

## Editor's Note

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The Holocaust poses some of the biggest challenges to our capacities to comprehend, conceive, and represent not only historical events but history and historicity themselves, as it seems to transcend the limits of these very capacities. Many—from Lacoue-Labarthe to Lyotard, to numerous members of the academic Holocaust industry—consider that the only appropriate attitude to this profound tragedy is respectful silence (Godfrey, 2007, p. 267), whereas others exile it to the space of absolute exception, historical aberration or accident and thus to a zone of historical irrelevance, of the a-typical and unconceivable and, ultimately, to the “silence” that characterizes the unhistorical space of uniqueness.

And yet, perhaps surprisingly, the Holocaust will not transport us in a system of philosophical-historical assumptions substantially different from those underlying our postwar civilization. Moreover, prominent analysts of post-Holocaust philosophy observed that the Holocaust did not entail “changes in the values underlying our society” (Rosenberg and Marcus, 1988, p. 202). This historical catastrophe, which poses a “radical countertestimony” to traditional philosophy (Fackenheim, 1982, p. 13), requires a new philosophical approach, instead of mere silence. Kenneth Seeskin wrote that “unless we entertain the dubious proposition that philosophy has nothing to do with the historical circumstances in which it is

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written, we must ask how the events in Germany force a re-examination of philosophical categories" (Seeskin 1988, p. 91).

The current issue of *Deliberatio: Studies in Contemporary Philosophical Challenges* brings together articles that try to break this silence. Dan Stone's, article "Wannsee and the Final Solution" argues that even though the Wannsee Conference, held on January 20, 1942, was a significant event in the Nazi decision-making process for the "Final Solution" of the Jewish question in Europe, it was not the moment when the decision to murder the Jews was made, as mass killings were already underway. Yet the conference played a crucial role in asserting the SS's control over Jewish policy and implicating other Nazi agencies in the genocidal process. The meeting, chaired by Reinhard Heydrich with Adolf Eichmann taking minutes, brought together senior officials from various ministries and SS agencies to discuss the coordination and implementation of the "Final Solution." The discovery of the protocol of the meeting in 1947 led to the misconception that Wannsee was where the decision for the Holocaust was made. However, the conference should be understood as a midway point in the transition from ad hoc mass killings to the systematization of a continent-wide genocide, with the cooperation of the Nazis' allies playing a vital role in the process.

Elliot D. Cohen's contribution "Hitler, The Wannsee Meeting, and the Epistemology of Power" has at its center the argument that Adolf Hitler's narcissistic epistemology, which equated truth with his own beliefs rather than empirical facts, played a crucial role in facilitating the systematic distortion of reality that enabled the Holocaust. The author suggests that this "epistemology of power" operated insidiously beneath Nazi propaganda, leading even well-educated individuals to unquestioningly accept Hitler's twisted vision of reality, as exemplified by the Wannsee Conference where Nazi officials dispassionately discussed the "Final Solution" to the "Jewish problem." The paper proposes that a culture encouraging belief based on sufficient evidence, rather than blind faith in authority, is the best antidote to such dangerous distortions of reality by narcissistic leaders.

In his article "Structural Heterogeneity - Global Scientific Research and the Broken Social Knowledge about the Shoah in Romania: An Analysis of Historiography and Commented Bibliography" Armin Heinen discusses the concept of "structural heterogeneity" as applied to Romania's historical understanding and global research integration regarding the Holocaust. The term, originally used in analyses of Third World countries, describes how

Romania's one-sided economic integration into the world system fostered social inequalities and hindered modern economic development. Heinen also maintains that a similar fragmentation exists in Romanian Holocaust knowledge. While global research on the Romanian Holocaust has made considerable progress, domestic historiography often remains insular, focusing on revisionism and national self-reference. Public awareness is low, with a significant portion of the population still unaware of Romania's role in the Holocaust. This discrepancy highlights the ongoing challenge of integrating Romania's complex Holocaust history into a broader narrative that aligns with international academic standards and public understanding.

Ion Popa's contribution "Becoming Israelis, Nostalgic of Romania: The life of Holocaust Survivors in 1950s Israel as reflected in the Romanian language journal *Sliha*" is an exploration of the complex identity of Romanian Jews who immigrated to Israel following World War II. It provides a detailed examination of the journal "Sliha," published in Tel Aviv in the 1950s, which was written in Romanian and served as a crucial medium for the immigrant community to express their nostalgia and maintain their Romanian cultural identity. Despite their efforts to integrate into Israeli society, these Holocaust survivors retained a strong emotional and cultural connection to Romania. The article highlights how "Sliha" included Romanian literary, cultural, and political elements, helping preserve the community's heritage while they adapted to life in a new country. This publication stands as a testament to the dual identity of Romanian Jews in Israel, portraying their struggles, adaptations, and enduring ties to their homeland.

## References

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