

International Symposium on

## Politics of Memory/Oblivion, Modes and Difficulties of Transmission

coinciding with the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camp Ljubelj/Loibl  
(Unterloibl, Loibl-Pass Süd, Loibl-Pass South),  
a sub-camp of the KZ Mauthausen



(Source: <http://redline69-serge.blogspot.fr/2009/07/loibl-pass-camp-nord-sud.html>)

### Introduction

For seventy years the interpretation of World War II has seen many different approaches in Europe depending on the respective countries' roles trying to be consistent with their own political and psychological needs. These facts have had profound implications for democratization processes and relations between neighbouring countries thus politics of memory and politics of oblivion are highly important socio-historical and cultural mechanisms. It is in the nature of every authority and ideology to impose its selected accounts and foist its own social discourse about selected past events in order to create a hegemonic version of the past. Omissions, silences, ignorance, oblivions, deficiencies, lack of traces or signs with their special coded languages form constitutive parts of this politics of memory/oblivion and they play a role in the transmission process. However, contested representations of the past, we sometimes tend to forget (especially in the communities historically inclined to mental and cultural homogenization), can be different and viewed from different angles and perspectives – but all are, nevertheless, in relation to power structures, identity strategies and institutional politics of memory/oblivion.

The symposium will address all these significant themes which will be debated in relation to concentration camps (the regime was not the same in the *Arbeitslager*, *Vernichtungslager* or in the centres for immediate assassination – such as Bełżec, Sobibor and Treblinka) and Nazi regime in the "concentrationary universe" (*l'univers concentrationnaire*, David Rousset). It will question how discourses and representations shape the past, how they're produced,

reproduced and challenged. It will examine various representations of concentration camps, differences between notions of memory and history, and discuss the role that community memory has in modelling and transmitting meanings, values and identities. Reflection of the modes by which we publicly present facts, testimonies, places and images is another crucial issue we want to highlight: "To educate is to make place for the other", writes Jean-François Forges, "it is in accepting that this place is neither planned nor programmed. It is in our efforts to create a world that cannot be dictated in advance. Education is the opposite of totalitarianism." Papers will address the relationship between past and present and educational practices about the Nazi camps in the frame of power relations.

## The Loibl Camp

The *Arbeitslager* of Ljubelj (*Loibl* or *Loibl-Pass*; it comprised two camps: one on the north side and one on the south side of the "tunnel") as a Nazi concentration camp received little attention in the post-World War II historiography and international debates. Nevertheless, many memories were collected and some testimonies published (e.g. books of Janko Tišler, *Mauthausen na Ljubelju*, Josef Zausnig, *Der Loibl-Tunnel* or of André Lacaze, *Le tunnel* etc.). By now some significant documents are also publicly available for research (e.g. Fonds Jean-René Chauvin at the CHS- Centre d'histoire sociale du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle) and other important texts in analytical perspective already published.

The camp Loibl-South itself was active between June 1943 and May 1945 and for the most of the time led by the SS commander Jakob Winkler. Beside the concentration camp there was also a camp of civil workers, where workers lived in slightly better circumstances.

In the concentration camp all together some 1800 prisoners were mostly political opponents of the Nazi regime (predominately communists and social-democrats), and some members of other either excluded or racially "inferior" groups in the Nazi mental universe (homosexuals, Gypsies, Slaves, etc.) of many nationalities. Jews, the principal target of the Shoah/Holocaust, were in the Ljubelj camp mostly present as a transit group or as individuals before they were sent to other lethal concentration camps, and were not numerous (their number is less than 30). The biggest ethnic group in the camp was French (more than 50 %), followed by Poles, Russians, Yugoslavians, Germans and Austrians, Italians, Czechs, Norwegians and also some other nationalities. Nazis used inmates as an enslaved working force to build the Karawanke tunnel (*Karawankentunnel*). The camp was liberated on 8 May 1945.

## Guests of honour:

- **Prof. Jean-François Forges**, professor of history, Lyon, France
- **Prof. Peter Gstettner**, Mauthausen Komitee Klagenfurt/Celovec

## Speakers (alphabetic order):

- **Dr. Edith Blaschitz**, Donau University Krems
- **Prof. Jean-François Forges**, professor of history, Lyon, France
- **MMag. Erich Herber**, Donau University Krems
- **Mag. Otto Hochreiter**, City Museum, Graz
- **Dr. Marija Jurič Pahor**, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana
- **Prof. Peter Gstettner**, Mauthausen Komitee Klagenfurt/Celovec
- **Mag. Monika Kokalj Kočevar**, Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana
- **Dr. Taja Kramberger**, independent researcher, Koper/Capodistria, Paris, France
- **Mag. Dr. Gerti Malle**, Memory Site of the Mauthausen satellite camp Loibl-North, guide, Klagenfurt/Celovec

- **Frédérique Neau-Dufour**, Director of European Centre of the Deported Members of the Resistance Memory Site of the former camp Natzweiler-Struthof
- **Christian Tessier**, independent researcher, France
- **Mag. Tadeja Tominšek**, Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana
- **DDr. Verena Vidrih Perko**, Director for Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Ljubljana

### Themes:

- Politics of memory and oblivion in connection to the concentration camps
- Presentations and representations of concentration camps (print media, manuals, official sources, digital spaces etc.)
- Testimonies of the KLs, trauma and survivor's narratives
- Intergenerational transmission of values and knowledge on the concentration camps, pedagogy of the Shoah/Holocaust
- Historical accounts, interpretations, public memory/oblivion and civic education in connection to the heritage of concentration camps

### Location, Date and Time:

**Conference location:** Tržiški muzej, Muzejska 11, 4290 Tržič, Slovenia

**Dates:** 11th and 12th June 2015

**Languages:** Slovene, English, French

### Conference Organizers:

Tržič Museum

KulturAgenda Institute, Celovec/Klagenfurt

### Conference Supporters:

Ministry of Culture, Republic of Slovenia

The Municipality of Tržič, Mag. Borut Sajovic, Mayor of Tržič

Institut Français, Ljubljana

Mauthausen Komitee Kärnten/Koroška

## PROGRAMME OF THE SYMPOSIUM

<b>Thursday, June 11, 2015</b>	
08:45 – 09:15	Arrival and registration
09:15 – 09:45	<b>Welcome and introduction</b> <b>Jana Babšek</b> , Director of Tržič Museum <b>Borut Sajovic</b> , Major of the town of Tržič <b>Anne Duruflé</b> , Director of the French Cultural Institute, Ljubljana
09:45 – 10:15	<b>Panel Session 1</b> – This session looks into Nazi Regime, small scale concentration camps and their universe in a broader European context.  <b>Keynote and Guest of Honour: Peter Gstettner</b> , Remembering the Victims of the Nazi Regime and Reconciliation with Our Own History
10:15 – 10:35	<b>Monika Kokalj Kočvar</b> , Concentration camp Mauthausen and its system of satellite camps
10:35 – 10:55	<b>Tadeja Tominšek Čehulić</b> , The Traces of Concentration Camp Ljubelj/Mauthausen in Slovenia of the heritage
10:55 – 11:15	<b>Discussion</b> <b>Chair: Monika Kokalj Kočvar</b>
11:15 – 11:40	Coffee Break
11:40 – 12:10	<b>Panel Session 2</b> – This session looks into politics of memory and representation of concentration camps.  <b>Keynote: Taja Kramberger</b> , Memory/oblivion, history, discourse. Rethinking key-notions, their political architecture and their social effects in regard to the "concentratory universe"
12:10 – 12:30	<b>Marija Jurič Pahor</b> , »Promise to tell the world what they were doing with us ...«: reflections on the need of testifying the experience of concentration camps
12:30 – 12:50	<b>Frédérique Neau-Dufour</b> , Practices of interpretation and transmission
12:50 – 13:05	<b>Discussion</b> <b>Chair: Taja Kramberger</b>
13:05 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 15:00	<b>Plenary Session</b> – 'Where do we go from here?' (cf. M. Randall) Along the ethic axis of civic education: what transmission of memory, what role of history and towards what kind of camp representation?  <b>Keynote: Verena Vidrih Perko</b> , The Interpretation of Traumatic History (working title)
15:00 – 16:00	<b>Frédérique Neau-Dufour</b> <b>Otto Hochreiter</b> <b>Marija Jurič Pahor</b> <b>Jean-Francois Forges</b> <b>Christian Tessier</b>  <b>Moderators of the session:</b> <b>Verena Vidrih Perko and Taja Kramberger</b>

Each participant has 8-10 minutes to address the title question of the plenary session. Short reflections will be followed by the debate.

16:00 – 16:15	Coffee Break
16:15 – 16:35	<b>Jože Romšak</b> , Observations and Narrations of local amateur historians and collectors
16:35 – 17:30	<b>Film presentation:</b> Anice Clement, Un Tunnel pour le Reich
18:00 – 20:30	<b>Dinner</b> (with the exception of participants special registration necessary)
<b>Friday, June 12, 2015</b>	
09:00 – 09:30	<b>Panel Session 3</b> – This session will discuss the modes of Holocaust education and difficulties of transmission of the Holocaust knowledge (cases of personal narratives and intergenerational transfers)  <b>Keynote and Guest of Honour: Jean-Francois Forges</b> , Shoah and deportation: memory, history and transmission, 70 years later
9:30 – 9:50	<b>Otto Hochreiter, City Museum Graz</b> , Museum Auschwitz: To exhibit The Incommensurable
9:50 – 10:10	<b>Christian Tessier, independent researcher</b> , "Coming Home", Personal Stories of French Prisoners
10:10 – 10:40	<b>Discussion</b> <b>Chair: Taja Kramberger and Marija Jurič Pahor</b>
10:40 – 11:05	Coffee Break
11:05 – 11:35	<b>Panel Session 4</b> – This session delineates other modes of representation and transmission of knowledge on concentration camps  <b>Keynote: Gerti Malle</b> , Learning from History: Education and Mediation Work at Former NS Satellite Camps
11:35 – 11:55	<i>Digital Memories &amp; Augmented Reality</i> <b>Erich Herber &amp; Edith Blaschitz</b> , Mediating The Holocaust Past: Transmedia Concepts at Historic Sites and Holocaust Memorials
11:55 – 12:15	<b>Discussion &amp; Round Up</b> <b>Chair: Jana Babšek</b>
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 17:00	Guided tours Loibl North & Loibl South

*Please note that the programme may be subject to further minor changes!*

*Dinner on Thursday is booked and free of charge for all speakers. However, other participants are welcome to join but need to register at the reception desk on arrival.*