



Perpetrators or victims? Interned men and women of the Soviet Special Camp Nr. 2 (1945 - 1950) in Buchenwald

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Acknowledgements

Learning activity designed by Ilka Braun and Daniel Gaede.

This activity makes use of sources from the collection of the Buchenwald Memorial.

More information about the sources is included in the material for teachers.

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How should we remember the camp and commemorate its victims, although many of those interned were accused of perpetrating crimes in the Nazi era?

This activity tries to challenge black and white categorization of perpetrators and victims when dealing with the practice of internment camps. Taking a look at Stalinist internment practice after the Second World War, particularly by the example of the special camp nr. 2 on the site of the former concentration camp Buchenwald, students will have to challenge their perception of "Perpetrator" and "Victim" by critically analyzing personal backgrounds of people interned in the camp between 1945 and 1950. Furthermore, the problem of remembrance of soviet camps and their victims in the after war period gets touched at: How to remember a camp system and commemorate its victims, although many interned were supposed Nazi perpetrators?

Heil Hitler!

Learning outcomes

 15+ years
30 minutes

Students will

- Be working with four documents related to two persons and notice that the descriptions are quite contradictory.
- Learn to ask, who is trying to give which impression, and why?
- Learn to analyse documents in a multifaceted manner, since interests are always involved in historical documents and descriptions.
- Get in touch with two biographies of persons, who had been interned in the Soviet Special Camp No 2 at Buchenwald after the war.
- Get to know the broader context of post war occupied Germany and Allied policies.
- Train new skills, learn to cooperate, involve different perspectives and get new information on a complicated matter.