



6. International Workshop for professional officers

on dealing with the past of Auschwitz burdened by violence

A cooperation between the Maximilian Kolbe Foundation and the Zentrum für ethische Bildung in den Streitkräften (zebis) [Centre for ethics education in the armed forces]

09 - 13 October 2017, Oswiecim, Centre for Dialogue and Prayer (Poland)

Idea for the project

Within the framework of the workshop, 30 professional officers from Poland, France and Germany are invited to enter a joint process of learning on dealing with the experience of violence and its consequences in the analysis of the present significance of Auschwitz, and to express their willingness to reflect on the subject matter in a way which is appropriate to the ethical seriousness of the use of violence.

Analyzing Auschwitz and its consequences – beyond the concrete case – gets an exemplary meaning for dealing with violence experience and its after-effects in general. Auschwitz stands for experiences having a lasting effect on the identity of our societies and on the identity of Europe. The different ways Auschwitz is remembered in the different contexts reflects the complexity of violent incidents.

At the same time the tensions created by the severe violence experience continue to exist in the different forms, contents, functions and ways Auschwitz is remembered by the various European societies. People must learn to understand this disposition to violence which has considerable explosive force. Only then it can be overcome and the prerequisites for a common European identity can be created which assimilates the differences without abolishing them.

The workshop wants to invite the participants to jointly visualize the experiences made in connection with Auschwitz and to reflect on the different perspectives and contexts of experience and interpretation contributed by the participants.

Special attention is to be turned to the specific challenge of a military remembrance culture when dealing with violence experience. Soldiers in particular bear responsibility for dealing with means of violence. In addition, they are especially exposed to the effects of violence. The joint workshop of professional officers from France, Germany and Poland is to be a sign of the endeavours to find a common military identity.

Program

Monday 09 October

- 03:30 p.m. **Introduction into the subject matter and the workshop**
Dr Jörg Lüer, Maximilian-Kolbe-Foundation
Kristina Tonn, zebis
Introduction of the participants
- 06:00 p.m. Dinner
- 07:00 p.m. **Remembering Auschwitz as an international challenge**
Dr Piotr Cywinski, Director of Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Site

Tuesday 10 October

The camp

- 07:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
- 08:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 08:45 a.m. Departure to the **Guided tour through the basic camp Auschwitz I**
- 01:00 p.m. Lunch
- 01:45 p.m. Departure to the **Guided tour through Birkenau**
- 06:00 p.m. Dinner
- 07:00 p.m. **Exchange in small groups and plenary session**

Wednesday 11 October

Violence experience: Survivors and offenders

- 07:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
- 08:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 09:30 a.m. **Meeting with survivors**
- 01:00 p.m. Lunch
- 01:45 p.m. Departure to the **visit of Marian Kolodziej exhibition**
Father Dr Manfred Deselaers, CDiM
- 04:00 p.m. **The lasting impact of traumatisation.**
Dr Paula Schneider, Air Force Training Battalion
Discussion in plenary
- 06:30 p.m. Dinner
- 07:30 p.m. **Becoming an offender – being an offender. Experiences with stories of offenders**
Dr Sara Berger, Researcher at Fondazione Museo della Shoah, Roma/ Italy
Discussion in plenary

Thursday 12 October	Dealing with history as a challenge
07:30 a.m.	Celebration of the Eucharist
08:00 a.m.	Breakfast
09:00 a.m.	<p>Remembrance and the present time. On dealing with the tension-filled diversity of remembrance of Auschwitz and World War II in Germany and Poland</p> <p><i>Dr Jörg Lüer, Maximilian-Kolbe-Foundation</i> <i>Dr Robert Zurek, Foundation Kreisau</i></p> <p><i>Discussion in plenary</i></p>
01:00 p.m.	Lunch
02:30 p.m.	<p>Departure to Oswiecim</p> <p>Visit to the Synagogue, the Jewish Center and the historic Market Square</p>
05:45 p.m.	Departure for the Act of commemoration at Auschwitz Memorial
07:30 p.m.	Festive dinner with musical accompaniment

Friday 13 October

08:00 a.m.	Breakfast
	Departure

Conference languages: French, Polish and German in plenary. English in working groups.