errors of communist theory and points out that "history is not moving towards the communist society, as Marx predicted. Rather Lee anticipates "a true classless society" that becomes possible to create when we discover the physical and spiritual principles that [God](#), the Creator, originally intended an ideal human society to be based on.

Marx's first grave error, according to Dr. Lee, is found in the Marxist labour theory of value,

"The laws of economic movement which he developed and formulated have been shown to be erroneous, with few exceptions, and thus his predictions concerning economic movement were also largely incorrect. (p.231)"

The second grave error is that,

"his dialectical materialism is not a philosophy of truth, but only a means to rationalize violent revolution, which was his real purpose. In order to philosophically support his theory that class struggle and revolution are necessary in social progress, he twisted the laws of progress in the natural world. In spite of the great difference between the progress of nature and that of society, he misled people through conceptual ambiguity and semantic deceptions to think that the two were the same (p.232)."

The third grave error of Marxist thought is his claim that "social progress is the result of the development of the productive forces which takes place according to material conditions." Lee asserts that Marx did not grasp the important role of human desires, will and creativity, that it is not just social and economic conditions that determine the direction of the development,

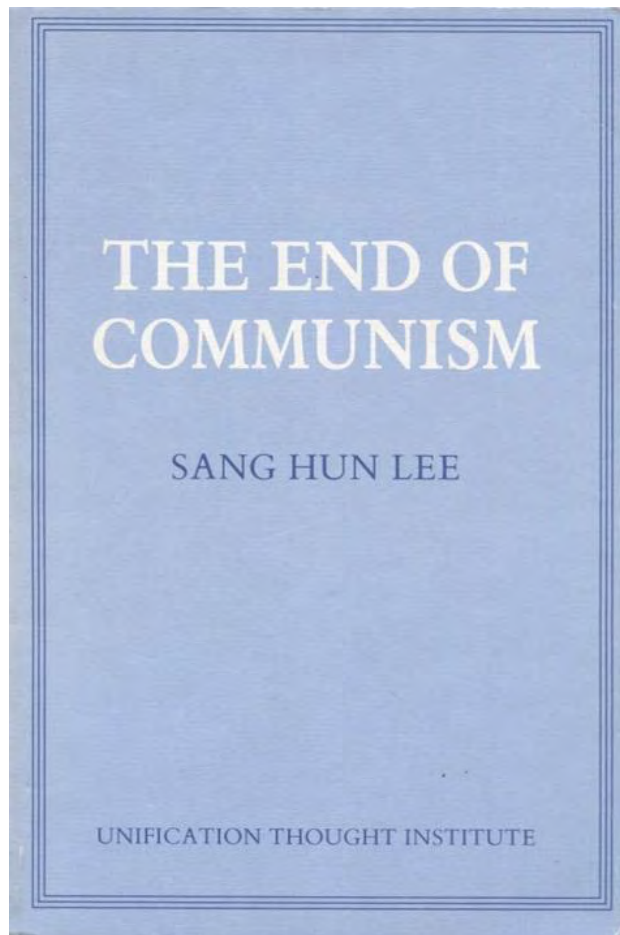
"Social progress is the result of two elements: man's will and the material conditions. Marx underestimated the role of human consciousness in social progress" (p.232).

In a later publication, "The End of Communism" (English edition 1985), Lee formulates a much more comprehensive critique of communism. He points out that his 1973 book,

"dealt effectively only with communist theory itself, not with the roots and fruits of communism [...] (Preface viii).

The theory of alienation is claimed to be the starting point of Marx's thought - the roots. The fruits are "the reality of present-day socialist economy". Lee describes the stagnation and collapse of the socialist economy.

Dr. Lee points out that it is important to study and criticize communist thought or Marxism as it is their ideology that drives activists to commit atrocities like acts of terror in their constant pursuit of a communist revolution.



The front page of the cover of "The End Communism" (1985)

If Sang-heun Lee (1914-1997) had still been writing today, he might well have added a section about so-called cultural Marxism - a key concept for understanding the communist movement of today. Karl Marx thought in his time that socialist revolutions would break out in the industrial world, where the proletariat would rule the bourgeoisie and establish dictatorships in the name of the people. However, as history has shown, it did not work out that way. This has even led many Marxist thinkers to believe that Marx was simply wrong and that a different method was needed to create a communist world.

This became the origin of so-called cultural Marxism. The communist goals could only be achieved through a "long march through the institutions". All the traditional institutions of Western society had to be infiltrated and attacked - the media, the church, the universities, the schools, the publishing industry, the film industry, etc. In addition, [marriage](#), the [family](#), traditional values, and the perception of gender had to be criticized and broken down.

The English edition of "The End of Communism" was published by Unification Thought Institute, New York, USA, and is a translation of the Japanese edition from 1983.

Sang-heun Lee has also authored several editions of [Unification Thought](#), the latest of which was New Essentials of Unification Thought (published posthumously in 2006)

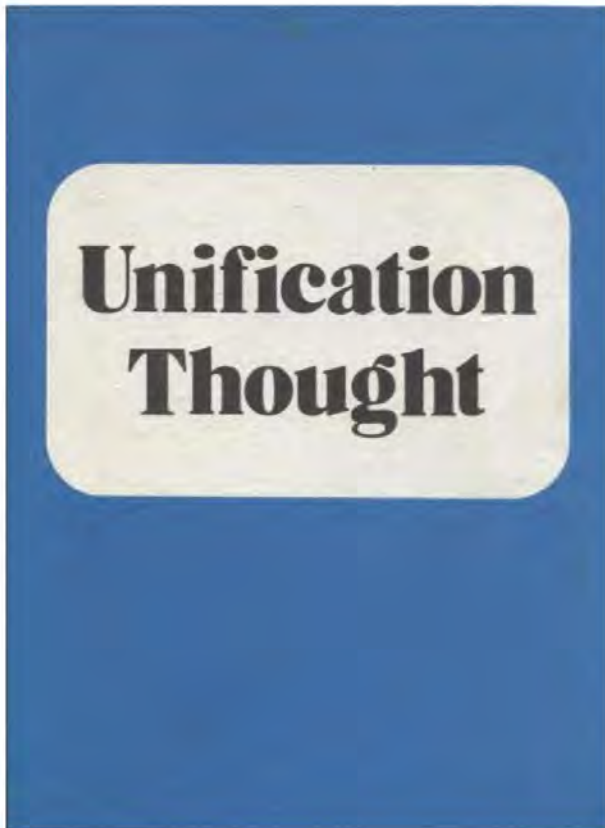
"50 Years since Lee's First Critique of Marxism" - text: Knut Holdhus



Unification Thought Turns 50 Years

September 22, 2023 • Knut Holdhus

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50 years since the first version of Unification Thought was published

Unification Thought celebrates these days its 50th anniversary. The first English version of the Korean publication *Tongil sasang yogang* (통일 사상 요강 – Outline (Essentials) of Unification Thought) was published in the autumn of 1973 as *Unification Thought*.



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According to its author Dr. Sang-heun Lee (1914-1997), a follower of [Sun Myung Moon](#),

“One of the necessary conditions of this time is the establishment of an ideological system which is able to meet the needs of the times. In such a situation, I am going to introduce a new system of thought.”
(Preface, *Unification Thought*, p.xiv)

[Father Moon](#) described the potential of Unification Thought,



[Sun Myung Moon](#) and [Sang-heun Lee](#) hiking in South Korea in 1972. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

“Unification Thought is a powerful key capable of solving any problem, no matter how difficult it may be. When this thought is applied to society, various social problems can be settled. [...] This Thought presents a new view of life, a new view of the world, a new view of the universe, and a new view of God’s work in history. It also offers a principle of integration that can bring different religious doctrines and philosophies into unity, while preserving their diverse characteristics.” (From a speech [Father Moon](#) gave in South Korea 16th December 1985, quoted from *Foreword, Unification Medical Science* by Shigehiro Suzuki, UTI, 2013)

Dr. Lee had studied [Father Moon’s](#) teachings deeply and was struck by their systematic and logical nature. Dr. Lee explained in his *Unification Thought Study Guide* from January 1974 that “Unification Thought was published after philosophically arranging and systematizing” the content of two of the chapters of the [Unification Principles](#), primarily the first chapter about various essential principles of the created universe, but also the chapter about key principles involved in the historical process of recreating the world originally intended by the Creator.



Sang-heun Lee presented [Father Moon’s](#) thought in standard philosophical categories and areas. The first book from 1973 was written based on the lecture notes Dr. Lee had used in seminars in South Korea and Japan.

Over the years, several new English editions of Unification Thought appeared, including

Explaining Unification Thought in 1981,

Fundamentals of Unification Thought in 1991,

Essentials of Unification Thought in 1992, and

New Essentials of



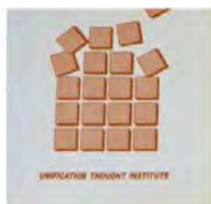
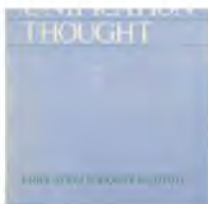
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Unification Thought in 2006.

Seong-bae Jin (Sung Bae Jin), president of the *Unification Thought Institute* the last 20 years, explains,



Seong-bae Jin (Sung Bae Jin).
Photo: FFWPU

“The reason why new books, with new titles, continued to be published over the years is because the [Rev. Sun Myung Moon](#) has continually revealed new content in the numerous speeches and sermons he has delivered to a great variety of audiences worldwide. In accordance with the changing world situation, his thought continually takes on new and

different dimensions.

In the process of systematizing the [Rev. Moon's](#) thought, the author continually integrated this new content within the context of the existing system of thought, and published the result as a new book. Nonetheless, the essence, or core, of the Unification Thought perspective has remained unchanged. New content was added in order to supplement and enrich this basic perspective, and this would appear as a new book.” (*Foreword, New Essentials of Unification Thought, p.vii*)

Unification Thought covers many different philosophical areas like God, human



The Ancient of Days by William Blake (1757-1827). Photo: Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain](#) image

nature, nature, ethics, art, education, knowledge, logic, method, and history. Still those make up one organic whole and present a holistic view. The reason is that all the different parts of Unification Thought are based on what is regarded as the fundamental principles [God](#) followed and put in place when creating the universe in which we live. Those principles all originate in [God](#), the Great Unifier, who intended both the physical and spiritual parts of our great macro-cosmos to be part of one large unified organic whole. Our world can be said to be intended to reflect [God's](#) nature.

Simply put, the goal of Unification Thought may be expressed as creating the kind of world that [God](#) originally desired, an ideal world of eternal peace and freedom.

Unification Thought presupposes the [existence of God](#) as well as the existence of the spirit world (life after death) and is based on four fundamental concepts – [God](#), the purpose of creation, the interdependence of beings, and relationships based on giving and receiving.

The latest version of Unification Thought *New Essentials of*

The latest version of Unification Thought, *New Essentials of Unification Thought*, contains 11 chapters:

1. Theory of the Original Image
2. Ontology: A Theory of Being
3. Theory of the Original Human Nature
4. Axiology: A Theory of Value
5. Theory of Education
6. Ethics
7. Theory of Art
8. Theory of History
9. Epistemology
10. Logic
11. Methodology

Unification Thought can be said to explain reality in a more comprehensive way than today's materialistic philosophies.

Unification Thought has sometimes been called *Head-Wing Thought* or *Godism*. According to Seong-bae Jin, President of the *Unification Thought Institute of Korea*,

“Head-Wing Thought seeks to unite both left-wing and right-wing ideas by overcoming materialism and humanism.

Godism embraces and unites all religions by clarifying God's fundamental attributes, His basic principles and methods of designing and creating the universe, and the universal laws of science and morality which underlie all of natural and social reality.

It sets forth a practical way by which a peaceful world might be realized, a world wherein all human beings might live together as one family, united in one heart, with God as the True Parent. Therefore, Unification Thought has the potential of accomplishing a truly historic task.” (*Foreword, New Essentials of Unification Thought*, p.viii)

The Unification Thought Institute (UTI) has also published books criticizing materialistic theories, e.g.

In 1985, *The End of Communism*, by Dr. Sang-heun Lee (Sang Hun Lee)

In 1987 *The New Cultural Revolution and Unification Thought*, by Dr. Sang-heun Lee.

In 1990, *The Concept of an Asian Community and the Unity of Religions and of Thought Systems*, by various scholars.

In 1990, *The Establishment of a New Culture and Unification Thought*, by various scholars.

In 1996, *From Evolution Theory to A New Creation Theory – Errors in Darwinism and a Proposal from Unification Thought*, by a team of Unification Thought scholars, under the supervision of Sang-heun Lee.

In addition, Dr. Sang-heun Lee authored *Theory of the Spirit World in Unification Thought*, published in *Unification*



world in unification thought, published in *Unification Thought Quarterly* 33, Summer 1995, pp. 28-36.

Unification Thought Institute has also published a series of books, *Textbooks on Unification Science*, where different scholars try to show how Unification Thought may be applied to various scientific fields.

The series include:



Pursuing the Unity of Science, by Dr. Seong-bae Jin (Sung Bae Jin).

Physics and Unification Thought, by Dr. Ching-Ching Chang (1929-2023).

The Unification Sciences: Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, by Dr. Richard Lewis.

Unification Medical Science, by Dr. Shigehiro Suzuki.

Unification Perspectives on Peace and Conflict Transformation, by Dr. Thomas Ward and Dr. Claude Perrottet.

Unification Ethics of True Love, by Akifumi Otani.

Featured image above: The first English edition of *Unification Thought*, published 1973 by the Unification Thought Institute. Photo: Knut Holdhus

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