

Episode 24: Naika Foroutan: Racism in the Perception of Israel/Palestine

Guest: Prof. Dr. Naika Foroutan, Humboldt University of Berlin / German Center for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM)

Hosts: Efe & Philip

Bio: Naika Foroutan is one of Germany's leading scholars of Migration. She is a Professor of Integration Research and Social Policy at Humboldt University of Berlin, where she also leads the Department at the Berlin Institute for Empirical Integration and Migration Research (BIM). Since 2017, she has served as Director of the German Center for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM), the largest research network on migration in Germany. Her research focuses on the transformation of immigration countries into post-migrant societies, minority and Islam policies, as well as radicalization, racism, and Islamism. She has received numerous awards for her scholarship, including the Berlin Integration Prize (2011), the Fritz Behrens Foundation Research Prize (2012), and the Höffmann Academic Prize of the University of Vechta (2016). In May 2025, she was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Lund.

In this Episode: October 7, 2023, marked a turning point: antisemitism and racism have since surged worldwide and in Germany. At the same time, the devastating situation in Gaza has fueled political polarization and deepened social divides. In this conversation, **Prof. Dr. Naika Foroutan** presents findings from the National Monitoring of Discrimination and Racism and examines how racialized perceptions shape media coverage, protest cultures, and institutional responses. She reflects on the rise of antisemitic content on TikTok, the interplay of war and prejudice, and the instrumentalization of antisemitism for anti-migration agendas. Prof. Foroutan also discusses double standards in free speech, the pressures facing universities, the risks of authoritarian politics, and the amplifying role of social media. She shares deeply personal experiences of her family in Iran during the 12 day war and concludes by calling for a societal "de-escalation of language" and emphasizing solidarity and pluralism as essential to countering both antisemitism and racism without undermining fundamental rights.

Link:

Prof. Dr. Naika Foroutan

https://www.sowi.hu-berlin.de/de/lehrebereiche/Integrationsforschung/integrationsforschung_MA/foroutan (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

German Center for Integration and Migration Research

<https://www.dezim-institut.de/> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Nationaler Rassismus und Diskriminierungsmonitor:

<https://www.rassismusmonitor.de/> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Annual Report on Islamophobia in 2024 by the CLAIM Alliance

<https://www.claim-allianz.de/aktuelles/publikationen/> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Annual Report of Antisemitic Incidents in Germany 2024 by RIAS:

https://report-antisemitism.de/documents/04-06-25_Antisemitic_incidents_in_Germany_Annual-Report_Federal_Association_RIAS_2024.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

RIAS Analysis of the Rise of Antisemitism since October 7:

https://report-antisemitism.de/documents/25-10-06_BVRIAS_Politischer-Antisemitismus-7-Oktober.pdf (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Kompetenzzentrum für Antisemitismusforschung und -strategien (KOAS). *Zwischenbericht: Studie zu den Auswirkungen des 7. Oktober 2023 auf jüdische und israelische Communities in Deutschland*. KOAS – Bildung und Forschung, Sept. 2025.

<https://koas-bildungundforschung.de/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ZwischenberichtStudieAuswirkungen7Oktober.pdf> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Comparison of the three Main Definitions of Antisemitism (IHRA, JDA, Nexus):

<https://thirdnarrative.org/three-definitions-of-antisemitism-a-comparison/> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

On Antisemitism on Tik Tok:

<https://www.bpb.de/lernen/bewegt-bild-und-politische-bildung/themen-und-hintergruende/lernen-mit-und-ueber-tiktok/552644/hass-for-you/> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Timothy Snyder on Fomenting Antisemitism by authoritarian policies:

https://snyder.substack.com/p/fomenting-antisemitism?utm_source=publication-search (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Please also check out our other episodes to explore multiple perspectives:

On Antisemitism: Magda Teter, Elad Lapidot/Hannah Tzuberi, Michel Friedman, Volker Weiss, Benjamin Fischer, Anita Haviv, Meron Mendel, Yael Danieli, Tirzah Firestone, Ken Stern

On Racism: Alena Jabarine, Khalil Sayegh, Oren Kessler, Saraya Gomis, Magda Teter

On defining antisemitism: Benjamin Fischer, Magda Teter, Ken Stern

Dedication:

We dedicate this Podcast to all victims and survivors of October 7, the hostages and their families, to all innocent civilians killed and injured in Gaza and their grieving families and friends. To our dear guests Udi Goren, Khalil Sayegh, Sima and Mai who shared their losses so powerfully with us. To their families: Tal's wife Ella Haimi, their children Nir, Einav, Udi and Lotan, who never got the chance to meet his father. To Khalil Sayegh's mother and siblings, to Mai's and Sima's family, to her mother Bushra.

To the blessed memory of: Tal Haimi, Lara Sayegh, Jeris Sayegh, Mahmoud, Danny Darlington and Haim Perry.

Disclaimer:

In each episode of this podcast, the invited guests speak on their own behalf. They share their experiences, assessments, and expert perspectives. These contributions are central to the multiperspectivity of the project but do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial team or producers.

Legal & Historical Anchor Episodes:

This podcast may include controversial legal terms of specific technical significance. Their legal applicability requires a thorough expert contextualization; for this, we refer to our legal chapter. All relevant terms of international law, its institutions, current controversies, and the state of jurisprudence are explained in the anchor episode with Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Claus Kreß LL.M. (Cambridge) (Episode 36). He is co-author of the Rome Statute, Special Advisor to the International Criminal Court, and Judge at the International Court of Justice in the parallel Gambia vs. Myanmar genocide case.

Historical matters are discussed from multiple perspectives in this podcast. Please check the cross-references in the shownotes of the respective episodes for details. All historically contested issues are addressed in the history anchor episode with Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Gudrun Krämer (Episode 21), author of the comprehensive work *A History of Palestine: From the Ottoman Conquest to the Founding of the State of Israel* (Princeton 2008), a standard reference in the field.

For her scholarly achievements as a historian, she was awarded the *Preis des Historischen Kollegs* in 2025, the highest distinction in her discipline in Germany.