

Function of the Family in the Process of Commitment Within the Unification Movement

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The family has been central to the Unification Movement. The ideal world of love is expressed in the family. According to Unification theology “the first man and woman did not fulfill their responsibility, and as a result, they did not perfect themselves, and they left the realm of God’s love.” (Kwak, 1980). The Fall is used to explain the social problems which confront our society today.

Confusion throughout society about standards of value and conduct has caused the strong trend toward egoism, and accompanying it, the breakdown of the family and the rapid increases in crime, juvenile delinquency and all kinds of immorality, which are unsettling the foundations of society and causing a loss of hope in the future (Kwak, 1980).

Part of the solution to these problems will be to “create a one-family world society.” The family becomes the “basic unit” for the restoring of God’s love and the ideal state of being which was lost in the Fall.

The Principle affirms that only through establishing order in the home can love be planted in the dry heart of modern man,

and only then can a true relationship be established between husband and wife, between parents and children, among brothers and sisters, and among neighbors (Kwak, 1980).

In this paper the author will describe the concept of commitment as related to the family in the Unification Movement using Kanter's model. Next, the author will develop a model demonstrating the progression of the seeking individual, from close personal ties with members of the Unification Movement, to commitment to the group, to acceptance of the ideology of *Divine Principle* and matched marriage arranged by Rev. Moon. The latter then leads to creation of a family and reinforcement of commitment to the group and the *Divine Principle*.

Present statistics show that 89.7 percent of the Unification Church members in the U.S. are between the ages of 18 and 29; which coincides with the average age for marriage in our society. The Unification Church attempts to enhance the stability of the family through the development of commitment to their religious community and God.

The concept of commitment is vital to the Unification Movement. Howard Becker stated that commitment is linked to the concept of "side-bets." The more a person invests of himself into an organization, the more difficult it becomes to leave it, and the more committed he is to it. Underlying all commitments is the system of values to which the individual and the group subscribe.

Rosabeth Kanter further developed the concept of commitment in her book, *Commitment and Community*. While her concern dealt with nineteenth century communes, her theory can also apply to families within the Unification Movement. Kanter defined commitment as:

A means of the attachment of the self to the requirements of social relations that are seen as self-expressive. Commitment links self-interest to social requirements. When a person is committed, what he wants to do (through internal feeling) is the same as what he has to do (according to external demands) and thus he gives to the group what it needs to maintain itself,

at the same time he gets what he needs to nourish his own sense of self (Kanter, 1972).

The survival of the Unification Movement is dependent upon the ability of the organization to develop commitment within members. This must include not only commitment to the larger organization, but also to the family unit. Within the organization, socialization must produce commitment involving (1) retention of members, (2) group cohesiveness, and (3) social control. An organization may have any of these as paramount to the organization, but has to include all if the organization is to survive.

Kanter develops the concept of commitment and how a "person orients himself to a social system instrumentally, affectively, and morally" (Kanter, p. 68). In defining these various types of commitment Kanter explains instrumental commitment in the following way:

Commitment to continued participation in a system involves primarily a person's cognitive or instrumental orientations. When profits and costs are considered, participants find that the cost of leaving the system would be greater than the cost of remaining; "profit," in a net psychic sense, compels continued participation. In a more general sense, this kind of commitment can be conceptualized as commitment to a social system role. It may be called instrumental commitment (Kanter, pp. 68-69).

She defines affective commitment as follows:

Commitment to relationships, to group solidarity, involves primarily a person's cathectic orientations; ties of emotion bind members to each other and to the community they form, and gratifications stem from involvement with all members of the group. Solidarity should be high; infighting and jealousy low. A cohesive group has strong emotional bonds and can withstand threats to its existence; members "stick together." This quality may be called affective commitment (Kanter, p. 69).

Moral commitment is defined as:

Commitment to uphold norms, obey the authority of the group, and support its values, involves primarily a person's evaluation orientations. When demands made by the system are evaluated as right, moral, just, or expressing one's own values, obedience to these demands becomes a normative necessity and sanctioning by the system is regarded as appropriate. This quality is here designated moral commitment (Kanter, p. 69).

The following table by Richardson, Stewart and Simmonds summarizes Kanter's model of commitment.

Basic Elements of Kanter's Model of Commitment

Types	Mechanisms	Effects of Mechanisms
Instrumental Commitment	<i>Sacrifice</i> Investment	<i>Detaching</i> Attaching
Affective Commitment	<i>Renunciation</i> Communion	<i>Detaching</i> Attaching
Moral Commitment	<i>Mortification</i> Transcendence	<i>Detaching</i> Attaching

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The idea that one continues to participate in the Unification Movement depends on a person's instrumental orientation. The costs and profits orientation of remaining in the movement or leaving it are related to the person's perception of the benefits he/she could derive if he/she were to remain within the movement vs. the cost of leaving. The sacrifices a person has made and the investment of time, self, and money make it more difficult to leave. If the person has been matched, again the cost can be very great.

Commitment to relationships, to group solidarity, involves primarily a person's cathectic orientations. This is affective commitment. The development of this high solidarity through primary relationships helps in the creation of community. There is a detachment from the "old life style" and communion with the new members.

The moral commitment involves the socialization of the individual to uphold and support the values of the group. The person incorporates these values into his/her life and keeps the norms surrounding these values. In a sense, it is the superego which is operating at this level.

Within the Unification Movement the various types of commitment are visible. The Unification Movement develops instrumental commitment through the sacrifices made by the members. Kanter states that the more it costs a person to do something, the more valuable he will consider it in order to justify the expense. The sacrifices of careers, education, time and in some cases their families of orientation help a person develop a commitment to the Unification Movement. Part of this sacrifice entails relinquishing personal selection of a mate. Within the American society great emphasis is placed on this individual choice; within the Unification Movement the selection may be made by Rev. Moon with the matched couple's approval. The norm is to accept the match and it appears that social pressure from other church members is very great to remain with the person selected by Rev. Moon.

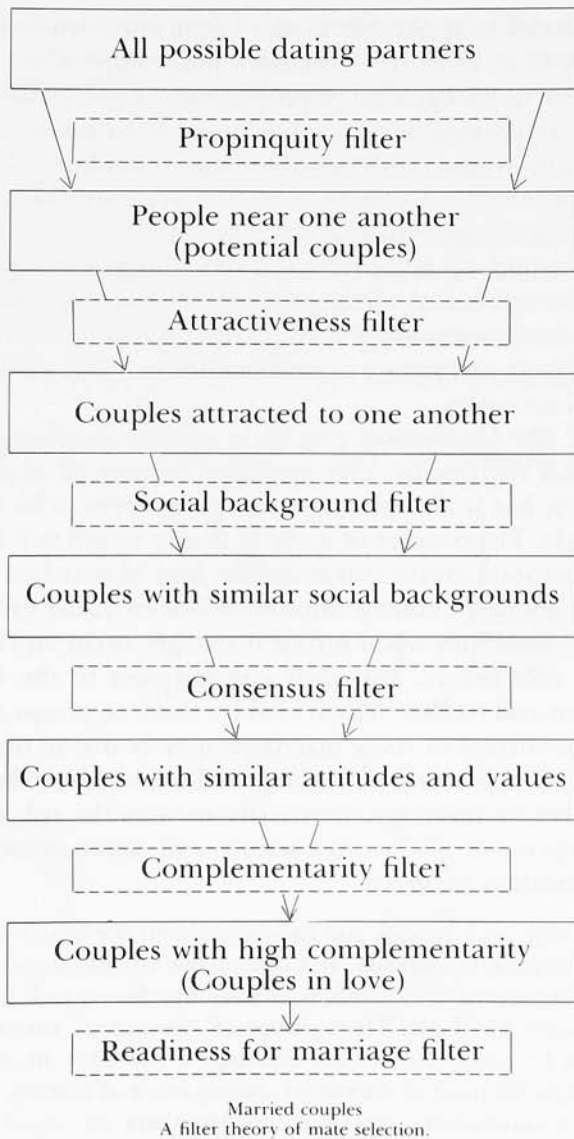
In the matching and marriage, the investment of self and property further links the member with the group and makes leaving costly. To leave at this point would involve not only the loss of a religion, but also one's family. The seemingly irreversibility of investment of self results in the feeling that one has come into the true church and cannot leave it.

Within the Unification Movement the affective commitment involves renunciation and communion. Renunciation of the ways of the world which are in conflict with the Unification Movement can involve being ostracized by one's friends and family of orientation. This renunciation of former support groups makes new converts more dependent on Unification members for emotional support. As satisfaction develops within these emotional attachments, and gratification within the group increases, the feeling of fellowship, group cohesiveness, the "we" feeling and equality are developed.

Moral commitment involves mortification which provides the

person with a new self-image. Fundraising on the street is one form of mortification. The mortification involves the socialization of new members to the *Divine Principle*. The transcendence involves the experience of the power within the community. Rev. Moon's selection of mates for such a large and varied number of members demonstrates this power.

The norm for mate selection in the larger society is very different from that of the Unification Church. Mate selection in the larger society is affected by various factors which Kerckhoff & Davis describe as follows:



This table is an adaptation of data from Alan C. Kerckhoff and Keith E. Davis, "Value Consensus and Need Complementarity in Mate Selection," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 27 (1962), and is used by permission of the authors and the publisher.

This model is applicable to the Unification Movement at the consensus filter level. This becomes more important than attractiveness, social background or propinquity. The selection of a mate is a very important decision which has been taken over by the church. The secular society values the individual selection of a mate. The individual's goals, however, are minor in view of the organization's goals which are paramount.

This method of selection has many functional aspects which relieves the individual of the decision of selecting a mate and the peer pressure surrounding dating and engagement activities. Relieved of these pressures a person can devote more of his/her time to church activities.

Part of the Unification emphasis is upon developing a world based upon the family. This emphasis insures all members they will marry, but it also places pressures on those who wish to remain single. The concept of a world family which will bring peace and brotherhood means that members may be matched with a person from another country, another ethnic or racial group. Members make headlines when mixed marriages occur and the couples have not met before. But their commitment to the Unification Movement and to Rev. Moon enables them to accept this match. Part of the success of these marriages may be due to the age of the members. The practice of waiting until members are in their mid-twenties before marriage statistically reduces the risk of divorce.

Marriage is one of the most serious and sacred events in the life of a Unification member.

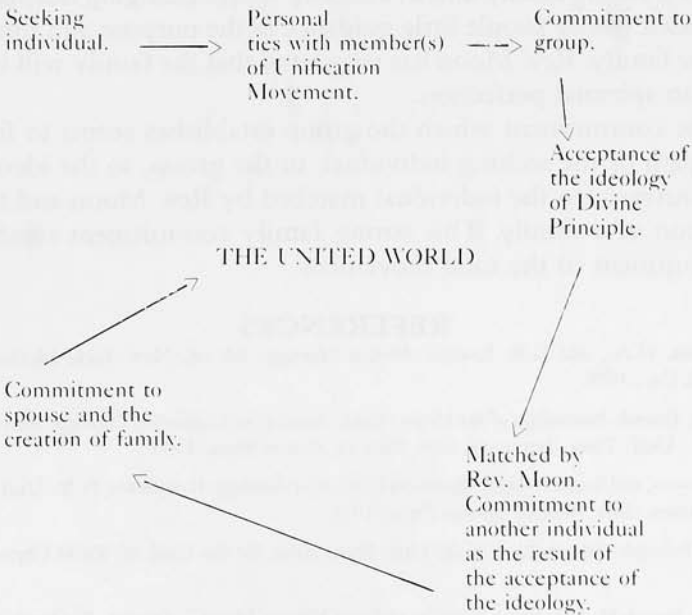
Marriage is a serious and holy sacrament for which lengthy preparation is required, and one of the notable aspects is the willingness of the members to have Mr. Moon pick their life partners for them. The concept of "arranged" marriages is alien to young Americans although it has been an accepted pattern for most of humanity during most of history. This is not a compulsory arrangement. Members are urged to express their preferences, but they do have a deep trust in Mr. Moon as the voice of God for them.

One recently engaged man remarked: "You try to have

confidence in your prayer life that God knows what is best for you, that He will work through Reverend Moon to suggest the proper match for you.” (Fichter, 1979).

This is counter to the events of engagement in the larger society. The secular society places great importance upon romantic love, individual choice, and sex rather than God and establishing a God-centered family. The following model summarizes the author’s thoughts about commitment and the Unification family:

CYCLE OF COMMITMENT TO THE UNIFICATION FAMILY



The individual is usually converted into the group as the result of friendship with a Unification member, not by accepting the ideology. As the convert sacrifices and invests more of her/himself

in the group, the more committed he/she becomes to the group. The convert proceeds through the cycle of attachment to individuals or small groups to the larger group. When the member accepts the ideology of *Divine Principle* she/he has become so committed he/she is willing to accept a stranger as a spouse. This differs dramatically from the rest of society where personal ties are paramount in the selection of a mate. Commitment to marriage among matched couples and creation of family completes the cycle in the seeking individual and reinforces commitment to the group. It is possible that the member could withdraw from the Unification Movement at any point in the cycle.

The Unification Movement has taken positive steps in the building of a strong family unit in a society where changing norms have provided young people little guidance in the purpose and function of the family. Rev. Moon has suggested that the family will be the way to spiritual perfection.

The commitment which the group establishes seems to follow this path of the seeking individual, to the group, to the ideology, commitment to the individual matched by Rev. Moon and to the creation of a family. This strong family commitment reinforces commitment to the total movement.

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