

## "I am Adolf Hitler": The astonishing confessions of a man in Argentina



In the remote province of Salta, a man presenting himself as Herman Guntherberg claimed before witnesses to be the dictator whom the entire world had believed dead since 1945. Senile madness, calculated imposture — or a fragment of a truth that official History would rather keep buried?

There are confessions that tear the veil of reality apart. In a peripheral neighbourhood of Salta, a sun-bleached city lost in the far northwest of Argentina, a bedridden old man allegedly uttered words his family did not know how to receive: *"I am Adolf Hitler. I have lived in hiding for seventy years. And now I want the world to know."* The man is officially known as Herman Guntherberg — or at least, that is the identity under which he has been registered since his arrival in Argentina in 1945.

The affair, first revealed by the ultra-conservative local newspaper *El Patriota* and later amplified by the website *World News Daily Report*, triggered an immediate media earthquake in 2017 before being dissected by fact-checkers across the globe. No matter: it resurfaced with troubling vigour in 2026, carried by social media and fuelled, paradoxically, by the partial declassification of CIA documents ordered by Donald Trump.

### [A passport forged by the Gestapo, a new life beneath the Andes](#)

According to statements collected by *El Patriota*, Guntherberg claims to have arrived in Argentina in the summer of 1945 carrying a false passport manufactured by Nazi intelligence services as the war drew to a close. The document identified him under an ordinary Germanic name, sufficient to blend into the communities of European immigrants who were then disembarking by the thousands on the shores of the Río de la Plata. The strategy, in its broad outlines, is hardly without precedent: notorious war criminals such as Adolf Eichmann and Josef Mengele followed remarkably similar routes, sheltered by religious networks and escape pipelines now well-documented — the infamous *ratlines*.

Archives — CIA Files / JFK Documents

In 2017, the CIA released microfilms containing reports on the testimony of one Philip Citroën, a Dutch soldier who claimed to have encountered Adolf Hitler in Colombia around 1954. According to this witness, the dictator subsequently moved to Argentina in January 1955. The head of the CIA's Western Hemisphere Division had recommended as early as 1955 that investigations be abandoned, deeming the "possibilities of establishing anything concrete" far too remote.

These documents, resurfaced during a new wave of declassification in 2025, reignited the debate — without providing a shred of formal proof.

### **The wife speaks: dementia, or a cursed memory?**

In the corridors of the family home, Angela Martinez, Guntherberg's wife of fifty-five years, speaks with the resignation of a woman who has exhausted her certainties. Her husband, she says, never spoke of Hitler, the Nazis, or the war before 2015 — the year the first signs of cognitive deterioration appeared. *"He would forget who I was. He would enter a kind of trance and begin talking about Jews and demons. Then he would return to normal, as if nothing had happened,"* she recalls. For Angela Martinez, the truth is medical: advanced dementia, identity confusion, an unconscious absorption of stories read or overheard.

"I have been depicted as a monster solely because we lost the war. When people read my side of the story, it will change the way they perceive me."

— Herman Guntherberg, as quoted by *El Patriota* (2017)

Yet other voices, less quick to reach a clinical verdict, press harder. How could a man afflicted with dementia construct a narrative so internally coherent — a forged passport, a precise itinerary, carefully reasoned motives? The timing, too, gives pause: it was precisely in 2016 that Israeli intelligence services reportedly and officially abandoned their policy of pursuing Nazi war criminals. Guntherberg is said to have cited this explicitly as his reason for finally speaking out.

### **Argentina: promised land of Nazi shadows**

To understand why such a story could be born and flourish, one must look Argentina squarely in the face of the post-war years. Under the presidency of Juan Perón — whose ideological sympathies with European fascist regimes have been noted by numerous historians — the country became a refuge for dozens, perhaps hundreds, of former SS officers and collaborators seeking to disappear. Organised networks, sometimes with the tacit complicity of ecclesiastical authorities, facilitated the obtaining of false papers and passage to South America.

Abel Basti, an Argentine journalist and author of the book *Hitler in Exile*, goes further still. In a revised edition published in July 2016, he argues that Hitler lived in Argentina for a decade, before taking refuge in Paraguay under the protection of dictator Alfredo Stroessner — himself of German descent. According to Basti, the Führer died on 3 February 1971 on Paraguayan soil. A thesis the academic community receives with polite but firm scepticism.

### **Science against myth: what the bones say**

Faced with this efflorescence of alternative narratives, historians have long ruled on the matter, evidence in hand. Adolf Hitler took his own life on 30 April 1945 in his Berlin bunker, surrounded by a close circle of loyalists. His body was partially burned on his orders before being taken by the Soviet army — a fact that long sustained doubt in the West.

## Fact-Check Note

In 2018, a team of French researchers analysed dental fragments preserved in Moscow, concluding that there was "sufficient evidence to confirm the definitive identification of the remains of Adolf Hitler." Historian Richard J. Evans, consulted by AFP, is categorical: "Only confirmed direct eyewitness testimony could prove that Hitler was seen in Argentina, and none exists."

As for the original source of the Guntherberg affair — *World News Daily Report* — the site itself carries, on its homepage, this unambiguous disclaimer: "*All characters appearing in the articles on this website — even those based on real people — are entirely fictional.*" More damning still: the photograph of the elderly man supposedly depicting Hitler is in fact that of Francis Morris, a British centenarian from Huddersfield, who gained media attention in 2014 as one of the oldest drivers in the United Kingdom.

### **Why these ghosts never die**

So why does such a story continue to circulate, to resurface, to fascinate? Psychologists and historians of belief are unanimous on this point: Hitler's death in his bunker, banal in its sordidness, profoundly disappoints the human instinct for justice. A man responsible for an unprecedented genocide cannot have *simply* put a bullet in his head and vanished. He must be hunted down, judged, humiliated. His imagined survival compensates for the absence of trial — an impossible catharsis transformed into a persistent myth.

To this must be added an undeniable historical reality: Nazis *did* flee to South America. Eichmann was captured in Buenos Aires in 1960. Mengele died in Brazil in 1979 without ever having been brought to justice. This factual soil feeds speculation: if they could hide, why not him?

Hitler's wretched death in a smoke-filled bunker fails to satisfy our thirst for justice. The myth of his escape is an imaginary revenge that History denies us.

— *Analysis of conspiracy theories surrounding Nazi survival*

### **Epilogue: the old man of Salta and his shadows**

Herman Guntherberg — whatever his real name may have been — has in all likelihood passed away by the time you read these lines, claimed by age or illness, without his declarations ever having been verified. Neither the DNA tests that might have settled the matter, nor the autobiography he allegedly promised to publish in September 2017, ever materialised. He remains a silhouette in an armchair, in Salta, in the shadow of the Andes — real or invented, flesh or fiction — and the words attributed to him float somewhere between the ravings of a dying man and the stubborn persistence of a History that refuses to close cleanly.

For therein lies perhaps the true mystery, more unsettling than any forged passport or escape network: not that Hitler could have survived, but that we so desperately need to believe he did.

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