

English transcript of the documentary on True Father and the Unification Movement released by Austrian state TV (ORF)

Sunday, 21. October 2012

PRESENTER:

"I am a controversial person", wrote Rev. SMM himself in one of his books.

A bit more than a month ago, the founder of the UC or the Moon-Movement, Rev SMM passed away aged 92 in Korea. Opinions differ on the figure of SMM. Many accuse his excessive religious claim or were offended at his political engagement or his immense wealth. Yet, for many of his followers he is not just the founder of a new religion, but they revere him as the Messiah and Savior.

CHRISTIAN RATHNER created following portrait from interviews with followers and little-known film material.

**

For members of the UC this tree stands on special ground. On a world tour in 1965 their founder buried sacred soil from Korea and took soil of Vienna's city council park back to Korea.

Interview with PETER ZOEHRER (NL Austria):

"We call him True Father. Originally, Adam was supposed to become the true father of mankind, but due to the Fall he became our false father of mankind. In our view, Rev. Moon has laid the spiritual foundations to restore this position of the True Adam."

**

In the UC Center of Vienna, where people meet for Sunday Service, the death of the person that everybody knew in his or her own way is being commemorated.

ERNI LOOS (member UC Austria): "...When he stood in front of me, he looked at me with such a love, such a fatherly love that I've never experienced ever before."

PETER ZOEHRER: "I've been fishing with him in Alaska, in Uruguay, in Brazil, in Korea. He's a good fisherman!"

**

"I am a controversial person", he writes in his autobiography, "The mere mention of my name causes trouble in the world." And yet, it is said, he was spending his whole life speaking just about peace.

Indeed, SMM made many enthusiastic followers over the years, but also many enemies. In the US he was even sentenced to prison due to tax evasion - but his friends and followers stress he was innocent.

E. LOOS: "If you do something that doesn't fit the norm, people regard it with suspicion. It just doesn't fit their concepts."

The man bursting with energy has always been uncomfortable - even for his own people.

PETER HAIDER (President UPF Austria): "He was a person who never remained quiet and never gave up to challenge our limits"...

**

When SMM was born in Korea in 1920, the country suffered Japanese occupation. He experiences torture and imprisonment because he is engaged in protests against the foreign rule. At the age of 10 yrs his family converts from Confucianism to reformed Christianity. WW II liberates Korea from the Japanese, but the country is split into two spheres of influence. The Korea War deepens the division.

SMM goes to N-Korea as a preacherman. There he is arrested as an alleged spy of the South and is sentenced to forced labor. There he is said to have become a "prison saint".

He writes history as he, the former prisoner, meets North Korean leader Kim Il Sung in 1991. However, the reconciliation of the two Koreas remains an unfulfilled heart's desire.

**

"May I present the Rev SMM" - 1971 he enters USA as combative Anti-Communist. TF (subtitled): "More than anything, communism which is based on atheism, is the most serious threat. It is infiltrating all corners of the nation..."

**

Rev. Moon supports conservative politicians and founds a newspaper, the Washington Times. After the Cold War the fight against communism fades into the background. PETER HAIDER: "After Communism was overcome, the task of the Washington Times was to strengthen and promote the family."

SMM ascribes his spiritual calling to a Jesus-Vision he experienced at the age of 16. His task would be to create a world of peace without sin. Ever since he sees himself to be sent by God, a God who is sad about the suffering of mankind. After fleeing from North Korea; he writes his spiritual main work: "the Divine Principle".

In 1954 he creates a community that is supposed to serve the unification of Christian churches, the Moon-Movement begins to take shape. In Korea and especially Japan Moon overcomes initial opposition and finds open ears. His community goes international.

**

Rev SMM and his 2nd wife Hak Ja Han are believed to be the True Parents, who are to fulfill the unfinished salvation work of Jesus. In big ceremonies often 1000s, even millions of brides and bridegrooms vow their marriage pledges 100,000 followers allow Moon to choose their future spouses. This way international couples are formed, from the view of the movement: A peace project! PETER ZOEHRER: "If for example partners of former enemy nations form couples and in true love try to overcome the problems and differences, the kids won't know who the enemy is!"

"One family under god". According to UC-theology a new genealogy begins now, the sin of Adam is overcome and in Moon's couple the return of Christ has been realized. Contrary to Moon, Jesus could only bring spiritual salvation.

PETER ZOEHRER: "The difference between spiritual and full salvation is that the Kingdom of Heaven can be realized in the "here and now."

"King of peace", "True Father of mankind", "Savior of the world". The list of honor titles is long, and they do not have the same significance to everyone.

PETER HAIDER: "I admit this is challenging for me, too. He was no ideologist. Someone formulated it this way: There is no right faith, only the right being and the right action."

**

The Unification Movement is not merely a church. It is a conglomerate of various projects. Among them the Unification Church and the UPF. Also; many companies and businesses are part of it. Rev Moon became very rich over the years.

PETER ZOEHRER: "He was not just a prophet. To us he was the Messiah who changes the world. For this purpose money is needed. And he always invested this money into projects, be it inter-religious dialogue or scientific conferences."

Tirelessly Rev. Moon is working for his cause. More and more the UN seems to be floor on which religions find a common ground to work for a peaceful future.

PETER ZOEHRER: "Of course there are liberals and hardliners etc. among us. But generally, it is the attitude of the UM that God can work through all religions."

A man who knew how to live is now dead, but many still feel close to him.

ERNIE LOOS: "Whether he is in Korea or in the spirit world, it doesn't matter really. I can communicate with him whenever I want."

Rev Moon has declared peace as his great goal. yet he was indeed controversial and he will probably remain so beyond his death.