Twitter Thread by eve barlow ■



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tomorrow is holocaust memorial day. it's not the jewish day of commemoration. that is later on in the year. it is a day for the non-jewish world to consider the memory of the holocaust and what it means to them.

i'm wondering a lot lately about what the holocaust means to non-jews, considering how much it's been divorced and decontextualized from jewish storytelling.

from where i'm standing the non-jewish world fetishises the holocaust to use it as a metaphor for bad things; things that don't need a holocaust comparison in order to be understood as bad.

it makes me sick. why? the holocaust is in recent memory for jews. it is a horror that disproportionately affected jews. it is a historic atrocity that attempted to end jewish life on earth, and it took far too many jewish lives to bear thinking about. we have to think about it.

if we don't think about it, we let those souls perish forever and we let go of the duty we have to ensure 'never again'.

growing up jewish, holocaust education was instilled in me from a very young age. i was watching documentaries about it as soon as i could open my eyes, and my nightmares as a kid predominantly involved the evil nazi boogie men waiting for me at the bottom of my bed in the night.

i know that the non-jewish world does not have the images of the holocaust imprinted on their brains, does not visit as many holocaust memorials nor read as many holocaust testimonials nor have as many interactions with survivors as the jewish world does.

we know about the holocaust. do you?

some jews have been shamed from talking about it because the non-jewish world is bored. to that i say: tough. the holocaust was not an accident, and the series of events that led to it were planned. it was a swift dehumanization of a people in order to justify our mass murder.

it began with economic boycotts of jewish business, with banning of jews from social and professional life, with ghetto-ising.

i think you know where it ended.

on sunday, ben and i led a webinar telling some of the stories from different regions where jews once lived. there was an image from a mass killing in the ukraine, in which 33,771 jews were massacred in the space of two days in September 1941. they filled a ravine: babi yar.

babi yar was a ravine that is now just lush green grass. in some of the images of massacres, there are civilians standing on the sidelines. these civilians are not nazi officers, nor jewish people. they are non-jewish civilians. they stood by, and they watched. bystanders.

antisemitism is rife again. it’s why i’m here every day, standing between a terrible rise in jew hatred and whatever could be next. ahead of tomorrow i’d like to ask you as someone on the side: where are you standing?