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Special Event



The Unification Movement: A Profile

WHERE: University of Vienna
Seminar room 5, 1st Floor

Schenkenstraße 8-10, 1010 Vienna

WHEN: 26 May 2014, 18:30-20:00

MODERATION:

Hans Gerald Hödl (University of Vienna)

Lukas Pokorny (Stockholm University)

LANGUAGE: English

Founded in 1954 by Mun Sŏn-myŏng (1920–2012), within a few decades the South Korea-based Unification Movement (UM) has become a global religious organisation, spanning five continents and enthusiastically engaging in peace promotion and interfaith dialogue. Notably, the UM has also been part and parcel of recent Austrian religious history, from its long-lasting court struggle for formal recognition as an association in the 1970s and early 1980s, to the role it has been ascribed by the media throughout the decades as the epitome of a ‘dangerous cult’—a public stigma in recent years largely transferred to Scientology—and its strident call for reform of Austrian religious law.

Peter Zöhner, the national leader of FFWPU (Family Federation for World Peace and Unification; i.e. the religious core organisation) Austria, will introduce the history and the main doctrinal tenets of the UM, also providing first-hand insights into the group’s current affairs. The event will conclude with a Q&A, providing the opportunity to engage in discussion with a major representative of the UM in an academic setting.

The seminar has been jointly organised by the Department of Religious Studies and the Interdisciplinary Research Platform ‘Religion and Transformation in Contemporary European Society’, both at the University of Vienna.

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