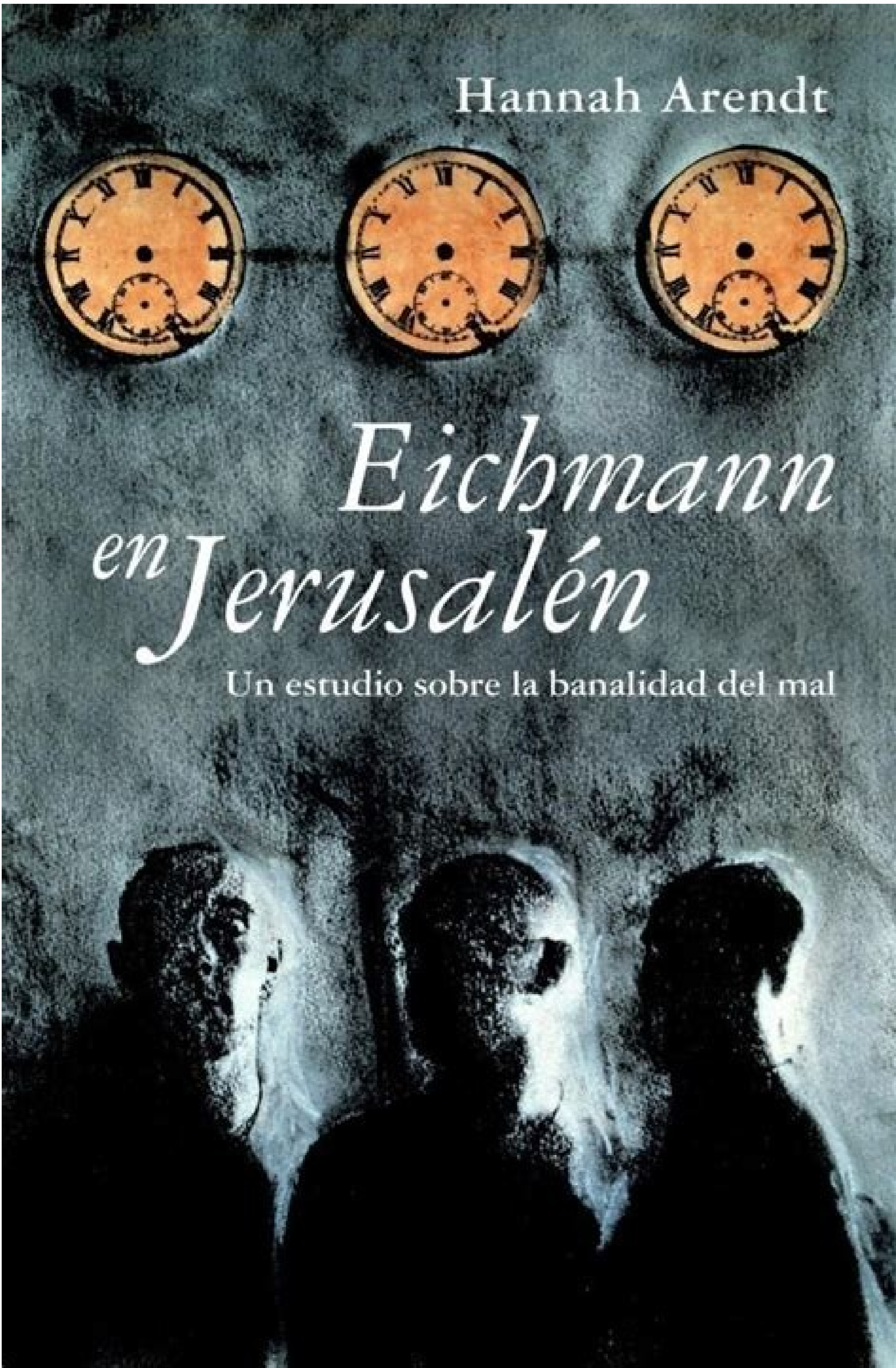


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Hannah arendt eichmann en jerusalén resumen. Hannah arendt eichmann en jerusalén pdf.

El gran estudio sobre el Holocausto, un ensayo de lectura imprescindible e inolvidable. A partir del juicio que en 1961 se llevó a cabo contra Adolf Eichmann, teniente coronel de la SS y uno de los mayores criminales de la historia, Hannah Arendt estudia en este ensayo las causas que propiciaron el Holocausto y el papel equívoco que desempeñaron en tal genocidio los consejos judíos -cuestión que, en su época, fue motivo de una airada controversia-, así como la naturaleza y la función de la justicia, aspecto que la lleva a plantear la necesidad de instituir un tribunal internacional capaz de juzgar crímenes contra la humanidad. Poco a poco, la mirada lúcida y penetrante de Arendt va desentrañando la personalidad del acusado, analiza su contexto social y político y su rigor intachable a la hora de organizar la deportación y el exterminio de las comunidades judías. Al mismo tiempo, la filósofa alemana estudia la colaboración o la resistencia en la aplicación de la Solución Final por parte de algunas naciones ocupadas y expone problemas cuya trascendencia sigue determinando la escena política de nuestros días. Más de cincuenta años después de su publicación, *Eichmann en Jerusalén* sigue siendo uno de los mejores estudios sobre el Holocausto, un ensayo de lectura inaplazable para entender lo que sin duda fue la gran tragedia del siglo XX. Reseñas: «Hannah Arendt tuvo una fecunda relación con la teoría política, un campo del saber que reivindicó con ahínco y que le sirvió para sobrelevar todas las crisis políticas y personales de los amargos tiempos que le tocó vivir. Hoy, como entonces, el vocabulario que empleó para pensar y narrar el mundo, sus reflexiones y esa escritura tan bella, tan suya, nos ayudan a interpretar lo que nos ocurre, aunque solo sea como simples enanos mirando el mundo a hombros de gigantes. Ella, desde luego, lo fue.» Mariam Martínez-Bascuñán, *Babelia*, *El País* «Un libro fundamental que levantó muchas ampollas. [...] *Eichmann en Jerusalén* es historia, es pensamiento y es advertencia -aún hoy- sobre las consecuencias de la banalidad del mal, de la que a pesar de lo vivido, no estamos vacunados.» Laura Barrachina, *RNE* «Un ensayo imprescindible. [...] Arendt no se olvida de nadie.» Marta Michel, *El Mundo* «Yo Dona» «La interpretación de Hannah Arendt del juicio a Adolf Eichmann continúa siendo un clásico, una piedra angular del pensamiento moral y político del siglo XX.» Adam Kirsch y Rivka Galchen, *The New York Times* «Brillante y perturbador.» Stephen Spender, *The New York Review of Books* «Un libro destinado a revolver nuestras mentes y nuestras conciencias.» *Chicago Tribune* «Se enfrenta al gran problema de nuestro tiempo: el problema del ser humano en un sistema totalitario moderno.» Bruno Bettelheim, *The New Republic* «Una pensadora formidable [...]. Por desgracia, *Eichmann en Jerusalén* es una obra maestra cada vez más relevante, ya que nos enfrentamos a un mundo gobernado por tiranos banales capaces de perpetrar grandes males con sus pequeñas manos.» María Popova, *Brainpickings* «En vez de defender la causa de su pueblo de manera incondicional, Arendt se puso a reflexionar, investigar y debatir. En palabras de Aristóteles, en vez de limitarse a ser una "historiadora", Arendt se convirtió en "poeta".» *El País* Immediately upon his arrival in Vienna, Eichmann opened negotiations with the representatives of the Jewish Community—whom he had to liberate from prisons and concentration camps for the purpose, since the "revolutionary zeal" in Austria, greatly exceeding the early "excesses" in Germany, had resulted in the imprisonment of practically all prominent Jews. Having undergone such imprisonment, the Jewish functionaries did not need Eichmann to convince them of the desirability of emigration. Rather, their concern was to inform him of the enormous difficulties that lay ahead. Apart from the financial problem—already "solved"—the chief difficulty was the great number of papers every emigrant had to assemble before he could leave the country. Each of the papers was valid only for a limited time, and this meant that the validity of the first had usually expired long before the last

Once Eichmann understood how the whole thing worked—or rather, did not work—he “took comfort with himself,” as he said in Jerusalem, and “gave birth to the idea that I thought would do justice to both parties.” He imagined “an assembly line, at whose beginning the first document is put, and then the other papers, and at the end the passport would have to come out as the end product.” This plan could be realized if all the offices concerned—the Ministry of Finance, the income-tax people, the police, the Jewish Community, and so forth—were housed under the same roof and their work on the spot, in the presence of the applicant, who would no longer have to run from office to office, and who, presumably, would also be spared some humiliating chicanery and certain expenses for bribes. When everything was ready, the assembly line did its work smoothly and quickly, and Eichmann thereupon “invited” the Jewish functionaries from Berlin to inspect it. They were appalled. “This is like an automatic factory, like a flour mill connected with some bakery,” one of them said. “At one side you put in a Jew who still has some property and, let us assume, a factory, or a shop, or some bank account, and he goes through the whole building from counter to counter, from office to office, and he comes out at the other end without any money, without any rights, with only a passport in which it says: ‘You must leave the country within a fortnight. Otherwise, you will go to a concentration camp!’ ” This, of course, was essentially the truth about the procedure, but it was not the whole truth. Actually, these Jews could not be left “without any money,” for the simple reason that no country at this date would have received them in that condition. They needed, and were given, their Vorzeigegeld—the amount they had to show in order to obtain their visas and to pass the immigration inspection of the recipient country. For this amount, they needed foreign currency, which the Reich had no intention of wasting on its Jews. These needs were not covered by Jewish accounts in foreign countries, which, in any event, were difficult to get at, because they had been illegal for many years. Eichmann therefore sent a number of Jewish functionaries abroad to solicit funds from the great Jewish organizations, and these funds were then sold by the Jewish Community to the prospective emigrants for a considerable profit. One dollar, for instance, was sold for ten or twenty marks when its market value was 4.20 marks. It was chiefly in this way that the Community acquired not only the money necessary for the poor Jews and people without accounts abroad but also the funds it needed for its own, hugely expanded activities. Eichmann had not arranged the deal without encountering considerable opposition from the German financial authorities, who, after all, could not remain unaware of the fact that these transactions amounted to a devaluation of the mark. Bragging was the vice that was Eichmann’s undoing. It was sheer rodomontade when he told men working under him during the last days of the war, “I will jump into my grave laughing, because the fact that I have the death of five million Jews for “enemies of the Reich,” as he always claimed to have said) on my conscience gives me extraordinary satisfaction.” He did not jump, and if he had anything on his conscience, it was not murder but, as it turned out, the fact that he once had slapped the face of Dr. Löwenherz, head of the Jewish Community in Vienna, who later became one of his favorite Jews. (He had apologized in front of his staff at the time, but this incident kept bothering him.) The claim that he was responsible for the death of five million Jews—the approximate total of the losses suffered from the combined efforts of all Nazi bureaus and authorities—was preposterous, as he knew very well, but he had kept repeating the damning sentence ad nauseam to everyone who would listen, even long after the war, when he was in Argentina. (Former Consular Official Horst Grell, who had known Eichmann in Hungary and had heard him make the claim there, testified in a court, in Berchtesgaden, in 1961, that in his opinion Eichmann was boasting. That must have been obvious to everyone who heard him utter his absurd claim.) Certainly Eichmann was boasting when he pretended that he had “invented” the ghetto system, or that he “gave birth to the idea” of shipping all European Jews to Madagascar. The Theresienstadt ghetto, in Czechoslovakia, of which Eichmann claimed the “paternity,” was established years after the ghetto system had been introduced into the occupied territories of Eastern Europe, and the setting up of a special ghetto for certain privileged categories—which is what Theresienstadt was—was the “idea” of Heydrich; so, indeed, was the whole Nazi ghetto system. The Madagascar plan seems to have been “born” in the bureaus of the German Foreign Office, and Eichmann’s own contribution to it turned out to owe a good deal to Dr. Löwenherz, whom he had called upon to put down “some basic thoughts” on how some four million Jews might be transported from Europe after the war—presumably to Palestine, since the Madagascar plan seems to have been top-secret. (Upon being confronted at the trial with the Löwenherz report, Eichmann did not deny that he had enlisted Dr. Löwenherz’s help; it was one of the few moments when he appeared genuinely embarrassed.) What eventually led to his capture in Argentina was his compulsion to talk big, even there—he was, he said at the time, “fed up with being an anonymous wanderer between two worlds”—and the compulsion must have grown considerably stronger as time passed, not only because he had nothing to do that he could consider worth doing but also because the postwar era had bestowed so much unexpected “fame” upon him. But bragging is a common vice. A more specific, and also a more decisive, flaw in Eichmann’s character was his almost total inability ever to look at anything from the other fellow’s point of view. Nowhere was this flaw more conspicuous than in his account of his good year in Vienna. He and his men and the Jews were all “pulling together,” and whenever there were any difficulties, the Jewish functionaries would come running to him “to unburden their hearts,” to tell him “all their grief and sorrow,” and to ask his help. The Jews “desired” to emigrate, and he, Eichmann, was there to help them, because it happened that at that time the Nazi authorities had expressed a desire to see their Reich judenrein. The two desires coincided, and he, Eichmann, could “do justice to both parties.” At the trial, he never gave an inch when it came to this part of the story, though he agreed that today, when “times have changed so much,” the Jews might not be too happy to recall this “pulling together,” and he said he did not want “to hurt their feelings.” The German text of the taped police examination, which was conducted by Captain Less between May 29, 1960, and January 17, 1961, and each page of which was corrected and approved by Eichmann, demonstrates that the horrible can sometimes be not only ludicrous but downright funny. Some of the comedy cannot be conveyed in English, because it lies in Eichmann’s heroic fight with the German language, which invariably defeats him. It is funny when he speaks, passim, of “gefügelte Worte,” a German colloquialism for famous quotes from the classics), because he means “stock phrases” (“Redensarten”) or “slogans” (“Schlagworte”). It was both funny and confusing when, during the cross-examination conducted by Judge Landau on the Sassen documents, he used the phrase “kontra gehen” (“to give tit for tat”), which is a term used in a card game called skat, to indicate that he had resisted Sassen’s efforts to live up his stories; Judge Landau, obviously ignorant of the mysteries of card games, did not understand, and Eichmann could not think of any other way to put it. He himself seemed dimly aware of a defect that must have plagued him even in school—it amounted to a mild case of aphasia—for he apologized by saying, “Officialese [Amtssprache] is my only language.” The real point here is that officialese became his language because he was genuinely incapable of uttering a single sentence that was not a cliché. (Was it these clichés that the psychiatrists thought so “normal” and “desirable”? Are these the “positive ideas” a clergyman hopes for in those to whose souls he ministers? Eichmann’s best opportunity to show this positive side of his character in Jerusalem came when the young police officer, in charge of his mental and psychological well-being, handed him “Lolita” for relaxation. After two days Eichmann returned it, visibly indignant: “That is quite an unwholesome book [Das ist aber ein sehr unerfreuliches Buch],” he told his guard.) The judges were right when they finally told the accused that all he had said was “empty talk”—except that they thought the emptiness feigned, and believed that the accused wished to cover up other thoughts, which were not empty but hideous. This supposition seems refuted by the striking consistency with which Eichmann, despite his rather bad memory, constantly repeated, word for word, the same stock phrases and self-invented clichés (when he did succeed in constructing a sentence of his own, he thereupon repeated it until it became a cliché) in referring to every event or incident that was of some importance to him. Whether he wrote his memoirs in Argentina or in Jerusalem, whether he talked to the police examiner or to the court, what he said was always the same, expressed in the same words. The longer one listened to him, the more obvious it became that his inability to speak was closely connected with an inability to think; that is, to think from the standpoint of somebody else. No communication with him was possible, not because he lied but because he was surrounded by the most reliable of all safeguards against the words of others, or even the presence of others, and hence against reality as such. Thus, confronted for eight months with the reality of being examined by a Jewish policeman, Eichmann did not have the slightest hesitation in explaining to him at considerable length, and repeatedly, how he had been unable to attain a higher grade in the S.S., and why this was not his fault. He had done everything; he had even asked to be sent to active military duty. (“Now, off to the front, I said to myself, then the Standartenführer [colonelcy] will come quicker.”) In court, on the contrary, he pretended that he had asked to be transferred because he wanted to escape his murderous duties. He did not insist much on this, though, and, strangely, he was not confronted with his statements to the police examiner, to whom he had said that he had hoped to be nominated for the Einsatzgruppen, the S.S. mobile killing units in the East, because by the time they were officially organized, in March, 1941, his office was “dead;” that is, there was no longer any emigration, and deportations had not yet been started. There was, finally, his greatest ambition—to be promoted to the job of police chief in some German town. Again, nothing doing. What makes these pages of the police examinations so funny is that Eichmann related all this in the tone of someone who was sure to find, as he put it, “normal, human” sympathy for a hard-luck story. “Whatever I prepared and planned, everything went wrong,” he said. “My personal affairs as well as my years-long efforts to obtain land and soil for the Jews came to naught. I don’t know—everything in my life was as if under an evil spell; whatever I planned and whatever I wanted and desired to do, fate prevented it somehow. I was frustrated in everything, no matter what.” When Captain Less asked his opinion on some damning and possibly lying evidence furnished by a former colonel of the S.S., he exclaimed, suddenly stuttering with rage, “I am very much surprised that this man could ever have been S.S. Standartenführer! That surprises me very much indeed. It is altogether, altogether unthinkable. I don’t know what to say.” He never said these things in a spirit of defiance, as though he wanted, even now, to defend the standards by which he had lived in the past. The very word “S.S.” or “career” or “Himmler” (whom he always spoke of by his long official title, Reichsführer S.S. and Chief of the German Police, although he by no means admired him) triggered in him a mechanism that had become completely unalterable. The presence of Captain Less, a Jew from Germany, who was unlikely to think that members of the S.S. advanced in their careers through the exercise of high moral qualities, did not for a moment throw this mechanism out of gear. Now and then, the comedy breaks into the horror itself, and the result is stories, presumably true enough, whose macabre humor easily surpasses that of any Surrealist invention. Such was the story that Eichmann told during the police examination about the unlucky Commercial Councillor Bertold Storfer, one of the representatives of the Viennese Jewish Community. Eichmann had received a telegram from Rudolf Höss, Commandant of Auschwitz, telling him that Storfer had arrived and had urgently requested to see Eichmann. “I said to myself, O.K., this man has always behaved well; that is worth my while. . . . I’ll go there myself and see what is the matter with him. And I go to Ebner [chief of the Gestapo in Vienna], and Ebner says—‘remember it only vaguely—‘Yes,’ he said, ‘if only he had not been so clumsy!’ He went into hiding and wanted to escape,” or something of the sort. And the police arrested him and sent him to the concentration camp, and, according to the orders of the Reichsführer [Himmler], no one could get out once he was in. Nothing could be done; neither Dr. Ebner nor I nor anybody else could do anything about it. I went to Auschwitz, looked up Höss, and said: ‘Storfer is here?’ ‘Yes, yes [he replied], he is in one of the labor gangs.’ With Storfer afterward, well, it was normal and human; we had a normal, human encounter. He told me all his grief and sorrow. I said, ‘Well, my dear old friend [Ja, mein Lieber guter Storfer], we certainly got it! What rotten luck!’ And I also said, ‘Look, I really cannot help you, because according to orders of the Reichsführer nobody can get you out. I can’t get you out. Dr. Ebner can’t get you out. I hear you made a mistake, that you went into hiding or wanted to bolt, which, after all, you did not need to do.’ [Eichmann meant that Storfer, as a Jewish functionary, had immunity from deportation.] I forget what his reply to this was. And he said, yes, he wondered if he couldn’t be let off work; it was heavy work. And then I said to Höss, ‘Work—Storfer won’t have to work!’ Höss said, ‘Everyone works here.’ So I said, ‘O.K. I’ll make out a chit to the effect that Storfer has to keep the gravel paths in order with a broom’—there were little gravel paths there—and that he has the right to sit down with his broom on one of the benches.’ I said, ‘Will that be all right, Mr. Storfer? Will that suit you?’ Whereupon he was very pleased, and we shook hands, and then he was given the broom and sat down on the bench. It was a great inner joy to me that I could at least see the man with whom I had worked for so many long years, and that we could speak with each other.” Six weeks after this normal, human encounter, Storfer was dead—not gassed, apparently, but shot. Is this a textbook case of bad faith combined with outrageous stupidity? Or is it simply the case of the eternally unrepentant criminal (Dostoevski once mentions in his diaries that in Siberia, among scores of murderers, rapists, and burglars, he never met a single man who would admit that he had done wrong)—of the wrongdoer who cannot afford to face reality because his crime has become part and parcel of it? Yet Eichmann’s case is different from the case of the ordinary criminal, who can shield himself effectively against the reality of a non-criminal world only within the narrow limits of his gang. Eichmann needed only to recall the past in order to feel sure that he was not lying and that he was not deceiving himself, for he and the world he lived in had once been in perfect harmony. Eighty million Germans had been shielded against reality and factuality by exactly the same self-deception, lies, and stupidity that had now become ingrained in Eichmann’s nature. These lies changed from year to year, and they frequently contradicted each other; moreover, they were not necessarily the same for the various branches of the Party hierarchy or the people at large. But the practice of self-deception had become so widespread—almost a moral prerequisite for survival—that even now, eighteen years after the collapse of the Nazi regime, when most of the specific content of its lies has been forgotten, it is sometimes difficult not to believe that mendacity has become an integral part of the German national character. During the war, the lie that was most effective with the whole of the German people was the slogan calling the war “the battle of destiny for the German people” (“der Schicksalskampf des deutschen Volkes”). This slogan, which was coined either by Hitler or by Goebbels, made self-deception easier on three counts, for it suggested, first, that the war was no war; second, that it was started by destiny and not by Germany; and, third, that it was a matter of life and death for the Germans, who must annihilate their enemies or be annihilated. Eichmann’s astounding willingness, both in Argentina and in Jerusalem, to admit his crimes was due less to his own criminal capacity for self-deception than to the aura of systematic mendacity that had constituted the general, and generally accepted, atmosphere of the Third Reich. “Of course” he had played a role in the extermination of the Jews; of course if he “had not transported them, they would not have been delivered to the butcher.” He went on to ask, “What is there to ‘admit’?” Now, he proceeded, he “would like to find peace with [his] former enemies”—a sentiment he shared not only with Himmler (who had expressed it during the last year of the war) and with the Labor Front leader Robert Ley (who, before he committed suicide in Nuremberg, had proposed the establishment of a “conciliation committee” consisting of the Nazis responsible for the massacres and the Jewish survivors) but also, unbelievably, with many ordinary Germans, who were heard to express themselves in exactly the same terms at the end of the war. This outrageous cliché was no longer issued to them from above; it was a self-fabricated stock phrase, as devoid of reality as those clichés by which the people had lived for twelve years. Eichmann’s mind was filled to the brim with such sentences. His memory proved to be very unreliable about what actually happened. In a rare moment of exasperation, Judge Landau asked the accused, “What can you remember?” (if you don’t remember the discussions at the so-called Wannsee Conference, which dealt with the various methods of killing Jews); the answer, of course, was that Eichmann remembered the turning points in his own career rather well but that they did not necessarily coincide with the turning points in the story of Jewish extermination, or, as a matter of fact, with the turning points in history. (He always had trouble remembering the exact date of the outbreak of the war or of the invasion of Russia.) But the point of the matter is that he had not forgotten a single one of the sentences that at one time or another had served to give him what he repeatedly called a “sense of elation.” Hence, whenever, during the cross-examination, the judges tried to appeal to his conscience, they were met with “elation,” and they were outraged as well as disconcerted when they learned that the accused had at his disposal a different elating cliché for each period of his life and each of his activities. In his mind, there was no contradiction between “I will jump into my grave laughing,” appropriate for the end of the war, and “I am ready to hang myself in public as a warning example for all anti-Semites on this earth,” which now, under vastly different circumstances, fulfilled exactly the same function—that of giving him a lift.

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