



DISCUSSANT RESPONSE

by

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to Antony Flew's

LOGIC: THE LOGIC OF UNIFICATION THOUGHT

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Committee VI
Unification Thought and the Global
Transformation of Consciousness
Response to: "Logic: The Logic of Unification Thought" by Antony
Flew
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Professor Flew gives us a thoughtful and searching essay on Unification Logic. As a propaedeutic, he sharply questions the German classical philosophical context in which Dr. Lee has chosen to place his exposition on Logic. This was the same context out of which Karl Marx sprang and it gives rise to certain philosophical flaws in that it carries with it certain unexamined assumptions, including the belief that "apriori reasoning can discover necessary truths." Furthermore, Marx and Engels seemingly failed to distinguish between Hume's "relations of ideas" and "matters of fact," and they also never distinguished between logical and physical necessity. Professor Flew, interestingly, argues that Dr. Lee is "too kind" in his treatment of Dialectical Materialism and its spokespersons. He holds that Dr. Lee should raise some "obvious awkward questions," and that he should object to the way in which Marxists "collapse the fundamental distinction" between "(verbal) contradictions" and "(physical) conflicts and tensions." The famous "egg" example illustrates the point. In short, Professor Flew sharply criticizes the Marxist philosophy.

Concerning the section on Logic itself he argues that Dr. Lee's opening sentences collapse certain important distinctions:

between contingent regularities and true laws of nature and between prescriptive laws and descriptive laws. If there is a "law" of thinking, then free will is jeopardized. Students of the "normative principles of valid argument" seek after "structures of logically necessary truths and/or prescriptions for those who wish to argue validly."

In addressing Part II on "Unification Logic," he fears that Dr. Lee has "been keeping bad philosophical company with Heidegger on the issue of Geworfenheit and is sure that Heidegger "intended to speak for the whole of humankind rather than...himself alone" when speaking of the "meaninglessness" of life. Professor Flew states that talk of a "universal felt need for a Divinely provided purpose" does not succeed in generating that felt need within himself. He asks three questions in response to anyone who "offers to inform" him of "the existence, nature and purposes of their God," and "since Dr. Lee has not undertaken to answer any" of them, he proceeds to "The Logical Structure of the Original Image," the study of which leaves him "completely at a loss." Rather than an elaboration of the concept in other terms, he, again, wants "some indication of what" might be admitted as "relevant...reasons for either acceptance or rejection." Professor Flew next admits of some difficulty with the "three stages of cognition" (perception, understanding, reason). He would like to know "when and why" such a distinction should be made as well as "the proposed scope of application" of such a

distinction.

In the following section concerning "The Basic Law of Thinking," which treats the "law of give-and-take action," Professor Flew calls attention to the use of the traditional syllogism concerning Socrates, and enquires as to the "object of this exercise." If it is being used simply as a "confirming instance of the 'give-and-take law,'" he feels it is in danger of falling prey to the same objection of "prejudiced ingenuity" voiced in Section 3 against Engels with the Dialectics of Nature. On the other hand, if it is simply to help increase our understanding of valid inference, then, he contends, a Venn diagram would much better serve the purpose.

In the final section, "A Critique of Traditional Logic," Professor Flew considers the ways in which formal logic and symbolic logic are characterized in Unification Thought. Whereas Unification Thought is slightly critical of formal logic, Professor Flew finds nothing wrong with the statement that "formal logic has only dealt with the logical...without paying attention to other structures." It is a "defining characteristic" of scientists, he says, that they attempt "to deal only...with certain particular aspects of those always richer realities which are the objects studied." Again, whereas Unification Thought is somewhat critical of symbolic logic, Professor Flew finds nothing wrong with the statement that "symbolic logic is one-sided, because it disregards the factor of

pathos in normal language." Indeed, he says that "such 'one-sidedness' is not, surely, a fault in a discipline which deliberately abstracts from the world of everyday language to produce uninterpreted calculi? Where it would be a fault would be a study of everyday communication."

I am in considerable agreement with the spirit of Professor Flew's opening comments criticizing the German classical philosophy and appreciative of his effort to have Unificationists raise the qualitative level of Unification Logic. I must smile a little when he says he thinks Dr. Lee has been too kind towards past philosophies. Dr. Lee wants to point to what he sees as flaws in Marxist thought, with the purpose of helping Marxists come to a higher level of understanding of life and truth. Perhaps, if Professor Flew is correct, Dr. Lee will have been somewhat successful.

My first substantive comment has to do with Professor Flew's reaction to one of the statements in Unification Thought. On pages 315-16 it states: "Marxism has rightly asserted that human history has developed according to certain laws." I find nothing wrong with this statement. It is the Unification position that human history has, indeed, developed according to certain laws, the point being that there are laws operative in history, as Marxism points out. It is important, however, to understand correctly the nature of these laws. Whereas Marxism incorrectly holds them to be materialistic laws, they are, rather, spiritual

laws. Human history develops according to certain spiritual laws, but these are not inexorable laws of nature like the law of gravity. Rather they operate together with human free will to guide the progress of historical development.

I appreciate Professor Flew's comments on page 15 concerning the confusion in classification. Here I think he is correct. The author of Unification Thought, in systematizing the thought of the Reverend Moon, writes his text not as an academically trained philosopher, much less as a trained logician, but as a serious student of Unificationism. Some refinement in expression is surely called for.

On page 16 the quote from Heidegger is misunderstood. Unification Thought is interpreting Heidegger as speaking "for the whole of humankind." All human beings are to varying degrees uncertain as to the purpose for our life on this earth. In response to the three questions Professor Flew raises to Unification Thought, I would simply say that Unification Thought is assuming the view of God that was presented in its opening chapter. This is indicated throughout the text. The Theory of the Original Image is understood as being the basis for the other theories and the foundation upon which they are formulated. But this does not mean that the reader is asked to accept or reject it. The whole system of thought is offered essentially as an hypothesis, a new philosophical perspective, which the reader is asked to consider, most certainly with the pillars of his/her

reason. No philosophy, especially today, can be persuasive unless it satisfies the court of reason and intellect. A Unificationist may be disappointed that the theory does not generate any "felt need" in someone, but that is not its purpose. Its purpose is to offer a standard by which actual problems can be addressed and solved. Some people find it an interesting system of thought, and some do not. The very least a person can rightly be asked to do, however, is to understand what it is saying, to understand its position. It takes reflection to grasp Aristotelianism or Hegelianism. Unification Thought rightly asks for serious consideration.

Professor Flew's criticism of the "three stages" of cognition is appreciated and yet I wonder what the difficulty may be. Others, including Kant, have posited three stages in cognition. "Thinking," broadly taken, is easier to reflect upon if it is seen in its respective stages. For what it is worth, Unification Thought points out that these three stages of thought correlate with findings in the field of brain physiology. This is taken as some sense of support for its theory and its inner and outer quadruple bases (four position foundations). Perhaps this is exposed to the same problem of a "confirming instance" as mentioned earlier. A more important issue, it seems to me, is that of revelation. The question of revelation as a mode of knowledge, especially, is a question which Unification Thought has yet to address on a serious level.

Unification Thought posits the law of give-and-take action as the fundamental law of thinking and holds that the mechanics of the traditional Aristotelian logic operate on this basis. Figure 24, which is a quadruple base (four position foundation), is used to illustrate the way in which the different propositions of a syllogism are related as subject and object in order to reach a conclusion. It shows clearly that there is a kind of give-and-take action (collation or comparison action) carried out between two premises or statements, one as subject, the other as object. I do not think that a Venn diagram, although it is perhaps more popular or well-known, would/could make the same point with equal clarity. As for the use of the syllogism involving the honesty of Korean people, I must agree with Professor Flew and say that it is probably not the best choice for an example. Dr. Lee is relying on his own culture for an example meaningful to him. But, again, the point is that a syllogism functions according to the law of give-and-take action, which is held in Unification Thought to be the fundamental law of thinking. A poor example does not invalidate the principle involved, it just fails to illustrate it with the same clarity as might be produced by a good example, all distinctions between mediate and immediate inference notwithstanding.

Finally, Unification Thought is attempting to point out that Unification Logic is a "complete" logic, in the sense that it addresses both the content and the form of our thinking. Both

formal logic and symbolic logic, although they have a certain merit per se, fall short, in the perspective of Unification Thought because they do not treat both content and form. We must be concerned with what it is that we are thinking about, but we must also be concerned with thinking according to the correct rules of grammar, etc. so that our thinking is correct, meaningful, and appropriate to our life and our action in the world.