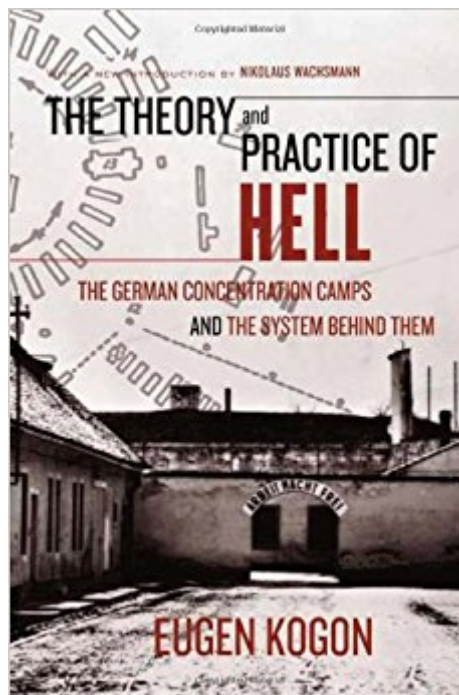


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# The Theory And Practice Of Hell: The German Concentration Camps And The System Behind Them



## Synopsis

By the spring of 1945, the Second World War was drawing to a close in Europe. Allied troops were sweeping through Nazi Germany and discovering the atrocities of SS concentration camps. The first to be reached intact was Buchenwald, in central Germany. American soldiers struggled to make sense of the shocking scenes they witnessed inside. They asked a small group of former inmates to draft a report on the camp. It was led by Eugen Kogon, a German political prisoner who had been an inmate since 1939. *The Theory and Practice of Hell* is his classic account of life inside. Unlike many other books by survivors who published immediately after the war, *The Theory and Practice of Hell* is more than a personal account. It is a horrific examination of life and death inside a Nazi concentration camp, a brutal world of a state within state, and a society without law. But Kogon maintains a dispassionate and critical perspective. He tries to understand how the camp works, to uncover its structure and social organization. He knew that the book would shock some readers and provide others with gruesome fascination. But he firmly believed that he had to show the camp in honest, unflinching detail. The result is a unique historical document – a complete picture of the society, morality, and politics that fueled the systematic torture of six million human beings. For many years, *The Theory and Practice of Hell* remained the seminal work on the concentration camps, particularly in Germany. Reissued with an introduction by Nikolaus Waschmann, a leading Holocaust scholar and author of *Hilter's Prisons*, this important work now demands to be re-read.

## Book Information

Paperback: 368 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Reprint edition (September 19, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374529922

ISBN-13: 978-0374529925

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 24.3 x 211.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 34 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #459,033 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #125 in [Books > Science & Math > Physics > System Theory](#) #913 in [Books > History > World > Jewish > Holocaust](#) #1496 in [Books > History > Europe > Germany](#)

## Customer Reviews

“The best of the many books on Nazi concentrations camps and the society behind

them. C. Wright Mills "Kogon omits nothing and spares no one. His account, magnificently controlled and dispassionate . . . achieves a devastating impact. The Nation "A description of the closest thing to hell in human history. Reinhold Niebuhr

Text: English, German (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Well written and documented history of the Nazi concentration camps. Eugen Kogon, a German political prisoner in WWII, worked as a guard in the Buchenwald prison camp. As a Nazi-resister, he enabled Staphane Hessel to escape certain death by switching his identity with that of a dead prisoner. After the concentration camps were liberated, Kogon provided the Allies with information on the organization of the camps. The detailed descriptions of how the camps were organized may shock the reader but The Theory and Practice of Hell is as relevant today as when written in 1950.

Immediately after the end of World War II, the Americans wanted a report of how the German concentration camps worked and appointed a committee made up of inmates from Buchenwald concentration camp to document the administrative aspect of the camps. Eugen Kogon, a writer and political activist, headed the committee and within four weeks produced what became a go-to document for the Nuremberg trials and a respected explanation of camp administration. The book expands the original report and each chapter covers a specific aspect of the camp, e.g., Daily Routine, Discipline and Scientific Experiments. Kogon is careful to stay objective in his reporting, even when he describes how the Germans beat, starved, tortured and worked inmates to death. He touches on how the prisoners reacted to the camp and how they became numb to their treatment, a by-product of the all-encompassing terror they experienced. "The Theory and Practice of Hell" is the most thorough accounting I have found that explains how the Germans ran the concentration camps and I would urge anyone who has asked themselves "How did they do this on such a grand scale?" to read the book.

Book is a little disturbing but Eugen Kogon's expert testimony were used in the Nuremburg Trials so historically his recollections are invaluable.

Very good condition. Fast delivery. More info about Conc. Camps and people than anything else I've

read in one book. Should be required reading for all adults.

This book was really helpful i bout because i had to do a 6 page paper on concentration camps but i found it to be interesting overall

This book really tells about the Nazi concentration camp system.

Very interesting stuff , horribly grotesque , but very interesting non the less.

Chilling information from a person who had personal knowledge rather than relying exclusively on archives.

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