

Forum on Cultural Differences between Korea and the West

Juraj Lajda
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Bratislava, Slovakia - UPF Slovakia organized a well-advertised event in Bratislava on Nov. 10, 2014 on "The cultural differences between Korea and the West." The presentation was inspired by the book titled *Doing Business with Koreans* by Prof. Che So-il which was recently translated and published by the Ideal publishing house.

The event was held in a modern office building in the town center. That evening an enormous traffic jam blocked the inner city, so organizers appreciated every person who did arrive. UPF Secretary General Milos Klas greeted the audience of almost 40 persons that included two historians, a filmmaker and a lawyer from the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The first presentation was given by the publisher, Dr. Juraj Lajda. To catch everybody's attention, he introduced two students, who performed a skit acting as a Korean businessman and his English partner. Afterwards, Dr. Lajda explained about the differences of their background and mindset and why they could not understand each other correctly. Since he has three children who are studying in Korea, he was able to tell many first-hand experiences about the differences in philosophy and outlook of people in the Far East and Europe. He also gave a short outline about the fantastic economic development after the Korean War, and many other points of interest.

The second presentation was given by Mr. Milos Prochazka, who worked as a translator for Korean companies and presently is doing post-graduate studies of the Korean language at the Comenius University in Bratislava. He talked about his own experiences with the differences in background and understanding and about resulting conflicts, be it during business meetings or between Korean management and Slovak or Czech employees.

The pertinent presentations were well received and provoked a lively discussion afterwards. All guests said that they enjoyed the meeting very much and are willing to attend similar events.