

## Eleos: Possible Questions for Discussion

1. What is the meaning of a “grey zone”? Which of the book characters, fictional and historical, would you place there?
2. Why “what must we do now?” is the first question in David’s diary? What choices was he referring to? What would you have done?
3. Why did Hannah Arendt refer to Adolf Eichmann as “banal”? Do you think he was?
4. Why did David refuse to take the needle in Grottaferrata? And why was he ready to accept it later?
5. Why was the Holocaust surrounded by silence until the Eichmann’s trial? What changed?
6. Despite significant differences, the book draws parallels between the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust. Do you think it’s justified?
7. Why was David so upset by the results of Milgram’s experiments? Fifty years later – do you think the results would be different?
8. Why does Erika refer to David as a “sweet prince” in the end? Who is she referring to?
9. The book quotes Stanley Loomis: “There is no crime, no murder, no massacre that cannot be justified, provided it be committed in the name of an Ideal.” Loomis was writing about the French Revolution. Do you think the quote is applicable to the Armenian Genocide? Holocaust? Our time?
10. Why does the story of Rudolf Kasztner play such a prominent role in the book?
11. Why was the prosecution of Nazi criminals in West Germany in the 1950s-60s was so limited and lenient?
12. Do you agree with “our brain seems to have a self-protective of blocking the truths it can’t survive ... the same mechanism enables the horror to return”? If so, what should we do?

13. Why do you think there is a motif of the “freedom to choose how to leave” in the book?
14. Why did the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF, Dashnaks) resort to Operation Nemesis? Do you consider it justified?
15. Why does David refer to Itzhak as “my duty-bound brother”? Why does he say “my life is mine, my own”?
16. The Frankfurt Auschwitz trial – success or failure?
17. Eleos rejects the “lesser evil” arguments and points a finger not only at the criminals but also at those that stood by. Do you agree with that? Do you think it’s fair to accuse Pius XII of an “astonishing moral failure”? to accuse Allen Dulles of having no sympathy for the Armenian victims? Do you think that the CIA and the MI6 were justified in hiring criminals with anti-Communist credentials?
18. What do you think should be the role of morality in politics? Why does a character say: “Short-term, *realpolitik*. Long-term, more bloodshed”? Do you agree with him?