

Episode 32: Gil Shohat

Guest: Gil Shohat, M.A., Director, Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Israel

Hosts: Mert & Efe

Bio: Gil Shohat, born in 1988 in Bonn to Israeli parents, is a historian and political scientist specializing in modern Israeli and German political culture. He studied in Munich, Exeter, and Berlin and has researched anti-colonial activism in London from the 1930s to the 1950s as well as Marxist historiography in Britain. Shohat has worked as a consultant at *Dialogperspektiven – Religionen und Weltanschauungen im Gespräch* and regularly publishes and speaks on contemporary German memory culture, the intersections of antisemitism and racism, and the manifestations of the Israel-Palestine situation in Germany. Since 2021, he has served as Director of the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung in Israel, contributing insights on political dynamics, education, and civil society.

In this episode: Recorded on Friday, June 20, 2025, hosts Efe and Mert speak with Gil Shohat about the current political climate in Israel, the ongoing impact of the events of October 7, and the broader regional dynamics, including recent escalations with Iran. Shohat shares his personal experience of the October 7 attacks and reflects on how Israeli society, politics, and public opinion have evolved since. The conversation explores the trajectory of support for the Gaza war, the challenges facing critical voices and Arab Israelis, and changes in the West Bank, the military, intelligence services, and the Knesset. Shohat also discusses international responses, including the International Court of Justice's acceptance of South Africa's genocide case against Israel and prior human rights reports, and he provides nuanced reflections on these debates. Turning to Germany, Shohat analyzes public and political reactions to the events in Israel and Palestine, including the handling of pro-Palestinian demonstrations, the tensions between free speech and legitimate concerns of antisemitism and the ongoing debates over definitions of antisemitism (IHRA, Nexus, and the Jerusalem Declaration). He emphasizes the importance of recognizing lived experiences of antisemitism and navigating these discussions responsibly. The episode closes with Shohat offering his perspective on how Germany can engage more effectively with Israel and Palestine, and what schools and educational institutions can do to foster informed, critical understanding.

Links:

Gil Shohat, M.A. https://www.rosalux.de/profil/es_detail/3IPF6THMKG/ma-gil-shohat?cHash=71e51c08171ebd2fa1c7dc735b09d793 (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/?utm_source=chatgpt.com (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 (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)

Harvard Caps Poll of October 19, 2023: 62% of 18-24 year olds answered that October 7 „attacks on Jews were genocidal in nature“, but 51% of them answered they were „justified by Palestinian grievances.“ (p. 43). https://harvardharrispoll.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/HHP_Oct23_KeyResults.pdf (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

On Jewish Experiences since October 7 in Germany:

Kolot (englisch: voices), Perspectives on October 7 <https://www.jmberlin.de/veranstaltungen-kolot-stimmen> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Chernivsky, Marina. *Bruchzeiten: Leben nach dem 7. Oktober*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2025. https://www.fischerverlage.de/verlag/rights/book/marina-chernivsky-bruchzeiten-9783103977127?utm_source=chatgpt.com (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

Friedman, Michel. *Judenhass: 7. Oktober 2023*. Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2024. https://www.piper.de/buecher/judenhass-isbn-978-3-8270-1515-0?utm_source=chatgpt.com (Last accessed on October 21, 2025)

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.