

### **Episode 3: Jewish experiences in Germany since October 7**

**Guest:** Prof. Dr. Dr. Michel Friedman, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Jurist, Philosopher, Author, Media Host and Public Intellectual

**Hosts:** Efe & Philip

#### **Bio**

Prof. Dr. Dr. Michel Friedman is one of Germany's most prominent intellectuals, jurists, and public voices. Born in Paris in 1956 as the son of Holocaust survivors rescued by Oskar Schindler, most of his family was murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau. He has served as Vice President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, President of the European Jewish Congress, member of the CDU federal executive board, and editor of the *Jüdische Allgemeine*. Friedman is Professor of Real Estate and Media Law at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, author, philosopher, and award-winning TV host.

A passionate defender of democracy and minority rights, he has been a leading critic of antisemitism, racism, and populism in Germany. In January 2025, after the CDU/CSU parliamentary group passed its migration plan with AfD votes, Friedman resigned from the party, denouncing what he called a "dramatic breach of taboo." He is the recipient of the Federal Cross of Merit, the German Television Award, the Goethe Plaque of Frankfurt (2024), and is an Officer of the French Legion of Honor.

**In this episode:** Prof. Friedman reflects on Jewish experiences in Germany since October 7, 2023. We discuss how the Hamas attack reawakened trauma across Jewish communities and how antisemitism has dramatically intensified on Germany's streets, in schools, and on campuses. He shares personal memories as the son of Holocaust survivors growing up in the country of the perpetrators, and speaks about the challenges facing Jewish students and professionals today. We ask him how society should respond to polarization, what responsibilities schools and universities bear, and what he would tell Jewish youth questioning their future in Germany. Friedman also offers a sharp analysis of the threats to democracy and the open society, the importance of solidarity between minorities, what still gives him hope - and the one sentence he would place in every school and public institution.

#### **Links:**

Friedman, Michel. Mensch! Liebeserklärung eines verzweifelten Demokraten. Berlin Verlag, 2025. <https://michelfriedman.info/> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Friedman, Michel. Judenhass: 7. Oktober 2023. Berlin Verlag. <https://michelfriedman.info/judenhass/> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

## **On the Rise of Antisemitism in Germany:**

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](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](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)

***Please also check out our other episodes to explore multiple perspectives.***

On October 7: Udi Goren, Benjamin Fischer, Eyal Benvenisti, Yael Danieli, Tirzah Firestone

On the Holocaust and the foundation of Israel: Michael Brenner, Derek Penslar

On Antisemitism: Magda Teter, Benjamin Fischer, Ken Stern, Meron Mendel, Volker Weiss

### ***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.