

# Cambridge Elements

Elements in New Religious Movements

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## THE UNIFICATION CHURCH MOVEMENT

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## The Unification Church Movement

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**Abstract:** This Element recounts the tumultuous history of the Unification Church Movement (UCM), deriving from the messianic ministry of MOON Sun Myung (1920–2012). It begins with the UCM's origins in Korea and traces its development into a global conglomerate of churches, related nonprofit organizations, and for-profit businesses. Known for its mass marriages, or "International Marriage Blessings," the UCM has been one of the most controversial new religious movements throughout the world, particularly in Japan and the West. The post-Moon UCM is a textbook case of a new religious movement transitioning from its founding to succeeding generations, a transition marked by this emergence of schismatic organizations. Utilizing both external documents and internal UCM sources, the account highlights the leading personalities, organizations, and circumstances which facilitated the UCM's rise, present challenges, and future development.

**Keywords:** Sun Myung Moon, Unification Church, Family Federation, True Parents, Divine Principle

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