

Quotations from survivors of the Gypsy Holocaust – Porrajmos (Great Devouring)

We had to sit on a chair one after the other and Dr. Ritter compared the eyes of the children and questioned them; his colleague noted everything down. We had to open our mouths and our jaws were measured with a strange instrument, then our nostrils, the roots of the nose, the distance between the eyes, eye colour, eyebrows, ears inside and out, the nape of the neck, the throat, our hands - every single thing there was to measure.

---Josef Reinhardt

as quoted in Romani Rose, *The Nazi Genocide of the Sinti and Roma* (Heidelberg: Documentary and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, 1995)

Until 1938 I was in possession of a showman's license. On the incorporation of Austria into the German Reich, my license was withdrawn because I was unable to provide proof of Aryan descent, as I allegedly descend from "gypsies." From that moment I was under the constant surveillance of the Gestapo. I was forced to work in armaments in the former Göringwerk, and was not allowed to leave the town boundary... My mother Cäcilie Kohlberger died in Auschwitz concentration camp. My brother Julius Kohlberger died in Dachau concentration camp with three children. My sister Albine Rosenfeld died with her eight children in Litzmannstadt camp, all because we were "non-Aryans."

---Maria Kohlberger

Maria Kohlberger as quoted in Romany Rose, *The Nazi Genocide of the Sinti and Roma* (Heidelberg: Documentary and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, 1995)

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...we were suddenly loaded onto lorries, together with the other Frankfurt Sinti families, and taken to the East Station, where the empty wagons were already waiting for us. Everything was blocked off with SS men and policemen with dogs and guns. Sixty to eighty people were crammed into each of the cattle trucks, the windows were closed with barbed wire. Each truck had one SS man in a little guardhouse. We were taken to Auschwitz like cattle, not like humans; I've never forgotten that and I never will.

---Herbert Adler

Herbert Adler as quoted in Romany Rose, *The Nazi Genocide of the Sinti and Roma* (Heidelberg: Documentary and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, 1995)

My sister Josefina Steinbach had nine children, only one of whom died in camp. Today I still can't believe that the other eight children survived everything until they were gassed in August 1944. My sister could have survived. But when she was supposed to be taken away with me to Ravensbrück before the destruction of the Gypsy Camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau, she refused to go because of the children. She told the SS that she wouldn't leave without her children. After the last transport left Auschwitz she and her children were gassed together.

---Maria Peter

Maria Peter as quoted in State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau, *Memorial Book: The Gypsies at Auschwitz-Birkenau* (New York: K.G. Saur, 1993)

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Additional quotations relating to the Holocaust can be downloaded from the Association For Citizenship Teaching at the following link:

[http://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/top/top\\_5/downloads/sub/5](http://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/top/top_5/downloads/sub/5)