

## From the Testimony of Olga Albogen about the Arrival at Auschwitz

...What happened to you?

A: Well, with my sister, with the next to me younger sister, they put us to the right side, only the two of us, and we didn't even say goodbye to Mother and the little ones. We just had some food yet from home and I gave it to my mother, "We'll see you tonight." And that was it and I never saw them again. It was such a commotion there in Auschwitz that we didn't know. So many people. You know, every wagon, every car was filled with people to capacity. Not a seat for anybody, just standing room, squeezed in. And when they emptied the wagons, thousands and thousands and trains kept on coming from all over Europe, not just Hungary. It was just unbelievable. And the people who were there longer and they said that, "Look at that chimney and don't you feel the stench?"

Q: They told you that?

A: Yes. And I said to my sister and the friends around me, I said, "How can you believe that? They're burning the rubbish, the garbage." "Rubber was burning", I said. "It's impossible. What kind of a crazy thing, they are insane?" And constantly I was telling them that it was impossible. They are there for so many years they are crazy, they are off their rocker.

Q: And in this selection you probably were shaved too?

A: Yes, right away.

Q: What was this feeling? Was it...

A: Horrible, horrible. Can you imagine? I had beautiful hair and off with it.

Q: It was traumatic for you.

A: It was horrible. And then they gave us, I don't know, a dress they called it. Like a sack, a grey dress. That was the only thing we had on and we...and it was already evening, late evening, marching to the...we didn't know where we were marching, into barracks. And I saw myself in a window, I saw my face without my hair and I thought my father is looking at me. I looked like him, I took after him a lot, and without my big hair - I had really, that was my beauty,

my hair all along - and that was the first one they took off. And then we knew that there was no food, no human conditions. So it was just....

Q: Do you think that, what was the most difficult thing for you as a woman also, this selection?

A: First of all, we had to be naked, completely naked in front of everybody. We were not used to that ever, to anybody, not even women, in front of women to out in the open spaces naked. And there were a lot of men around, the Polish people who were there working around the crematorium and Mengele was, his fancy, elegant outfit, his shiny boots, and the whip in his hand. That was enough. And that we got used to because when we were a whole month in Auschwitz - I am skipping already three months - every single day we had selection by Mengele, every single day.

**Source: Yad Vashem Archives O.3-10335**