

Episode 47: Evaluating Education on the Israel/Palestine Conflict

Guest: Per Leo, Historian, Author, Journalist

Hosts: Philip & Efe

Bio: Per Leo studied history, philosophy, and Slavic studies in Freiburg and Berlin, earning his PhD in 2009 at Humboldt University. His novel *Flut und Boden*, which reflects on his grandfather Friedrich Leo, an SS-Sturmbannführer, and the family's history during the Nazi era, was shortlisted for the 2014 Leipzig Book Fair Prize and received several awards. Since 2021, Leo has critically examined German culture of remembrance in the context of the Middle East conflict and migration, notably in his essay *Tränen ohne Trauer*. He writes for leading publications including *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Die Zeit*, *Die Welt*, and *Neue Rundschau*, and lives in Berlin with his family as a freelance author. He is a 2024/2025 fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Berlin (Wissenschaftskolleg Berlin) where he examines how schools deal with the Israel/Palestine conflict.

In this episode: In this episode, Efe and Philip speak with Dr. Per Leo about how the Israel-Palestine conflict is addressed in Berlin schools. Drawing on his research and conversations with teachers, parents, and students, Leo explores how the conflict is taught historically, politically, and ethically. The discussion highlights the challenges of presenting multiple perspectives and making existing controversies visible - consistent with the requirements of the Beutelsbach Consensus for civic education - rather than promoting a single narrative or reducing the territorial conflict solely to issues of antisemitism. Topics include the role of inclusive remembrance culture in Germany, approaches to antisemitism, and Germany's special responsibility toward Israel. Leo also explains how historical events and political conflicts can be taught in ways that are ethically meaningful for students. The episode concludes with practical guidance and reflective questions for teachers on how to engage thoughtfully and responsibly with the Israel-Palestine conflict in the classroom.

Links:

Dr. Per Leo, Wissenschaftskolleg: <https://www.wiko-berlin.de/fellows/akademisches-jahr/2024/leo-per> (Last accessed on October 21, 2025).

Tom Khaled Würdemann/Hochschule für Jüdische Studien, Heidelberg, *Polarisierende Pädagogik? Ein Plädoyer für mehr Israel- und Palästina-studien in der antisemitismus- und rassismuskritischen Bildung [Polarizing Pedagogy? A case for more Israel- and Palestine studies in education critical of antisemitism and racism]*: <https://www.ufuq.de/aktuelles/polarisierende-paedagogik-ein-plaedoyer-fuer-mehr-israel-und-palaestina-studien-in-der-antisemitismus-und-rassismuskritischen-bildung/> (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).

Please also check out our other episodes 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.