

PREPARING A VISIT TO THE DACHAU CONCENTRATION CAMP MEMORIAL SITE | MODULE 2

RECOMMENDED LESSON STRUCTURE (90 MINUTES)**TIME REQUIRED**

90 minutes

LEARNING GOALS

More intensive exploration and discussion of the themes in the graphic novel about life in the Dachau concentration camp by working in small groups and sensitizing the students about the differences between the historical concentration camp and the Dachau Memorial Site today.

DESCRIPTION

Module 2 takes 90 minutes for preparing a visit to the Memorial Site. In addition to the animated graphic novel / short film, students also work with the e-paper version and delve deeper into the topic through more extensive group work. Module 2 also offers considerably more time than module 1 for preparing a visit to the Memorial Site and sensitizing students about the differences between today's Memorial Site and the historical Dachau concentration camp.

**POSSIBLE MATERIAL
FOR PREPARING THE LESSON**

- Materials on Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz for teachers
- Information on the history of the Dachau concentration camp: <https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/en/historical-site/dachau-concentration-camp-1933-1945/>

**NECESSARY MATERIAL
FOR THE LESSON**

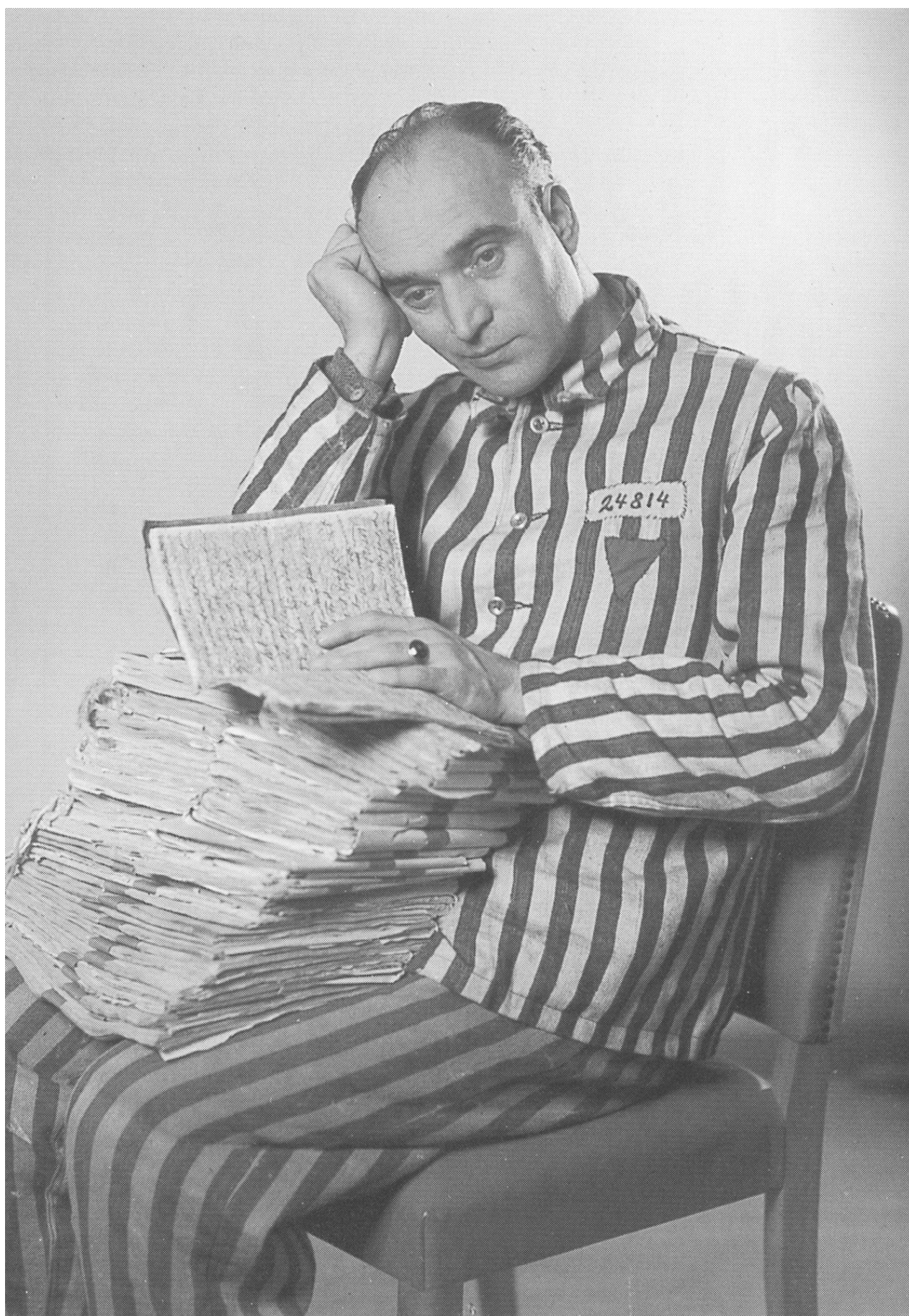
- Photograph of Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz with his saved notes and in prisoner clothing
- Animated graphic novel / short film *A Lifelong Survival*: <https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/en/history-online/the-graphic-novel-a-lifelong-survival/>
- Access to the e-paper version of the graphic novel: <https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/en/history-online/the-graphic-novel-a-lifelong-survival/>
- Exercise sheets for group work (groups 1-6)
- Exercise sheet 2: Contemporary Relevance

TIME STRUCTURE

TIME	CONTENTS	LEARNING GOALS	TEACHING TECHNIQUE	NECESSARY MATERIAL / MEDIA
5 min	<p>Show the photo of Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz with his saved notes and in prisoner clothes</p> <p>Ask the students about their associations: Describe the man. Who could he be? What is the story behind the photo?</p> <p>Provide some brief information on the biography of Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz</p>	<p>Activate prior knowledge</p> <p>Awaken interest in the biography of a former concentration camp prisoner</p>	Conversation in class, teacher talk	<p>For preparation: biographical material</p> <p>For giving the lesson: photo of Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz / beamer or docucam</p>
15 min	<p>View together the animated graphic novel film <i>A Lifelong Survival</i></p>	<p>Become familiar with different important themes on life in the Dachau concentration camp</p> <p>Create an emotional connection to the topic</p>	Film screening	Animated graphic novel / beamer
25 min	<p>Work through the exercise sheets</p> <p>Group 1: Arrest Protective custody order</p> <p>Group 2: Arrival at the Dachau camp Registration procedure</p> <p>Group 3: Life in the camp barracks functionary prisoners</p> <p>Group 4: Standing at attention camp punishments life under constant threat</p> <p>Group 5: Work details living conditions of Jewish prisoners</p> <p>Group 6: Death and dying in the camp</p>	<p>Reflect on the film</p> <p>Delve deeper into what was shown in the film by working with the more detailed e-paper version of the graphic novel</p>	Work in small groups	<p>Exercise sheets for group work (groups 1-6)</p> <p>Access to the e-paper version of the graphic novel</p>

TIME STRUCTURE

TIME	CONTENTS	LEARNING GOALS	TEACHING TECHNIQUE	NECESSARY MATERIAL / MEDIA
30 min	Presentation of the themes worked on	Evaluating and consolidating the results	Student presentations, conservation in class	The worked on exercise sheets from the group work (groups 1-6), docucam
10 min	Work on exercise sheet 2 with the help of the e-paper version on the website (flipbook)	Awaken curiosity for the visit to the Dachau Memorial Site Sensitize students about the differences in the appearance of the historical Dachau concentration camp and today's Memorial Site	Partner work	Copies of exercise sheet 2 Access to the e-paper version of the graphic novel, above all pages: 16 ("Jourhaus"), 18 ("shunt room"), 20 ("prisoner baths"), 24/25/26 (barrack 12), 29 (roll call area), 41 (small crematorium) / Docucam and beamer
5 min	Check together exercise sheet 2 Practical pointers for the visit to the Dachau Memorial Site Homework: Note open questions for the visit to the Dachau Memorial Site	Consolidate what has been worked on and learnt Leads into the visit to the Memorial Site	Class conversation	Exercise sheet 2 / Docucam or beamer



Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz in his former prisoner clothes with all the manuscript pages, beginning of 1946. Archive of the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, DaA F5229



EXERCISES

Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz was arrested on the island of Ischia by the Italian police in the fall of 1940. He was arrested on the basis of a police agreement between the allied states of Germany and Italy on extraditing "political criminals" that came into effect in 1936.

1

- Read the panels on pages 9-13 and 27.
- Note the most important points Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz makes about his arrest.

2

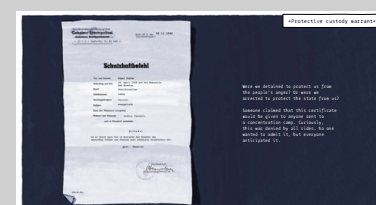
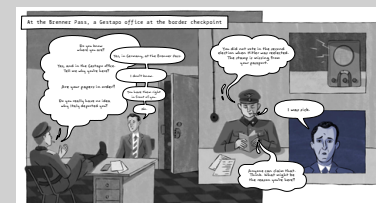
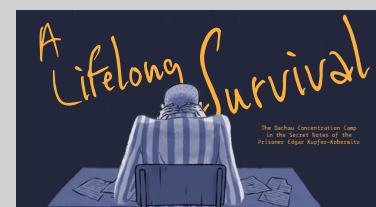
- a) Find out the reasons for the arrest given on the protective custody order (p. 13) and which patch Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz was given in the Dachau concentration camp (p. 27). The translation of the respective sentence in the protective custody order (p. 13) reads: “Reasons: because he has seriously damaged the reputation of the German people and state abroad through his actions.”
- b) Reflect on and interpret what “protective custody” means and why the Nazis made use of this term.

3

- a) Discuss what the example of Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz's arrest says about how the Nazis persecuted people.
- b) Analyze what these kind of persecution practices means for a society.



Scan here for the graphic novel!



GROUP 2

ARRIVAL AT THE DACHAU CAMP I
REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

EXERCISES

On November 11, 1940 Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz was taken to the Dachau concentration camp. The registration procedure began immediately upon arrival. After personal details were recorded in the Political Department, the prisoners were taken to the maintenance building. Located here were the “shunt room” (scene on p. 18) and the “prisoner baths” (p. 20).

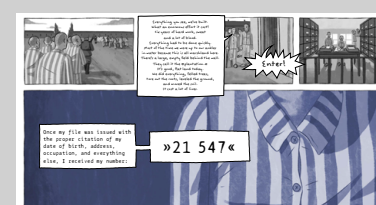
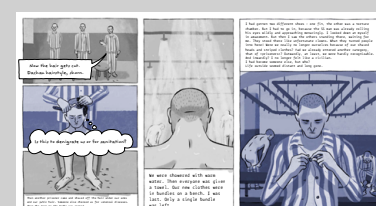
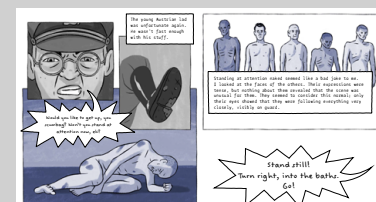
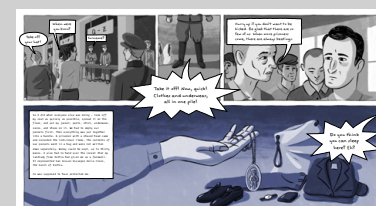
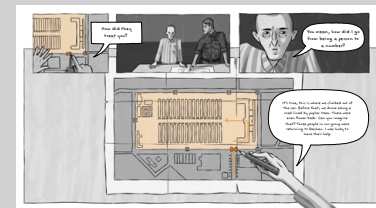
- 1 a) Read the panels on pages 15-21.
b) Note down what happened to Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz in these rooms.

- 2 a) Find out which steps made up the registration procedure.
b) Reflect on the impact this procedure and the violence inflicted had on the persons forced to go through it. Consider Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz's own thoughts on this (p. 20).

- 3 With this admissions process the SS wanted to turn people into “numbers”.
a) Describe which aspects you think make up the individuality and identity of a person.
b) Discuss which of these aspects you think the SS could take away from the prisoners and which ones they could not.



Scan here for the graphic novel!



GROUP 3

LIFE IN THE CAMP | BARRACKS | FUNCTIONARY PRISONERS



EXERCISES

After Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz was given his prisoner clothes and number, he was confronted with the living conditions in the camp for the first time.

- 1
 - a) Read the panels on the pages 22-26.
 - b) Note down how Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz describes the places and what he experiences there.

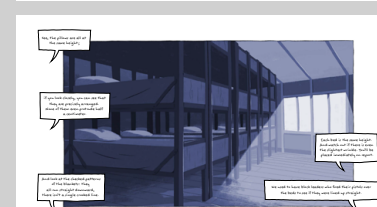
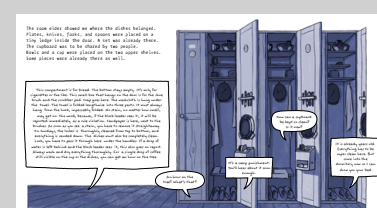
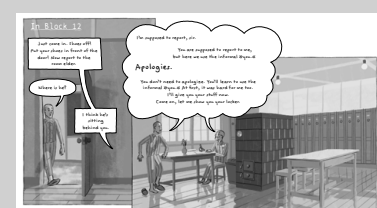
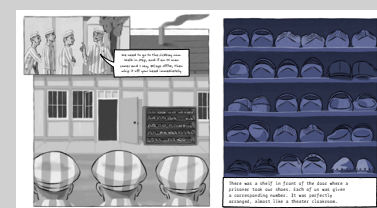
- 2
 - a) Describe the strict tidiness that had to be observed in the barracks.
 - b) Think about why the SS imposed this strict tidiness.

- 3
 - In the sickbay and block 12 Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz encountered functionary prisoners (e.g. kapos, room elders), who the SS installed in different areas of the camp.

- a) Find out the similarities and differences in how the functionary prisoners behaved towards their fellow prisoners.
- b) Discuss how much scope to act functionary prisoners had, and why they made use of this in different ways.



Scan here for the graphic novel!



GROUP 4

STANDING AT ATTENTION | CAMP PUNISHMENTS | LIFE UNDER CONSTANT THREAT



EXERCISES

In his notes Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz goes into great detail about the inhumanity of the concentration camp system and describes how the living conditions in the camp effect the behavior of some of his fellow prisoners.

1

- Read the panels on pages 28-32 and 37.
- Note down the different kinds of harassment and punishments in the Dachau camp.

2

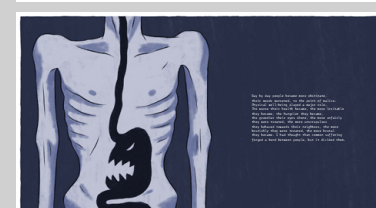
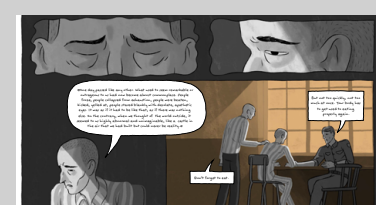
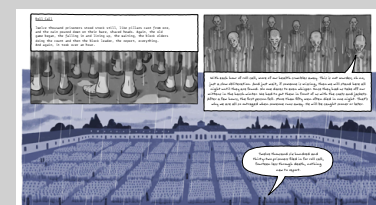
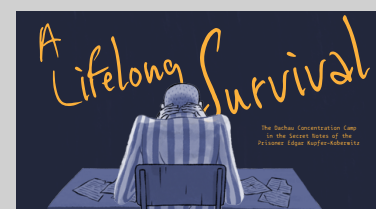
Find examples of situations in the graphic novel where prisoners show empathy to one another, but also others where a deadening of sympathy are evident.

3

"There were tens of thousands of prisoners in Dachau, you greatly outnumbered the SS. How did they manage to break the spirit of so many?" asks the American soldier in the graphic novel. Discuss a plausible answer to this question.



Scan here for the graphic novel!



GROUP 5

WORK DETAILS I

LIVING CONDITIONS OF JEWISH PRISONERS



EXERCISES

The prisoners were forced to work in the concentration camps. The work ranged from clerical duties through to the hardest physical labor. The work detail a prisoner was assigned to either reduced or increased their chances of survival.

1

- Read the panels on the pages 33-39.
- Note down the work details Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz describes.

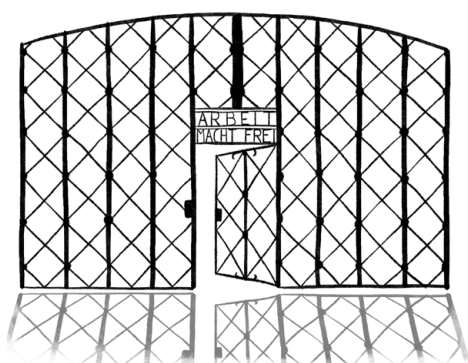
2

On page 39 Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz describes the working conditions in the "gravel pit."

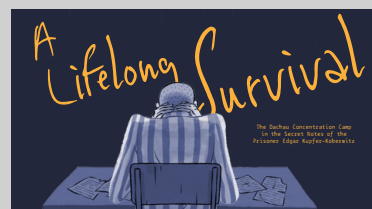
- Identify the factors which made this work detail so inhumane.
- Consider why the SS mostly deployed Jewish prisoners in this work detail.

3

The SS had the saying "Work sets you free" mounted on the entry gate to the prisoner camp. Based on what you have already read, analyze how the prisoners may have felt about this saying.



Scan here for the graphic novel!



GROUP 6

DEATH AND DYING IN THE CAMP



EXERCISES

While working in the penal company, Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz observed that fellow prisoners had to carry coffins.

The danger of not surviving the concentration camp was omnipresent for the prisoners, especially from 1940 onwards.

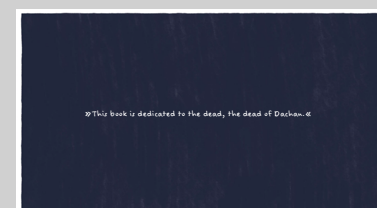
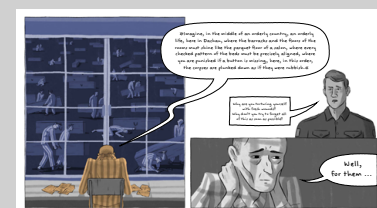
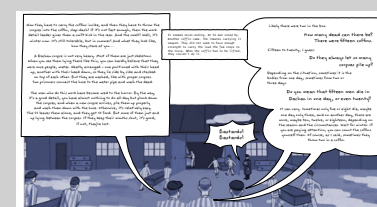
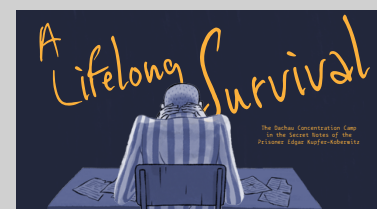
- 1
 - a) Read the panels on the pages 41 - 44.
 - b) Note how Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz describes death and dying in the Dachau concentration camp.

- 2
 - Take another look at pages 43 and 44. Identify the aspects of how the dead were dealt with which Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz found to be particularly distressing.

- 3
 - Many of those who survived persecution in the concentration camps and the Holocaust in general asked themselves after 1945 why they had survived and so many others did not – in research this is known as “survivor guilt”.
 - a) Analyze Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz’s way of dealing with this “survivor guilt”.
 - b) Think about other ways survivors dealt with their experiences after the Nazi period came to an end.



Scan here for the graphic novel!



EXERCISE SHEET 2: CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE



Scan here for
the graphic
novel!



EXERCISE

Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz was imprisoned in the Dachau concentration camp from November 1940 until liberation on April 29, 1945. The Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site was established in 1965. Much has changed since then – for example, existing buildings were demolished and monuments erected. Look at the camp map from the graphic novel. It shows a drawing of the

grounds in 1945. The photos show locations in the Memorial Site in 2024.

1. Flip through the e-paper of the graphic novel and note the page numbers where there are drawings of historical locations.
2. Match today's places with the historical locations on the camp map.



Page _____

Former "prisoner baths"



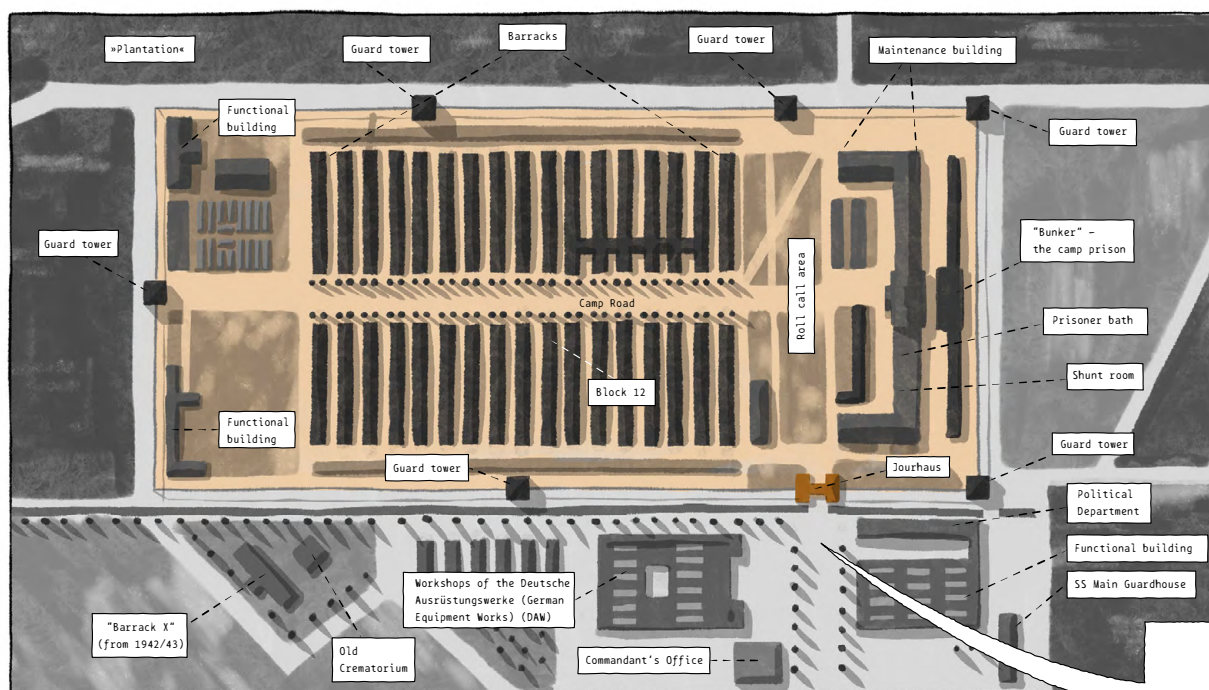
Page _____

Former "shunt room"



Page _____

Former roll call area



Page _____

Barack marker



Page _____

Former "Jourhaus"



Page _____

Former small crematorium