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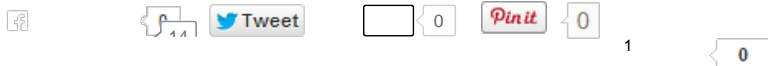
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## Tulsa's Holocaust commemoration to focus on non-Jewish victims

The annual commemoration event is Thursday at Temple Israel.

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Nadine Blumer: "When talking about the Nazi genocide of the Roma people, the most important point to emphasize is that they were persecuted as racial 'inferiors,' in a very similar manner to the Jews."

Posted: Saturday, April 26, 2014 12:00 am | Updated: 7:10 am, Sat Apr 26, 2014.

By BILL SHERMAN World Religion Writer | 1 comment

Tulsa's Yom Hashoah commemoration next week will focus on the 5 million non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust: disabled German children, Roma and Sinti peoples (Gypsies), Polish and other Slavic peoples, homosexuals, "asocials" such as the homeless, alcoholics and criminals, persons of African or Asian descent, and those who were considered ideologically dangerous.

The 17th annual Interfaith Holocaust Commemoration is slated for 7 p.m. Thursday at Temple Israel, 2004 E. 22nd Place.

Guest speaker Nadine Blumer will address the topic, "Forgotten Holocaust Victims: How Germany Remembers the Roma."

Blumer recently finished a fellowship at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and now is starting a postdoctoral fellowship at the Centre for Ethnographic Research and

Exhibition in the Aftermath of Violence at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec.

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The Roma are an ethnic minority who began migrating a millennium ago into what is now Europe from the Indian subcontinent.

The name Roma was adopted by the Romani civil rights movement in the 1970s to distance the group from the stigmatizing "Gypsy" label, Blumer said in an email interview this week.

Before and during World War II, Nazis persecuted the Roma and Sinti people as asocials and also as racially inferior people who threatened the biological purity and strength of the Aryan race.

"When talking about the Nazi genocide of the Roma people, the most important point to emphasize is that they were persecuted as racial 'inferiors,' in a very similar manner to the Jews," she said.

The number of Roma victims of National Socialism is debated, but the most commonly cited number is 500,000, she said.

"While the Nazis never had a comprehensive law against the Roma as they did with the Jewish Question the Roma were subject to forced sterilization, deportations, mandatory labor, medical experimentations, starvation and extermination in numerous concentration camps," she said.

They remain the largest minority in Europe, with a population of about 10 million to 12 million, she said, and are the most marginalized of Europe's minority populations.

Blumer said the Nazi mass murder of Roma was not officially recognized in West Germany as an act of genocide until 1982, for a variety of reasons.

"The 2012 inauguration of a national Holocaust memorial dedicated to Romani victims, located in the center of the capital city (Berlin), is regarded as one of the major achievements in the Roma's long struggle for recognition," she said.

The Yom Hashoah Commemoration is sponsored by the Council for Holocaust Education, a committee of the Jewish Federation of Tulsa, in cooperation with the Circle Cinema, the Tulsa City-County Library and dozens of local interfaith and community organizations.

The program will include projects created by Tulsa-area students of the Holocaust; music by select members of the Trinity Episcopal Choir and Tulsa Symphony; and books and media on the Holocaust available for checkout by the library.

"Paragraph 175": Circle Cinema, 10 S. Lewis Ave., will show a screening of "Paragraph 175," a documentary film about the homosexual survivors of Nazi persecution, at 2 p.m. Sunday.

Made in 2000, the film's title refers to a provision of the German Criminal Code that made homosexual acts illegal. Tickets for the film cost \$6 for Circle Cinema members and \$7 for nonmembers and are free for teachers of the Holocaust.

White Rose Essay Contest: Earlier this month, the Council for Holocaust Education announced the winners of the annual White Rose Essay Contest.

White Rose was the name of a group of college students in Nazi Germany who openly protested the genocide of the Jews.

High school winners were Charles Roberts, first place; MacKenzie Dutton, second; and Madelyn Shaw, third.

Middle school winners were Hanna Doudican, first place; Kale Keeling, second; and Deborah



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**Yom Hashoah**

**What:** Interfaith Holocaust Commemoration

**When:** 7 p.m. Thursday

**Where:** Temple Israel, 2004 E. 22nd Place.

**Who:** Speaker Nadine Blumer

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