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Editor's Note

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The Holocaust presents some of the most significant challenges to our abilities to understand, conceptualize, and portray not only historical events but also history and historicity themselves, as it appears to exceed the boundaries of these very abilities. Many scholars—from Lacoue-Labarthe to Lyotard, to numerous authors contributing to the vast and exponentially expanding body of Holocaust literature—believe that the only fitting response to this profound tragedy is respectful silence (Godfrey, 2007, p. 267), while others relegate it to the realm of absolute exception, historical anomaly or aberration, thus consigning it to a zone of historical irrelevance, of the atypical and inconceivable and, ultimately, to the "silence" that characterizes the non-historical domain of uniqueness.

Nevertheless, perhaps unexpectedly, the Holocaust does not transport us to a framework of philosophical-historical assumptions fundamentally different from those underpinning our postwar civilization. Furthermore, notable 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 presents a "radical countertestimony" to traditional philosophy (Fackenheim, 1982, p. 13), necessitates a new philosophical approach, rather than mere silence. Kenneth Seeskin wrote that "unless we entertain the dubious proposition that philosophy has nothing to do with the historical circumstances in which

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it is 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.

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