

Transcript

In every conversation my grandmother and I are having, the topic of Germany comes up. She always expresses her emotions about me living there, and I listen and try to investigate a bit more, in each conversation, about our Israeli - German relation.

I moved to Germany and I am from Israel.

But you are not Germany, you are in Germany of today that accepts everyone

Germany of the past didn't accepted any one, it was Germany only for the Germans.
(Grandfather: Deutschland über alles)

Today there are still many groups that think that Germany is only for the Germans.

But in Germany of Hitler, not only they deported the Jewish people but all foreigners.
Only Germans.

Yes but that is not the Germany of today.

Yes Germany of today is more open hearted, they accept people.

They accept you, they don't mind, but not all the people accept you because they want Germany only for the Germans. You talk about Berlin which is cosmopolitan where everyone can be. You don't talk about other cities where there are only a few Jewish people or non at all. And anyway if something is happening they immediately shout its the Jude. Why in football, when two teams are playing and someone loses, they shout Jude? To the ones against them. Why? What does it have to do with the Jewish people?

What does the Jewish people have to do with it?

I feel that it is a sentence I have heard, not only from my grandmother, but many times before. Maybe it is my grandmother generation that feels that everything have to do with the Jewish people, and maybe the life circumstances has brought her, and many others, to feel that way.

Why won't you come visit me in Germany?

For years I made a vow that to Germany I won't go. There is something in my blood, because my mother was left alone, the only one of her family. I didn't knew anyone of them, she was one. No brothers, no sisters, no cousins. She had one cousin that used to live in Paris, we were searching for her, she probably ended up in Auschwitz, sent there from Paris. So why I didn't come? This is why. Because my mother remained the last of the family. And why were she the only one left? Because the Germans killed all of her family. But I believe in the young Germany and all the young people, who don't want and don't think they are the one to blame for it and I will not argue with it - they are not the ones to be blamed. (Yes) Although they might grew up in the atmosphere of the past, Deutschland uber alles, above everyone,(grandfather in background: brainwash!) And they got the brainwash from their grandparents and thought Germany deserves everything. No one wanted to fight Germany, they started the war and ended up really miserable by the end of the war. Everyone that was against the government were sent away as well, if they were liberal or not. And how the neighbours of the Jewish people from the same street let them throw them and everything away, take their property and leave them with nothing. And how many famous Jewish people committed suicide because they didn't think this will happen to them in Germany?

Even my uncle, when my mother went to say goodbye and asked her family to run away as well, he said that The Germans are cultured people and nothing will happen to them. This isn't what happened.

I have a lot of sympathy for Merkel. She is bringing everyone together and she have good words for all the people. She is in favour of Israel. She does many things to bring the young people of us (Israel) and them (Germany) together and it is a very big thing. She is a strong woman. There are not many women in charge like this, she was there for many years. Now she will go down, she said it is enough for her. The other voices in Germany didn't like what happened with the refugees and maybe she exaggerated when she took them all in.

But if you look at it how back then they expelled everyone and now they are taking everyone... Yes, exactly. For me she is the opposite of what happened in Germany.

When speaking with my grandmother, we always start at one topic and travel through time. There are stories I have heard many times and there are stories I hear for the first time. I know she made a vow not to visit Germany, but so does my father, and he came. I know that the uncle of her mother said that nothing will happen, and I know no one knows the end of his story. I did not know she secretly admires Angela Merkel.

So you will not come to visit me?

I will come to visit you.

Will you?

After corona I will break my vow. I want to see how you live and i have a lot of interest in Berlin itself. The fact that they commemorating the Holocaust more than other places, maybe even more than here (Israel), we have Yad Vashem and it is different.

There (Berlin) on the streets, i saw virtually, they have the stones with names saying who was living there. Yes, the stones.

Im excited by you saying you will come. I am waiting for you to come.

I am waiting for you to come and make me food.

Live here and I will make you food everyday.

But I am there.

But there you are staying the same girl who was born in Rishon Le Zion, from Israel, Jewish, nothing will help you to change it. Even if you live there for thirty years you will stay Israeli.

Yes, it is part of my identity.

You identity is Israeli Jewish. There, in the past, they search, they got to different generations, if the wife was Jewish the husband would leave her because the Nazis said they don't belong together anymore.

The fact that I live in Germany, was, still and will be an issue with my grandmother and my family. Why did I choose to live there? Or as my grandfather love to ask me, Shir, why did you choose to live precisely there?

The truth is that my decision was not intentionally about Germany, however ironic it may sound. The decision was made based on the issues I was facing with living in Israel and being Israeli. But my identity can be made up not only of the fact that I am Israeli and Jewish.

Your identity... You can live wherever you would want. I don't mind where. Maybe I mind a little that it is Germany, maybe choose another place.

My brother lives in Canada, everyone choose wherever they want. We had a discussion once, when I used to visit them, that the Israelis that live there want to have the right to vote in Israel while they live abroad. I asked them, what do mean you want to have the right to vote? You will send my child to the army? You will choose someone who wants to have war? While I live here and don't want to have wars, They argued with me, that they will not vote for wars. But the possibility that they you will get the right to vote it's impossible! You will either support or not support us, and do not demonstrate against us from abroad! This is my opinion. Even if I don't like something, i will not run and demonstrate. Although I can support the demonstrations of the desecration of democracy.

My grandmother and I once had that discussion as well. If someone that live outside of Israel can criticise what's going on the inside. She said of course not, I said there is always room for criticism. As someone who was born and raised in Israel I can understand the floating emotions when someone criticise home, its what we call "team spirit", it is the pride, and mainly because we grew up hearing that we have no other place. Does that mean we have to accept everything regarding this place? When I asked my grandmother those questions, she expressed to me her fear of being deported again. She rather criticise, from home, silent, alone.

I went to the demonstrations in Balfour, I saw a women there that made half a swastika, half a Magen David.

This I don't! This I don't accept at all. The swastika reminds me of the bluntness of this people, of the war. What is this story about? swastika is not my symbol, Magen David is. It is the symbol of the Jewish people. I don't accept this. Until now, when the two country solution was discussed, little by little the wave of people talking about one country for all was increasing.

One country will not be, not a democratic and Jewish one. And I want a Jewish country because there is only one. Now if they will come and say they were here before us, it is true, but we don't have another place. The people need to learn to live together.

It is a problem to define Israel as a Jewish country when not only Jewish people live here. I am in favour of what was written the on the "Declaration of Independence" that the country is Jewish and democratic with equal rights for everyone. There should not be privileges to the Jewish people, we are not the chosen people as much as the Germans are not the chosen people and that's it. Maybe in the Bible we were the chosen people. For what we were chosen exactly? To suffer? No. I disagree.

All the people were chosen, to live in peace with each other.

Another reason why I admire Merkel. There are a few women who role like that with liberal opinions. If women were in charge... look at Ancient Greece. They had the play Lysistrata. There were women boycotting men, and the men were nothing. The women made the decisions and said they want peace ant not war, Sparta and Athens were fighting constantly.

So I am telling you, I think if women were in charge we had less war. And Merkel is in favour of us and in favour of life, and she doesn't want the people living next to us to have no rights.

And I do want peace.

I want peace as well. But many people I spoke with about made me think that it is an utopian thought.

I also think it is utopian after all my years here. After all the wars we have been through. And another thing I care about is to separate state and religion.

I think as well. This is why I asked you why we need to define Israel as Jewish state.

It can be Jewish, but the state can be separated from religion.

If the right wing will win the election, maybe the court will be Jewish court as well.

Like in the biblical period. They will cut babies into two, like Solomon trial.

No, he was smart, he didn't cut into two. It will be by the Torah law. Torah law is not an easy one. Even in religion they don't agree on everything, they have many yards where everyone expresses their opinion.

My grandmother and I can speak forever. I learn from her and she learns from me. we admire each other, and we come to the conclusion that women should be in power. And that is my conclusion: Women should run the world. I am not a politician thought. Politics is very far from me. I don't believe to policies. Everybody lies.