

Episode 25: Johannes Becke, Hochschule für Jüdische Studien

Guest

Prof. Dr. Johannes Becke, Ben-Gurion Chair for Israel and Middle East Studies, Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies

Hosts: Efe & Leif

Bio: Prof. Dr. Johannes Becke is a political scientist and a leading expert on Israel and Middle East studies in the German-speaking world. He studied political science and Romanic Languages in Heidelberg, at the University of Illinois, and at Cairo University. After completing his PhD in 2014 at Freie Universität Berlin, he conducted research at Tel Aviv University and at Oxford. Today, he holds the Ben-Gurion Chair for Israel and Middle East Studies at the Heidelberg University where he is also a co-opted member of the Faculty of Philosophy. His research focuses on Israeli politics, Arab-Israeli relations, and state- and nation-building in the Middle East and North Africa.

In this episode: Prof. Dr. Johannes Becke reflects on the Hamas massacre of October 7 and its historical significance. He discusses Israel's security and political failures, and the profound impact of the attacks on Israeli society. The discussion also explores the structure, ideology, and international networks of Hamas, as well as the political implications of Israel's military strategy in Gaza. Other key topics include international reactions, the role of regional powers like Qatar and Iran and of the International Criminal Court. Finally, the episode looks ahead to possible scenarios for the future: the political order in Gaza after the war, the internal consequences for Israel, and whether a two-state solution remains a realistic prospect.

Links:

Prof. Dr. Johannes Becke / Ben Gurion Chair for Israel Studies

<https://www.hfjs.eu/professuren/ben-gurion-lehrstuhl-fuer-israel-und-nahoststudien/team/lehrestuhlinhaber/prof-dr-johannes-becke.html> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

On the ideological roots and structure of Hamas, listen also to the episodes with Joseph Croitoru and Gudrun Krämer.

Please also check out our other episodes in the political debate chapter to explore multiple perspectives.

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.