



# **Eichmann Before Jerusalem: The Unexamined Life of a Mass Murderer**

*Bettina Stangneth*

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## **Eichmann Before Jerusalem: The Unexamined Life of a Mass Murderer** Bettina Stangneth

A total and groundbreaking reassessment of the life of Adolf Eichmann—a superb work of scholarship that reveals his activities and notoriety among a global network of National Socialists following the collapse of the Third Reich and that permanently challenges Hannah Arendt’s notion of the “banality of evil.”

Smuggled out of Europe after the collapse of Germany, Eichmann managed to live a peaceful and active exile in Argentina for years before his capture by the Mossad. Though once widely known by nicknames such as “Manager of the Holocaust,” in 1961 he was able to portray himself, from the defendant’s box in Jerusalem, as an overworked bureaucrat following orders—no more, he said, than “just a small cog in Adolf Hitler’s extermination machine.” How was this carefully crafted obfuscation possible? How did a central architect of the Final Solution manage to disappear? And what had he done with his time while in hiding?

Bettina Stangneth, the first to comprehensively analyze more than 1,300 pages of Eichmann’s own recently discovered written notes— as well as seventy-three extensive audio reel recordings of a crowded Nazi salon held weekly during the 1950s in a popular district of Buenos Aires—draws a chilling portrait, not of a reclusive, taciturn war criminal on the run, but of a highly skilled social manipulator with an inexhaustible ability to reinvent himself, an unrepentant murderer eager for acolytes with whom to discuss past glories while vigorously planning future goals with other like-minded fugitives.

A work that continues to garner immense international attention and acclaim, *Eichmann Before Jerusalem* maps out the astonishing links between innumerable past Nazis—from ace Luftwaffe pilots to SS henchmen—both in exile and in Germany, and reconstructs in detail the postwar life of one of the Holocaust’s principal organizers as no other book has done

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