

## UPF Bratislava, Slovakia: China's Ideology - Communism Plus Confucianism?

Barbara Grabner  
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Bratislava, Slovakia - UPF presented a talk on the return of Confucius to a position of respect in China, despite being demonized for many years.

Despite harsh winter conditions, the lecture room of the UPF Peace Embassy was filled on January 25, 2023, for the presentation "China's Present Ideology - Communism Plus Confucianism?"



A special honor was the presence of Dr. Marina Čarnogurská, an internationally known Sinologist of classical Chinese philosophy and literature. She enriched the discussion with her expert knowledge. UPF Chairman Miloš Klas moderated the event.

The main speaker, journalist Mag. Barbara Grabner, explained that during the Cultural Revolution

Confucianism was demonized. In 1958 Mao said: "The first emperor buried 460 Confucian scholars, but we have buried 46,000."

Today, however, Confucius is a flagship figure of Chinese culture. His tomb in the cemetery of his descendants has been lavishly restored and is a popular destination for tourists. The renaissance is quite remarkable.

"This is not a contradiction," Mrs. Grabner explained, "because Confucianism is not a religion. Rather it is a practical guide to how to run a country while adhering to certain ethical principles." Despite persecution and re-education efforts, his teachings are engraved in the Chinese mentality, she said.



Since 2004, about 1,600 Confucius Institutes have been established worldwide; presently there are three of them in Slovakia. The Confucius Institutes are under increasing pressure. It is feared that China wants to use these institutes to influence other countries or even spy on them.

The Austrian journalist also highlighted Xi Jinping's family background and explained why the Chinese Communist Party will hardly deviate from Marx or Mao. President Xi has warned repeatedly that if the party would turn its back on them, it would lose its soul and direction.

The party has 90 million members, "but it cannot be compared to a party in the Western sense of the word - it is more like an imperial army of civil servants, raised in the spirit of Confucius and Xi Jinping's personal philosophy," she concluded.

"Beijing will make a profound change only if it breaks with Marxism. Otherwise, something like 'Christian Putinism' will appear." She also mentioned the tragic arrest last year of Cardinal Joseph Zen, the Catholic bishop of Hong Kong, and how Christians are monitored and subdued by the regime.

Dr. Marina Čarnogurská thanked UPF-Slovakia. She said she hardly goes out, due to her tight working schedule. "Well, it was a big exception that I decided to go to your lecture - but I am very glad that I made it. I hope your organization holds more interesting events at the Peace Embassy to enhance mutual interaction over hatred and divisions."

She suggested that a joint cultural event about her work on Chinese culture could be organized.