

The 14th International Symposium on Unification Thought
November 30- December 2, 2002
Tokyo, Japan

Inquiry into the Senses of Unity in Unification Thought

Dr. Keisuke Noda
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
Unification Theological Seminary, New York, USA

Introduction

Unity is one of the central and unique characteristics of Unification Thought. Unification Thought uses the concept of unity in various senses and forms, yet it does not explain the diversity of the senses which belongs to Unification Thought. This essay attempts to clarify some of the senses and forms of unity, that are running through like a web of strings, in the theoretical constructs of Unification Thought. The aim of this essay is not to give an exhaustive and/or comprehensive list of these senses, but to show that there are diverse senses in the concept of unity in Unification Thought, and how and in which senses Unification Thought seeks these unities. The clarification of the senses of unity will explain how Unification Thought can relate with other philosophies, disciplines, and social reality. I will discuss the issue under five headings, whose presentation is more juxtapository than systematic: 1) mind/body unity, 2) homogeneity and diversity: quest for unity, 3) hierarchical unity and dual purposes, 4) categorical unity: meta-methodological unity of give-and-receive action, 5) unity as a coherent system: axiomatic deductive unity and taxonomical unity. As a conclusion, I will discuss the original diversity and non-original conflicts in philosophy, and the position of Unification Thought for the unity of thoughts.

1. Mind/body Unity in the Sense of the Control of Bodily Desires by Moral Command of Practical Reason or Conscience

A. Mind/body Unity as the Starting Point for the Resolution of Conflicts

1) Conflicts as Facts of Life

We find conflicts in every sphere of social life in the present and the past. No matter how human

being desired to attain unity in the sense of peaceful co-existence, conflicts and struggles remained as unwanted facts of human life. The quest for unity has been, therefore, a perennial goal of humanity regardless of historical period and at geographical locations.

How can we resolve a variety of conflicts and bring about the unity we have been longing for? This has been one of the most difficult yet important questions. If there is a thought that can resolve this seemingly unsolvable question, it will truly be the hope for humanity.

How does Unification Thought answer this question? Where does it see the origin of the problem, and the solution? To fully answer this question, we will have to step into the realm of the religious teachings of Rev. Moon and inquire into such questions as the origin of evil, the questions of theodicy, and other relevant religious issues. I am not going to develop the question quite that far. I will keep it within the general parameters of philosophy although the boundary between philosophy and religion is often blurred.

2) Happiness and Unity: Individuals and Society

Why do we desire unity in the sense of peace or peaceful co-existence? Why do we pursue the unity in the sense of harmonious co-existence on every level of social life? One way of answering this question would be that peace is an essential component of happiness, and as Aristotle rightly pointed out, happiness is the self-sufficient ultimate purpose of human life. Questions of why you do this or that can be traced back to a series of reasons or purposes and these reasons are ultimately answered by a final end of human life, that is, happiness. Happiness is self-sufficient for the reason that the question of why you want to be happy is senseless and this end needs no further end behind, although the content of happiness is still arguable.

Is happiness communal, or a collaborative matter, or a matter of subjective feeling of individuals? On one hand, the happiness seems to be a matter of individuals. How one interprets one's life ultimately seems to rest on the individual. Regardless of how others feel about their lives, each individual can interpret one's life in the way he or she wants. Religious practitioners try to attain individual perfection or "enlightenment" even within the midst of adverse conditions. On the other hand, an individual's life is deeply affected by how others live. A human being is born out of human relationships of his or her parents and can grow only when someone else like parents nurture a vulnerable new born baby. Needless to say, each human being exists interdependently with other fellow humans. The well being and crisis of a country affects the life of each family and the situation of the families affects individual's lives. The happiness of the whole and that of the individual is mutually interdependent.

What, then, does the happiness of the whole exactly mean? What does it mean to say that this country is a happy one or that family is a happy one? The happiness of any larger social entity seems to rest ultimately on the happiness of the constituting individuals.

The individual is the smallest unit, which constitute all social institutions such as family, clan, tribe, nation, and world. While it is true that individual cannot be genuinely happy without the happiness of the whole, i.e., the larger social entity, and the whole cannot be genuinely happy without the happiness of the individuals. What does the happiness of the whole mean? It means the happiness of the constituting individuals. Happiness in this sense comes to be a matter of all individuals who constitute the whole social unit. Accordingly, the obstacle to the happiness of the individual, that is, conflict or struggle between mind and body in the individual, is a serious obstacle to attain happiness. For this reason, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon points out in her public speech entitled "The Origin of Peace is God,"

I think that everyone, at some point in life, searches for the origin of peace and happiness. From where do peace and happiness really come? They do not originate from America, or Korea, or the United Nations. The crucial issue is how we human beings, whose minds and bodies are in conflict, can come to embrace a true view of the universe and find peace and happiness in our hearts.¹

The question is how can Unification Thought address the question of solving the conflict between mind and body.

3) The task of uniting mind and body

Unification Thought takes the conflict of mind and body, that is, the conflict between the moral commands of practical reason or conscience and bodily desires,² as a serious obstacle to the attainment of the happiness of the whole. In moral philosophies in the history of philosophy, philosophers took the problem of mind/body conflict seriously. For both Socrates and Plato, the unity of mind/body is central to the meaning of philosophical activity in general. For Socrates, "care of the soul" has the primary importance among all human activities including philosophical activities. Plato defined philosophy as a "practice of death," that is, the liberation of the soul from the domination of lustful desires of body. Plato made this claim within the context of his belief in the immortality of the soul. In the 18th century, the conflict between the mind and body also led Kant to the postulation of life after death where the human being pursues the unity of mind and body for eternity. Plato and Kant as well as other moral philosophers did not provide the definitive solution to the conflict between mind and body.

Within the framework of Unification Thought, which presupposes the existence of God and that of the spirit world, the human being is supposed to cultivate one's heart or spirit self while one is living on the earth. Man grows in spirit and will eternally live in the spirit world after death. The unity of mind of body, that is, the control of bodily desires by desires for values in mind, is the condition to

cultivate one's spirit self.

Even if we limit the context of our discussion to the common sense level, the control of bodily desires by moral conscience is important. Domination of the mind by bodily desires can easily lead one to the destruction of character development, ruin one's career, marriage, family, and other forms of social life. The task of the unity of mind and body has thus a prime importance for any thought, which pursues peace and happiness. The question is how can we attain this difficult task and how Unification Thought answers this question.

B. How Can Mind and Body Be United? : True Love as the Power of Unity

How then can a mind have control over bodily desires? Unification Thought claims that there are only two ways. One is the way of decreasing the power of physical desires and another is that of empowering the mind. In "Fundamental Theory of Unification," Rev. Moon says,

There are only two ways to achieve mind and body unity. The first is by striking the body; the second is by unity without doing so.³

The first method, i.e., decreasing the power of bodily desires or "striking the body," is consistent with the ascetic life in religious traditions. An ascetic life focuses on restricting bodily desires in such a way as to elevate one's consciousness to religious truth.

The second method, i.e., empowering the mind, is a path by means of true love. Unification Thought claims that the unity of mind/body is not possible by means of any other method than true love that includes faith, knowledge, and other external powers. Faith alone is insufficient, knowledge of moral principles or religious truth alone is insufficient, commitment or willful determination alone is insufficient, and exercise of practical reason alone is also insufficient to unite mind and body. From our everyday life experiences and actual cases, we know the fact that even the most knowledgeable and faithful person is vulnerable to temptations of lustful desires. We can see the fact that even a person like St. Paul suffered for the uncontrollable drives of lust and admitted the weakness, who had deep faith, religious knowledge, firm commitment, and wisdom.

Seen from the perspective of Unification Thought, what is missing is the power of mind. Mind is too weak to carry out what it desires to do. When mind is weak, physical desires overpowered and swept away any whispering of mind. This is not a matter of knowledge of good and evil. As Augustine rightly admitted, man can be driven by lust not because he does not know but even if he knew he was not supposed to do so. What, then, is the element to empower the mind?

Unification Thought takes true love as the sole element to empower the mind. Mind can carry out what it desires only when it is empowered by true love. The unity of mind and body is, according to Unification Thought, possible only when the command of practical reason, conscience, faith and

knowledge are empowered by true love, that is, God's love. In Section 5 "Unity Through True Love" of the "Fundamental Theory of Unification," Rev. Moon says,

Where would the unity take place? The unity does not take place in the thought but in loving. Your mind and body unites only at the moment you love. That is the way the unity would take place. The unity is achieved only through love.

Oneness will occur only this way. Not only the perfect unity, the vertical unity, but also the horizontal unity begins with love.⁴

The unity by means of love encompasses a large scope: from that of the mind/body of an individual, to husband/wife, parents/children in a family, tribes, races, nations, religious traditions, and any other human relationships among human society. The application of true love as the core element of unity is extended to the relationship between God and human beings.

Exercise of true love is manifested in three typical forms. First, acts of giving and forgetting about the fact of giving. Second, acts of forgiving others, including one's own enemies. Third, a lifestyle of living for the sake of larger entities and greater causes. The altruistic lifestyle of exercising true love is summed up as a phrase, "a life for the sake of others."

This spirit of altruism is also consistent with the methodology of UT. The core methodology of Unification Thought is give-and-receive action. This method reflects the spirit of giving by placing priority on the acts of giving. The spirit here is different from popular concepts of give and take that do not imply any sense of altruism.

2. Homogeneity and Diversity: Quest for Unity

Every individual, from humans to animals, plants, and materials, exists as a unity of internal constitutive components. Components are combined together to form a unity. While keeping the internal unity to maintain its identity, each individual also seeks interactions with other individuals. These individuals in some cases form a larger entity through the formation of interactive unity.

Why then does every individual seek to establish relationships with other individuals and try to interact? Why don't individuals remain isolated without entering into the relationships with others?

Why, for example, does a man want to establish a relationship with a woman and a woman with a man? Why do individuals seek to establish friendships with other humans? Why do humans want to interact with anything around them?

Each individual seeks unity in the broad sense of the term. Interactions make two separate individuals one. This oneness is in some cases the formation of a larger entity. This interactive unity nevertheless allows individuals to experience a kind of transcendence over the boundary of individuals and leads them to enter a higher unity that is available only if they enter into the

relationships. A smaller scale unity within the individuals seeks unity on a larger scale. From the subatomic level to the cosmic level, diverse kinds of unity are formed. Like an orchestra, where musical instruments form a variety of unities in the flow of time and space, numerous unities on all levels are formed in the cosmos.

According to Unification Thought, all are one in God. Sungsang and Hyungsang, Yang and Yin are both homogeneous and exist in oneness. The homogeneous one in God is manifested into the world with articulations, distinctions, and differences. These diverse individuated beings can interact each other due to their homogeneity in the origin. These beings seek unity thereby becoming the one, which resembles God who is one.

Unification Thought explains this process as one of Origin-Division-Union Action, ODU action in short. The original unity in God is manifested as divided beings in the Creation, and these divided individuals seek unity by entering interactive relationships of giving-and-receiving. Unification Thought explains existence as a process of unity by ODU Action. An individual thus exists as a unity formed as the result of a number of ODU processes.

3. Hierarchical Unity and Dual Purposes

Layers of unity from a smaller scale to a larger scale can be looked at from the perspective of purpose. In the view of Unification Thought, every being exists with dual purposes, that is, the purpose for the individual and the purpose for the whole. In human society, an individual exists for the sake of oneself and at the same time for the sake of larger social entities such as family, clan, tribe, social institutions, nation, and world. The idea of true love prescribes individuals to give priority to the purpose for the whole over the purpose of the individual, which allows each individual to align his or her individual purpose to the purpose for the whole. When each constituting member of a social entity aligns each purpose for the individual to the purpose for the whole, unity in the sense of harmony is generated in the social entity.

For example, if the individual members of a family lived for the betterment of the family and aligned their private lives in harmony with the whole, the social unity as a family is generated. For a family to maintain its self-identity, this collective unity is necessary. This organizational unity is possible only when each member aligns individual purposes to the purpose of the family and "lives for the sake of others." Likewise when each family can align its individual purpose to the purpose of nation or other social entity, a unity as a nation or as a social entity is generated. Like individuals, families or other social entities can practice the code of "living for the sake of others" collectively.

When each nation collectively works together under the same principle of true love, unity as a world can be generated. When human beings align the goal of their lives in harmony with the cosmic purpose under God's purpose of creation, a cosmic unity, which includes the entire Creation under God, is achieved under the ultimate purpose of God's will. This harmonious coordination of dual

purposes forms the hierarchical unity of all beings.⁵

4. Categorical Unity: Meta-methodological Unity of Give-and-receive Action

The methodology in UT is a give-and-receive method. It is claimed that the method of give-and-receive “unifies traditional methodologies.”⁶ In what sense, does the method of give-and-receive “unify” other philosophical methodologies?

At first glance, the give-and-receive method seems to be empty in the sense that it lacks the specific utility that is usually tied to specific disciplines. The axiomatic-deductive method is used in constructing mathematical theory and the hypothetico-deductive method, experimental method, and induction are all used in the formation of scientific theories. Language analysis, the phenomenological method, and the hermeneutic method have utility in philosophical discourse. If we go beyond strictly philosophical methodology, we can find a variety of methods in diverse disciplines. Every disciplinary quest is accompanied with its awareness about a specific methodology practiced and accepted in each disciplinary community.

The method of giving-and-receiving is quite general. The method of give-and-receive underlies or is operative in all kinds of philosophic methods,⁷ be it deductive or inductive, analytic or synthetic, transcendental, phenomenological, hermeneutic, and so on. Here, we can understand the method of give-and-receive as a general principle that underlies all particular methods. The relationship between Unification Methodology and the methodologies in philosophical traditions is that of general-to-specific. A seeming lack of a particular utility of the method of giving-and-receiving is, I believe, due to its generality. Hence, the unity of methods means the subsumption of particular methodologies within the framework of the generality of the method of give-and-receive.

5. Unity as a Coherent System: Axiomatic-deductive Unity and Taxonomic Unity

A. Deductive Unity and Theoretical Consistency

Unification Thought seems to derive the ontological constructs of each theory from those of God. Let us examine the link between the theory of God’s nature, i.e., theory of the Original Image, and that of human nature, i.e., the theory of the original human nature. The components of the original human nature are derived from the “divine image” and “divine character” in God. The ground of justification of why and how human natures are such and such seems to hinge on the natures of God. Other branches of Unification Thought such as the theories of education, ethics, logic, and epistemology are constructed consistently with the theory of original human nature and the theory of the Original Image.

This type of constructing theory is similar to that of an axiomatic deductive model. In the

axiomatic deductive model, the theory begins with a number of self-evident axioms. From these limited numbers of principles or claims, one constructs a theory by a chain of reasoning. The end result is a theoretical system whose internal connections are firmly established by deductive logical chains. The typical model of this type of theory is mathematics.

One of the crucial problems for this type of construction is the validity of the first principles or axiomatic claims out of which a chain of reasoning begins. How secure the point of departure is is crucial for an axiomatic deductive theory.

A particular difficulty for axiomatic deductive constructions of theistic theories including Unification Thought, is justification of the starting points, that is, the natures of God and his existence. For God, not only His natures but also His existence itself is still subject to dispute. Methodological consideration of how one can justify the natures of God and His existence in Unification Thought is a task to be carried out as a preliminary issue.

Although Unification Thought is not purely an axiomatic deductive theory like mathematics, it has an element of similar deductive construction. This semi-deductive unity gives a consistency to the whole architectonic of Unification Thought.

B. Taxonomical Unity and the Independence of Particular Sciences

When we examine the practical theories of Unification Thought such as the theories of education, ethics, history, and art, we notice one common characteristic. Unlike similar titles in general scholarship, theories in Unification Thought are more like a description of a general framework rather than a detailed description of specific principles, particular methods and theories.

Each discipline has a particular object of study and subject matter. The methodology, the way to validate knowledge, and the perspective or angle of analysis can vary both within the same discipline and from a discipline to discipline. Diverse theories are born out of the combination of these factors.

Unification Thought proposes a framework within which diverse disciplinary studies can be conducted with relative independence. It is relative in the sense that Unification Thought holds its own theistic presuppositions and they may be in conflict with the presuppositions of some theories.

A type of unity Unification Thought is trying to establish among other disciplines is probably a taxonomical one. Taxonomy gives a framework without intervening the contents. For example, various educational theories, which constantly develop, are understood within the framework of the Unification Theory of Education, while they retain their autonomy and independence of theoretical progress. The taxonomical unity is loose and flexible. This looseness and flexibility is beneficial to the disciplinary autonomy and development for particular theoretical fields.

Conclusion: Unification Thought and the Unity of Thoughts: Original Diversity and Non-original

Conflicts

Philosophy is so diverse today that it is not easy even to define what it is. One may define it as everything philosophers do. From the perspective of Unification Thought, there are two threads running through this diversity. One is original diversity and the other is the non-original conflict of ideas due to the perverted reality of human being.

One of the reasons for the diversity of philosophy is due to the diversity of subject matter, method of inquiry, and perspective. The divisions in twentieth century philosophy such as language analysis, phenomenology, and hermeneutics is of this kind. There are certainly various fundamental disagreements among them. Their disagreements can be a positive impetus for the development of philosophy. Unification Thought is compatible with this kind of division and diversity. Unification Thought can be seen as a general framework within which diverse styles and methods of philosophy can develop with their own impetus.

In answering the question about the possibility of the unity of philosophies, the late Dr. Sang Hun Lee says, "Unification Thought seeks to discover the commonality (common view of value) among philosophers and to guide them into cooperation."⁸ The "common view of value" means the broad purpose of serving for the betterment of humanity and Unificationism is calling for the spirit of "cooperation" in service for the common goal.

There is another reason for the diversity of philosophy. As I discussed before, the human condition is seriously perverted due to the conflict of mind and body. In the field of ontology, this conflict caused two types of incompatible theories of being, idealism and materialism. Rather than seeing beings as the dynamic unity of the dual characteristics of Sungsang and Hyungsang, these two views of reality took one of the dual characteristics as "THE reality." The division of various types of idealism and those of materialism is understood in Unification Thought as division caused by the conflicts between mind and body.

From the perspective of Unification Thought, the domination of the mind's pursuit of invisible values by bodily desires and the conflicts between the desires of the mind and those of the body are caused by the perverted human condition. Dialectical materialism is built upon these two fundamental perverted realities, that is, the materialist view of reality and the dialectic as a justification of conflicts and struggles. Dialectical materialism is unique among philosophical theories due to the combination within its theoretical construct of these two perverted human conditions.

Unification Thought presupposes two ontological claims, that is, the existence of God and that of the spirit world. Some philosophical theories such as dialectical materialism are in direct conflict with these claims of Unification Thought. While Unification Thought is trying to bring unity in various senses among diverse philosophical ideas, it also denies all types of philosophical theories built upon the perverted reality of human beings. Beginning with the unity of mind and body, Unification Thought will continually pursue the unity in thought and in reality for the harmonious

developments of an ideal cultural world.

¹ Moon, Hak Ja Han “The Origin of Peace is God.” American Speaking Tour, September 16, 2002. Washington D.C.

² Late Dr. Lee explains the conflict between mind and body as that of spirit mind and physical mind. UTI, *Essentials of Unification Thought: the head-wing thought*, Tokyo: UTI, 1992. p. 93-95.

³ Moon, Sun Myung. *The way of Unification in God’s Providence*, New York: HAS-UWC, 1997. P. 167.

⁴ Ibid. p. 178. The translation has been modified to make it closer to the original by the author.

⁵ *Essentials*. P. 66-69.

⁶ Ibid. p. 403

⁷ Ibid. p. 411-16.

⁸ Lee, Sang Hun. *The New Cultural Revolution and Unification Thought*, Tokyo, Japan: Unification Thought Institute, 1987. P. 46.