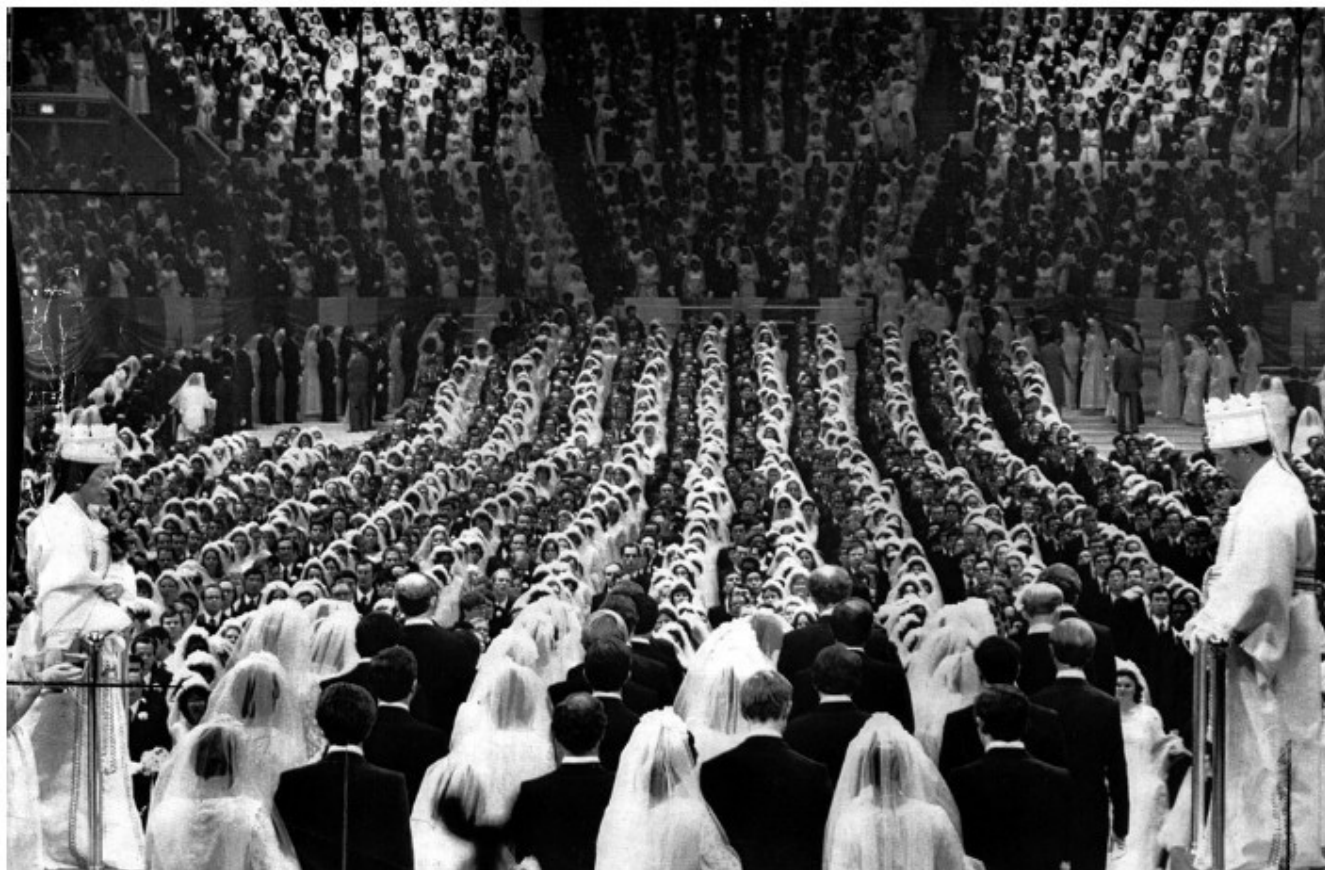


Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Self-Proclaimed Messiah Who Built Religious Movement, Dies at 92

By DANIEL J. WAKIN SEPT. 2, 2012



The Rev. Sun Myung Moon, right, with his wife, Hak Ja Han, married 2,075 couples at Madison Square Garden in 1982. United Press International

Church founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon dies at 92



In this Saturday, June 25, 2005 file photo, Unification Church leader Rev. Sun Myung Moon speaks during his "Now is God's Time" rally in New York. (AP Photo/John Marshall Mantel)

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GAPYEONG, South Korea -- Officials say the religious leader who founded the Unification Church and built it into a multibillion-dollar business empire has died in South Korea at age 92.

Church officials said Monday that the Rev. Sun Myung Moon died at a hospital the church owns near his home in Gapyeong (GAHP' young) after being hospitalized with pneumonia last month.

The patriarch and founder of the controversial Unification Church gained fame in the 1970s and 1980s for pairing up and marrying off thousands of followers at elaborate mass weddings. Critics accused the church of demanding cult-like devotion from its followers.

The church also built a business empire that included newspapers, schools, a ski resort and dozens of other ventures in several countries, including a peace institute, carmaker and hotel in North Korea.

Read more: <http://www.cp24.com/mobile/world/church-founder-rev-sun-myung-moon-dies-at-92-1.939926#ixzz25Mh4NeoD>