

Rev. Sun Myung Moon, first to propagate the culture of Korea to the world

Il-Shik Hong

August 24, 2021

Transcribed by Knut Holdhus



A commemorative speech by Dr. Il-Shik Hong, chairman of the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee 2014-2020, president of Korea University 1994-1998, one of South Korea's top three universities. The speech was given on 24th August 2021 in Cheongshim Peace World Center, Gapyeong, South Korea at the 9th commemorative service of the ascension of Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

As a person who has always respected the exceptional peace ideology and great achievements of Rev. Sun Myung Moon, I am truly honoured to be chosen to give this speech, an in-memoriam address on the 9th anniversary of his holy ascension.

I believe that Rev. Moon was the first pioneer to propagate the culture and ideology of Korea to all parts of the world, as well as the most widely respected Korean in the world.

My first meeting with Rev. Moon dates back forty-some years to 1980. At the time, I was working as a professor in Korea University's College of Liberal Arts, and also serving as research director of the Institute of Korean Studies. As such I was quite immersed in the compilation of the "Chinese-Korean Unabridged Dictionary".

We had been having much difficulty in procuring funds for the compilation, when Rev. Moon readily provided what was then quite a large sum in support of our project even though he and I were complete strangers. He said, "The compilation of the Chinese-Korean Unabridged Dictionary will not only serve as a cornerstone of exchange between Korea and China in the future, but will also be directly linked to the

fate of Korea in the coming days. His words and determination, shown at a time when Korea was yet to establish diplomatic relations with China, made me realize what a great and remarkable man Rev. Moon is.

Afterwards, through various other experiences, I was also able to realize that Rev. Moon's great ideology, philosophy and vision are the new peace ideology for humanity created by fusing the Christian ideology of the West with the traditional ideology of Korea.

Recently, in the international community, including the UN, discussions are being held actively on "global citizenship", which entails all of humanity coming together in solidarity transcending nationality.

From a century before that, however, Rev. Moon took the next step from "global citizenship" and spoke of "global familyship". In order to bring about a peaceful world of humanity living as one family, Rev. Moon invested endless passion, superhuman energy and an enormous amount of money to carry out his interreligious, international and interracial movement on a global scale. Moreover, he attained incredible results in all fields and spheres, which is an almost impossible feat for a single individual to achieve.

However, what is more important, is for us to not only revere his greatest achievements, but also to take the next step, and reflect upon what he believed in and dreamt of. This is because human thought is flexible, unrestricted and limitless, to the point where it can transcend and embrace the entire universe.

Isn't it true that all kinds of unique cultural phenomena originating from the young Korean generation, such as the trend of K-pop and the Korean wave led by "BTS" and several girl groups are quickly spreading like wildfire across the world today? They are helping to assimilate the popular culture of the entire world to become something more akin to that of Korea.

What this means is that for the first time in history Koreans and Korean culture have moved from the tributary to the mainstream in the creation of human cultural history. Instead of being a passive object, they have become an active protagonist (subject) and moved in from the periphery where they had been following others, to the center where they are leading others. This is an actual fact and reality recognized by all people of the world. However, when we reflect upon it, we can see that this great and unbelievable change and turnaround is not a mere coincidence. We cannot but be deeply moved, for we are the ones who know that this phenomenon is actually the germination of seeds sown earlier by Rev. Moon, despite all kinds of difficulties.

In 2014, two years after Rev. Moon ascended to the eternal realm, the Kingdom of Heaven, I was put in charge of the Sunhak Peace Prize Committee, created by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon to memorialize his great peace ideology and achievements, where I served faithfully until the fourth award ceremony.

I believe that Rev. Moon in heaven is feeling deeply rewarded to see what has become a global peace prize in such a short time.

It is also my firm belief that Rev. Moon's heartfelt love for all humanity will become a great beacon in human history and light the way for us all in the future.

Dear Rev. Moon, who I am sure is looking down upon us from heaven at this very moment, please give us great wisdom and courage, and help us bring together all of humanity as one global family through your great ideology, philosophy and vision.

I pray for Rev. Moon in heaven to be eternally in peace.