

Holocaust Survivor EXPOSES Genocide Denialism | Felix Marquardt & Gabor Maté

Felix Marquardt speaks with physician and trauma expert Dr. Gabor Maté about anti-Semitism claims, Zionism, colonialism, Gaza, French and European politics, censorship, Israeli dissent, and the push to criminalize anti-Zionism. They also discuss trauma, propaganda, victimhood, media silence, and the wider crisis inside Western power and public debate. Links: Felix's Channel: <https://youtube.com/@theblackelephantexperience> Neutrality Studies substack: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com> (Opt in for Academic Section from your profile settings: <https://pascallottaz.substack.com/s/academic>) Merch: <https://neutralitystudies-shop.fourthwall.com> Donation: <https://neutralitystudies.com/donate> Timestamps: 00:00:00 Introduction 00:00:52 Gabor Maté on Zionism 00:10:07 US Europe and colonial denial 00:20:12 Anti Semitism and state interests 00:33:13 Rima Hassan and French repression 00:40:10 Colonial power and imperial decline 00:52:37 Speaking out and paying the price 00:57:24 Trauma identity and propaganda

#Pascal

Welcome back, everybody, to Neutrality Studies. Tonight we have a special episode because I'm joined by Felix Marquardt and the very famous Gabor Maté. But in fact, it wasn't me—it was Felix who interviewed Gabor—and we're broadcasting that interview here for you to watch, because the two of them talked about this very important topic of accusations of antisemitism. And with that out of the way, Felix, I'll leave it up to you.

#Felix Marquardt

It's my great pleasure to welcome Dr. Gabor Maté, world-renowned physician and specialist on trauma and addiction. Your work on how unhealed pain drives both individual and collective violence has never felt more relevant. Gabor, welcome. Thank you. Nice to be with you, Felix. Thank you for being here. In 1950, in his **Discourse on Colonialism**, Aimé Césaire argued that while Europeans claimed their horror was about what man had done to man, it was actually more about realizing that they had done to white Europeans what they had been doing to non-whites all around the world for five centuries. You survived the Holocaust as an infant, embraced Zionism, then changed your mind. Walk us through that journey and how you came to decide that "never again" had become a tribal slogan, and that Zionism weaponizes Jewish suffering to justify a classical settler-colonial situation.

#Gabor Maté

Yeah. Well, first of all, there's a book I have on my shelf called **Endless Holocaust**, which is about the millions of people the American empire has destroyed over the centuries. And there's a tendency

to compartmentalize the genocide against Jews—which is horrible, of course; my grandparents fell victim to it, and nearly did I as well, as an infant. But it was only the latest of multiple genocides—not the last, but at that time the latest. And Hitler, as a matter of fact, took as some of his models the way the Americans had treated their Indigenous people. So we have to put this into context, number one. Number two, Zionism didn't begin by weaponizing the Holocaust, because the Holocaust didn't exist yet.

Zionism was a response to anti-Semitism in Europe—European anti-Semitism—which was horrific enough even before the Nazi genocide. By the way, if you don't like the word *Holocaust*, do you know what it means? *Holocaust* means a burnt sacrifice; it's a biblical term. So what are we talking about? *Genocide* is the word. But *Holocaust* has become the accepted terminology. So, Zionism began in response to European anti-Semitism, and along with other European nationalisms, it sought to locate its nationalistic aspirations in a particular land. The difference was that the European nationalisms—whether French, German, Italian, Hungarian, or Slovak—took place on lands already occupied by those ethnic groups.

Jews didn't have any such land, so their nationalism had to be realized on the land they claimed a right to because of ancient history—which itself is an interesting subject and historically entirely incorrect. We can talk about that. But nevertheless, they sought to establish Jewish nationhood in this ancient homeland. The problem was that there were already people living there, and there was this totally dishonest slogan: "a land without a people for a people without a land." But they knew very well there was no land without a people. And within Jewish circles, there was huge debate about that. Some Zionists said, "Look, we can't do this, because there are already people living there."

And the Zionist leaders who became predominant said, yes, there are people living there, and those people are going to fight against us, and we're going to have to destroy them. I mean, they talked about this very openly. This wasn't retrospective. So, insofar as Jewish pain is concerned, certainly some of that flowed into the Zionist project. But at the same time, it was a nationalist project on European lines and necessarily a colonial project, because without Western imperial support, it could never have been achieved. So, to summarize my answer here, I'm reluctant to ascribe everything that Israel has done, or the West has done, to historical pain.

There's always that element in there. I mean, the people who went to Australia from England were the lowest classes, who'd been persecuted in England. So there was certainly pain there. But if you look at what Israel has done over the decades, it's no different from what every settler-colonial project has ever done, which is to kill, displace, dispossess, rob, suppress, and torment the Indigenous populations—almost to the point of extinction in the case of Australia, North America, and New Zealand. So it's a colonial project that certainly has an element of pain infused in it, but the pain doesn't explain the policies overall.

#Pascal

Hey, very brief intermission because I was recently banned from YouTube. And although I'm back, this could happen again at any time. So please consider subscribing not only here, but also to my mailing list on Substack. That's pascallottaz.substack.com. The link's in the description below. And now, back to the video.

#Felix Marquardt

What's fascinating is that when you read the early Zionists in the 1920s and 1930s, or even sometimes before, it seems that the realists are the ones saying, "We're going to have to fight, and we're going to have to kill."

#Gabor Maté

Well, they said that very openly—they said it in so many words. And even as late as 1956...

#Gabor Maté

Moshe Dayan, who was the one-eyed general and a Zionist hero, gave a speech at the funeral of an Israeli soldier who had been killed by some Gazans. This was in 1956. And he said, "Of course they hate us. They look across the fence and see us tilling their lands and living in the villages that used to be theirs. Why wouldn't they hate us?" By the way, the first massacre of people in Gaza by Israel happened in 1956, when they lined up some civilians and just murdered them. And the kids who were watching that became leaders of Hamas decades later.

So, you know, if you know a bit of history, it's not all that mysterious. But yeah, they knew what they had to do, and the early Zionists—they weren't moralistic about it. They said, "Oh, it's not that the Arabs are evil. Of course they will oppose us. We're trying to take their land. In their position, we would do the same thing." They said that in so many words. Both Ben-Gurion, the leader of the labor strain, and Jabotinsky, who founded the Revisionist Zionists, which became Likud today. And by the way, you asked about my own personal trajectory—my grandfather, who died in Auschwitz, was a friend of Jabotinsky's.

And as for me, given the history of my own family and my near demise as an infant at the hands of the Nazis, Zionism made every sense in the world—why we needed our own country, our own army, our own homeland where we weren't minorities, despised, and suppressed. But I knew you were Palestinian. So when you asked me, "How did they change their minds?"—well, because they found out that they were Palestinians who had their own history. And I found out what we had to do to them in order to establish our own dreams. It was a nightmare that we imposed on the Palestinians to achieve our dream. And once I became aware of that—and this is happening to a lot of people now—

Just this morning, there was an article in **The New Yorker** about a synagogue in New Jersey where there's a huge division within the community. As people learn about the Palestinians, they lose their allegiance to Zionism, because once you open that window and look at what actually happened, you can't hold on. You know, if you have an open heart and an open mind, you can't be a Zionist. To be a Zionist, you have to have a closed heart or a closed mind—at least one or the other. Because once you find out what was done over the decades, and what is being done now to the Palestinians, you can't be a Zionist.

#Felix Marquardt

Indeed, I mean, there's clearly a massive change taking place in hearts and minds, but it seems to be affecting the Jewish community far more in the U.S. than in Europe. I think only about 37% of Jews in North America, or at least in the U.S., identify as Zionists, which is unheard of. Just a few years ago, that was absolutely not the case. But I find there are two things happening that really strike me about this change in America and the absence of change in Europe. First of all, there's the difference itself, but also the fact that the change happening in America is absolutely not covered by the media in Europe.

It's as if governments and the Jewish community in Europe are trying to keep this secret. And the question I had about that for you is, it feels like it's the cultural equivalent of the need in an abusive relationship—the need for the bully or the abusive parent to shroud everything in secrecy and to hide in order to carry out the abuse. And it seems like what's happening in Europe is that we're trying to keep the conversation separate, knowingly, because we don't want to change a certain state of affairs in Europe regarding the conversation about Israel.

#Gabor Maté

Yeah. So in America, according to the polls, as many Jews opposed the actions in Gaza as supported them. It's not much reported, but it was mentioned this morning in New York, for example. Now, Europe is a bit different. America is a settler-colonial country where settlers from Europe came, colonized the continent, and almost succeeded— not quite, but almost— in totally exterminating the Indigenous population. Europe consists of colonial countries. France is a major colonial country; the British, a major colonial country. They all had their share in it. The Netherlands, a colonial country—I don't know if you realize this, but after the Second World War, the Dutch killed nearly 300,000 Indonesians in an attempt to hold on to their colony, which they didn't succeed in doing.

But Italy and its horrendously murderous campaigns in Africa—Ethiopia, for example. France, with its brutal colonial history in North Africa. And in France—let's not forget—was it 1961 or '62? You know, how many Algerians were killed in Paris by the police and thrown into the Seine? Six hundred, maybe more. Yeah. Okay. So that history is very fresh, and Europe has never surrendered its colonial—never mind surrendered—never even acknowledged its colonial nature. The Germans, the

first genocide they committed wasn't against Jews; it was against the Herero in what is now Namibia, I think, in the early 20th century.

#Gabor Maté

They barely ever talk about that. Yeah, they barely ever talk about that.

#Gabor Maté

So when Europe lines up with the Zionist project, they're really lining up with themselves, including their present. I mean, it's more neocolonial than decolonial now, but France, until quite recently, very frequently sent troops into Africa to support this or that government that served its interests. So for them, the Zionist project makes perfect sense because it's what they do and what they've always done. It's a colonial identification. Now, as far as the Jewish community in Europe is concerned, I was in Auschwitz for the first time last May. I went there as part of a five-city tour of Poland to talk about Palestine, and my host took me to Auschwitz. It was a very moving, deeply moving experience.

I stood at the very spot in Birkenau where my grandparents would have gotten off the train to be sent immediately to the gas chambers—and where my mother and I nearly ended up as well. When we came out of Birkenau, they asked me, "What are your thoughts?" My first thought was that those of my fellow Jews who continue to identify with Auschwitz as being—well, it's beyond horrible; there's nothing like Auschwitz in the history of the world—those who base their identity on that victimhood will never understand the Palestinians. Because from the point of view of victimhood, you're always the victim, and therefore anything that's done to you is victimhood, and everything that you do is self-defense.

But it's not just victimhood; it's also an entitled victimhood. We're victims, therefore we're entitled to do whatever we want. And that's the mentality of the Jewish communities in Europe. For example, in Amsterdam last year, when these soccer hooligans from the Maccabee team went around beating up Arab taxi drivers, pulling down Palestinian flags, and fomenting violence, they were still seen as the victims when people fought back. It's an entitled victimhood, and it exists within a Western colonial mentality. That internal victimhood is coddled and supported by the colonial mindset. And France has been miserably dishonest about confronting its whole colonial history. Why would it look honestly at Zionism?

#Felix Marquardt

Of course. There's a need in France to—France is constantly, its whole conversation about Israel is shaped by its refusal to look at its role in World War II. And to recognize, for instance—just to give one example of a French colonial disaster—that in a way, Algeria, French Algeria, is an Israel that failed. Yeah. So that really resonates. The same way that there—sorry. No, you go ahead. The same

way that there's this sort of active effort to disconnect the conversation between both sides of the Atlantic. I feel that in France we're constantly weaponizing anti-Semitism, but we're also weaponizing linguistic and cultural barriers. And again, I want to go back to this idea, if it resonates with you—you know how a bully in the schoolyard will hide behind a bush to beat up the bullied kid?

It seems like there's something going on in France where there's a concerted—and this isn't even just French—it seems like a concerted effort by Western governments to pretend that resistance movements, whether high-intensity ones fighting directly against Israel or the U.S. and Western powers, or low-intensity movements happening all across Europe, are somehow fringe or marginal. But the reality, and it's very obvious when you look at how people are behaving and talking, is that most people agree that ethno-supremacism or religious supremacism is abhorrent. So I'd be interested in what's happening here with this constant attempt to isolate people, to make them believe they're a fringe movement or a minority voice. What's going on there?

#Gabor Maté

Well, first of all, on this anti-Semitism issue—I know at least eight Israeli Jewish scholars of genocide who have declared that what Israel has done in Gaza is genocide. There was an article by two Hebrew University Jewish scholars in *Haaretz* a few months ago that said, "There's no Auschwitz in Gaza, but there is genocide." So, first of all, anybody who wants to claim—well, a former reserve general in the Israeli army even said that the Israeli army uses Palestinian babies as target practice. And Israeli journalists regularly talk about Israel as an apartheid state. So the first point to make is: if anybody is going to claim anti-Semitism on the part of those who make these statements, let them first argue with those Jewish Israeli scholars who make them. What are they talking about—anti-Semitism? It's just weaponization. Now, you know, anti-Semitism has a horrendous history in France, going back to the Dreyfus Affair, which is a huge stain on French history.

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah, which was actually a huge argument for the first Zionists.

#Gabor Maté

Yes, it was. And Herzl himself was shocked into Zionism by the Dreyfus Affair. So there is a horrendous history of anti-Semitism. We know very well how Vichy France collaborated with the Germans in the persecution and extermination of the Jews. So there's plenty of guilt there. And one way for them—and for the Germans as well—to assuage that guilt is to say, "We're supporters of Israel, the Jewish state." So there's that. And who wants to be an anti-Semite, given the stained, horrendous history of that particular form of racial hatred? But ultimately it's not about that. Ultimately it's about the interests of these governments and these states. Germany was a major arms supplier to Israel.

And Francesca Albanese, bless her soul, prepared this report showing all the involvement and profiteering of banks, weapons companies, and all kinds of Western corporations in the genocide—which again, if you don't like that word, talk to the Jewish-Israeli scholars who are calling it that. Don't argue with me; I'm not a genocide scholar. Don't argue with people who use that phrase—go argue with the Jewish-Israeli scholars of the Holocaust who are calling it genocide. But there's a huge Western economic investment. So it's not just about guilt, historical or otherwise. It's not just about defense against the charge of anti-Semitism. It's also about naked imperial interest.

#Felix Marquardt

It's business.

#Gabor Maté

It's business, yeah—taking care of business every day, as the old song goes. And... of course. As we said before, when you talk about the bullying and so on, as much as a lot of my work has to do with psychology and trauma and how trauma can show up in so many ways, I hesitate to ascribe everything to psychological factors, because I'm seeing these huge systemic, historical factors at play here. And the other thing to do with Europe is, of course, what's happening right now. Over the last several decades, there's been a huge influx of Islamic refugees from countries that the West has destroyed—Ethiopia, Libya, Syria, Palestine, Iran, and so on.

And the West—it's like the Americans right now. The Americans have devastated Latin America in so many ways, historically. They've declared it. As you can see right now, Trump just goes into Venezuela, kidnaps the president, and says, "I'm going to take your oil." Well, the Americans have been doing that for 150 years—not always as nakedly aggressive in their language, but the so-called Monroe Doctrine: "This is our backyard, and nobody else gets to interfere here." And Americans have intervened in Latin America dozens of times in horrendous ways—supporting right-wing dictatorships, mass murder, torture. One could go on forever.

And as a result of that devastation in Latin America, there are all these refugees who want to come to North America, which is economically far more promising for them. And they become the enemies we have to keep out. In other words, the people escaping the countries we've devastated have now become the enemy we have to keep out of our borders. And in Europe, there's a huge—well, as far as I can tell from abroad—there's a huge pushback against these Middle Eastern and North African refugees whose countries the West has destroyed. But now these refugees become the enemy; they're "taking over" and all that stuff. So that's another stream that flows into this river of dishonesty and denial.

#Felix Marquardt

No, you can really see that in Europe. It's a bit like those who seem to want to say that history started on October 7. There's a reluctance—it seems like, for instance, France has the largest Muslim population in Europe, yeah? And somehow it's impossible to ask, you know, why are they here? It's as if they just landed here magically. And at the same time, I'm struck by something else, which is that in France, people are very proud of the sort of pride of a people like the Corsicans—you know, Mediterranean islanders, like the Cretans in Greece, Corsicans, Sardinians. They're proud people; you don't mess around. And everyone in France and Italy and Greece is proud of that. They love to tell stories about it.

#Gabor Maté

Wasn't Napoleon Corsican?

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah, absolutely. And actually, famously, he wanted to take—or Mussolini considered taking—Corsica from the French. And he said, "I love the cage, but I don't like the birds. They're too dangerous. They're untamable birds." But somehow, as we watch this daily horror that Palestinians are subjected to—every video, not even the genocidal stuff—I'm talking about random settlers walking into a store and just smashing everything. You see this a lot.

#Gabor Maté

If you just read Haaretz, which I read in English every day, you know what the settlers do. They torture the animals of the Palestinians—they slit the throats of baby sheep in front of their mothers. Then the Palestinians come and try to protect their animals, and the army shows up to arrest the Palestinians. And how Aref describes these stories—one after another. On my Instagram, I posted a plea from some Israeli mental health workers begging the world to intervene, to stop the settler and IDF violence in the West Bank.

These are Israelis begging the world. But you don't hear these Israeli voices in the West—they're just not given a venue. It's a small minority, to be sure, but the very fact that they exist matters. I mean, in Germany, we still talk about the few Germans who stood up against Hitlerism, and we see them as heroes. But these modern-day heroes, these Israelis who actually, at quite some risk to themselves, plead with the world to do something to stop the genocidal violence in the West Bank—they're not heeded in the West. It's as if they don't even exist.

#Felix Marquardt

I'm struck. I mean, you mentioned reading Haaretz, and occasionally I have a look. I find it really difficult, to be honest.

#Gabor Maté

Why do you find it difficult?

#Felix Marquardt

I find it difficult because you'll get a sliver of self-awareness here and there, and then you go back to this absolute insanity. And the fact that Haaretz is labeled as the voice of reason—it's just such schizophrenia, the titles in Haaretz.

#Gabor Maté

It's true. But within its pages, you'll find certain voices that are totally clear. And all I'm saying is, if we're going to talk about anti-Semitism, and if we're going to paint critics of Israel with this anti-Semitic brush, just pay attention to the Jewish-Israeli voices that are saying the same thing—and saying it very clearly in some cases. I mean, Gary Levy talks about apartheid. He talks about genocide. And his parents were German Jews who escaped Hitler. You know, so be done with this already.

Drop this nonsense about anti-Semitism when it comes to pointing out the truth about the Israeli state and its nature. And as for this idea that history started on October 7th—come on. In the last 15 years, back in 2004, if anybody thinks history began on October 7th, I want to show them a study that came out in 2004 in a psychiatric journal, before Hamas even took power in Gaza. That study showed that Palestinian kids were severely traumatized. They wet their beds, they were aggressive toward their parents, they had nightmares.

#Felix Marquardt

That was in 2004.

#Gabor Maté

Twenty years later, who do you think streamed across the Israeli border? Those same kids—kids who were traumatized before Hamas. And then you look at all the massacres of Gazans starting in 1956 by the Israeli army—civilians. These are not in question historically. The mass bombings of Gaza by Israel over the decades, killing hundreds of children. Nothing is new. So it all started—well, you know, in Hungarian there's an expression: the fight started when the other guy hit me back.

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah, that sums it up. I want to take the conversation to the case of Rima Hassan, who's a French member of the European Parliament.

#Gabor Maté

A policeman was denied entry into Canada.

#Felix Marquardt

Absolutely, yeah. I saw your son tweet about that. So she was arrested a few days later by the French police—summoned by them for “apology of terrorism” over a tweet. This is a new low for the French authorities. And meanwhile, you have a bill that’s about to go through Parliament in France—the loi Yadon—that intends to adopt the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, which basically equates it with anti-Zionism, and to criminalize anti-Zionism. So I’d really love you to say to the French people how you, as a Holocaust survivor who has done what you’ve done and lived what you’ve lived, feel about what this inspires in you.

#Gabor Maté

Disgust. Look, first of all, I balk a bit at the idea of speaking as a Holocaust survivor, because being a Holocaust survivor doesn’t give me any special expertise. A lot of Holocaust survivors would support that law. So being a Holocaust survivor doesn’t give you legitimacy as such. The question is not whether you’re a survivor. No, it does give me, I would have to say, some personal acquaintance with anti-Semitism, which I also experienced as a kid growing up in Hungary. So I know a little bit about anti-Semitism, let me tell you. But it doesn’t give me any special expertise. It’s a question of what is true and what is not true. And that definition—the International Holocaust Remembrance Association definition of anti-Semitism—is simply slander. It has nothing to do with anti-Semitism.

There are plenty of laws against racism in all kinds of countries, and anti-Semitism isn’t some special form of racism. It’s racism—just as vicious as any other kind. Islamophobia, hatred against people of color, or so-called “colored” people—it’s all the same thing. So that particular piece of legislation has nothing to do with protecting people from anti-Semitism. It’s about protecting the state of Israel from people who talk about its real nature, which is that of a racist, apartheid, genocidal, colonialist, oppressive state. Look at this recent law that just passed: Palestinians who kill—death penalty. You think that’s bad enough? It’s even worse than that. Because Palestinians, when they’re charged, are taken to military courts where they don’t even get to see the evidence against them.

#Felix Marquardt

You know what happens in a military court in the West Bank?

#Gabor Maté

The person is charged, but he’s not allowed to see the people who accuse him. When his lawyer asks for the evidence, the prosecutor says to the judge, “Well, that’s a state secret.” And the judge

says, "Okay, well, we can't introduce the evidence." So he can't defend himself against the charge because he never knows the evidence the charge is based on. And then he's condemned. If a Jew is charged, they go through civil courts, where there's evidence, evidentiary procedure, and defense lawyers get to see that evidence. So even if the law applied equally in terms of the death penalty to Jews and Palestinians, it still wouldn't be fair because of the nature of the trial each would experience.

#Felix Marquardt

The system itself.

#Gabor Maté

But then you see these, uh, Israeli ministers drinking champagne and wearing a noose as a badge. I mean, how disgusting can you get? And this is what the, uh, French parliament is going to enshrine as a law. It's almost beyond words. And if you criticize this—by the way, why shouldn't anybody question the right of Israel to exist? I mean, as the way it is right now. I'm not talking about the Israeli people as a people; I'm talking about the state as it's set up. I don't want to see it exist.

I don't want to see this colonialist, apartheid, genocidal, military state continue. I want to see a free state for all the people who live there—Jews and non-Jews. What's wrong with that? Why should there be a crime in calling for that? I mean, does anybody want to see Vichy France? Did Vichy France have the right to exist? Does Mussolini's fascist state have the right to exist? Did the Nazi genocidal state have the right to exist once people saw its true nature? So why shouldn't people be able to question that and have a conversation about it?

So there's nothing anti-Semitic about it, given that within the Jewish community, right from the beginning of Zionism, the same questions were asked. People like Einstein warned against a Jewish state with its military, and many other Jews did as well. So if that debate could and did take place within Jewish communities all those years ago, why can't that debate also happen in public without being denounced as anti-Semitic? The law is nonsensical, dictatorial, anti-democratic, mendacious, hypocritical, and ultimately designed to maintain Europe's colonial relationship with the Middle East.

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah, I'd like your take on this. It seems that we're in the midst of the crumbling of what you described as all these colonial entities that have forgotten they are colonial entities and have never really wrestled with their past. It feels like what we're watching is the unraveling of the most formidable gaslighting operation in the history of mankind, right in front of us. We see it in the way the West is trying to present the war in Iran. We saw it with the genocide in Gaza. We saw

Europeans who had nothing to say about the kidnapping of Maduro, nothing to say about Gaza, nothing to say about Iran, who suddenly were outraged by Trump talking about Greenland the way he did.

Yeah, it was just so surreal. And there's this guy I've been interested in. A friend of mine wrote his thesis on the work of Paul-Claude Racamier, who sort of coined the phrase "perverse narcissism." He described it as a kind of failure in the ability to grieve a certain mythology about oneself. That's how he characterized pathological, or perverse, narcissists. My friend actually wrote a book—funnily enough, it's called **Emmanuel Macron: Perverse Narcissism in Power.** And it seems that what you were alluding to is that it all goes back to an inability to grieve the fantasies the West has been building for centuries about itself and its role in the world.

#Gabor Maté

Well, now, hold on. That sounds really nice and intelligent, but it's actually about power. I mean, no—wait, that's not true. The colonialists—well, I was going to say no colonialist acknowledges themselves as a colonialist, but that's not true. When the Jews first came to Palestine, they called themselves colonialists. That's what they called themselves. Now, when we talk about settler colonialism, they're outraged—"How can you talk about colonialism?" They called themselves colonials.

#Felix Marquardt

Of course, the whole commission.

#Gabor Maté

But the belief of the colonists is always that they're entitled. What the colonists will never question is their right to be entitled. The Europeans who came to North America felt entitled. The Spanish and the Portuguese who devastated South America were entitled Christians. So the issue for me is entitlement. And as long as there's a failure to grieve anything, it's just entitlement. What they fail to grieve is their own vulnerability and their own humanity, so they have to hold on to this sense of power in order not to accept a vulnerable humanity. And as long as the system is economically and politically invested in a colonial enterprise, and as long as they can win—even temporarily—they're not going to grieve. They're not going to acknowledge their vulnerability.

Now, it's true. If you listen to a whole range of American scholars, they see the American empire in decline. And any empire in decline gets more vicious and more naked in its expressions. That's what we're seeing now. Which leads to another point: Hannah Arendt, the great German-American Jewish political philosopher, said way back in 1942 that the Zionists were making a huge mistake in aligning themselves with distant powers, annihilating the local population. Now, there was truth and lack of truth in that. It wasn't a mistake on the part of Zionism—that was the only way they could have

prevailed. So she's telling them, basically, "Don't do what you're doing." But she's also right in the sense of asking, what happens when those foreign powers wane?

Now, the American empire is on the wane. Whether it's got another few years or a few decades, it's on the way out. Then what for Israel? Israel is nothing. It's a country of seven million Jews in the Middle East, living in relative comfort because of the Western support for its economic and military establishment. But they've puffed themselves up. They think they're so powerful. It's like a frog that's puffed itself up—it's going to burst. And what happens to Israel and the Zionist project when America either says, "Okay, we've had enough of this, we don't need it anymore," or the American empire simply loses its capacity to impose its will on the world? Then what's going to happen to Zionism? So maybe angle that.

Zionism is a self-defeating project, and every day they dig their grave a little bit deeper and a little bit faster, and they don't realize it. There's an ancient Greek expression: those whom the gods would destroy, they first make proud. That's what we're seeing now. And to my fellow Jews, I can only say: you think you're supporting your people? You think you're securing your future? You're actually destroying it. Not to mention—and I don't know what it's like in France—in North America there's tremendous pushback against anybody who speaks out for Palestinians. It's Stalinist in its intent, and it's Stalinist in its tactics: fire people if possible, prosecute them, delegitimize them. It's Stalinism, pure and simple. And a lot of people are intimidated, but people don't like being intimidated.

#Felix Marquardt

They resent it.

#Gabor Maté

I'm sure there are a lot of people in Europe who are keeping quiet but really resenting what's being done to suppress critics of Zionism. That resentment, at some point, is going to explode. People don't like being coerced, and we might see some very vigorous expressions of that resentment once the lid is off.

#Pascal

Of course.

#Gabor Maté

And the lid can't be kept on forever. It just can't.

#Felix Marquardt

And the great paradox is that laws like the one—the Loi Yadon—that’s about to go through Parliament are actually a vector of anti-Semitism.

#Gabor Maté

Exactly.

#Felix Marquardt

Ultimately.

#Gabor Maté

Exactly. Exactly. And there have been studies, by the way—not recently, but over time—that show anti-Semitism rises when Israeli-Iranian interaction occurs. And then the Zionists say, “That’s because Jews are not allowed to defend themselves.” No, that’s because people then get to see the true nature of the Israeli state. And, by the way, even what is called anti-Semitism—well, who gets to define that? But the fact is, if you read *Haaretz* and other sources, it’s not so admirable anymore to be an Israeli when you travel the world. People don’t like you very much. Why don’t they like you? Well, because of what you’re doing, or at least what your country’s doing. It might not be fair to identify every Israeli with what their country’s doing, but on the whole, most of them support it.

And not only that—the Jewish communities, like in this article I mentioned in *The New Yorker* today—when a synagogue puts up Israeli flags and says, “We stand with Israel, and we’re doing this in the name of the Jews,” then what are people supposed to think of the Jews? Of course. When starvation is being imposed, when doctors are tortured to death, when hospitals are destroyed, when universities are devastated, when journalists are targeted, when people are raped and tortured in prisons, when Palestinians in Israeli jails die of starvation—which they do—and the world sees this happening, and it’s said to be in the name of the Jews, then what are people supposed to think of the Jews? Of course, the truth is there’s no such thing as “the Jews.” There are some Jews, but they’re the dominant ones right now in shaping the discourse. But what is the world supposed to think?

#Felix Marquardt

I mean, it reminds me—I remember seeing Norman Finkelstein being asked about “Death to the Jews” being written on the Houthi flag. And he said, well, they see people with the Star of David on their flag killing Palestinians day in, day out for the last 80 years. You know what’s interesting, by the way?

#Gabor Maté

The Star of David has nothing to do with David. Do you know where it comes from?

#Felix Marquardt

I don't.

#Gabor Maté

The same place the swastika came from.

#Felix Marquardt

India.

#Gabor Maté

Wow. Now, in India, the swastika is turned the other way. It was actually a symbol of truth and justice, or something like that.

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah, yeah.

#Gabor Maté

And the Star of David—I forget its exact origin—but it also came from an Indian symbol.

#Felix Marquardt

Mm-hmm.

#Gabor Maté

So, nothing to do with David. But you're right. I mean, when Palestinians have said this to me—when you grow up your whole life and the Jews are all wearing uniforms, beating up your parents—what are you supposed to think of the Jews? Some Palestinians found it surprising to meet Jews who were not in uniform, who were not anti-Palestinian. But they grow up with that because it's being done in the name of the Jews and the Jewish people.

#Felix Marquardt

Sorry. I have two more questions before I let you go, Gabor, and thank you again for your time. Sure. First, as a Jew—you know, earlier on, the reason it was important for me to say “as a

Holocaust survivor” is because, I think, in France, and in Europe generally, people need to hear that. But I get your point that it’s sort of irrelevant in terms of your argument. But as a Jew, I’m sure you’re being castigated to some extent by a large portion of your community, as someone who has a voice and who is loudly speaking up for Palestinian rights and the Palestinian people. What would you say to Jews in France today who are appalled and struggling to come out and speak up the way you do?

#Gabor Maté

Well, first of all, I'm used to it. I've been doing this for decades, because it was in 1967, after the war, that I did the research and saw that the history I'd been taught was so one-sided and biased. I wrote an article then for the student newspaper at the university I attended, in which I said that Israel fomented this war to capture territory they would never give back. I said that in 1967. So far, I haven't been proven wrong. Little did I imagine the horrors that would happen—but I knew. So ever since then, I've been used to being critiqued and shunned.

It doesn't bother me. It's just the cost of speaking the truth. If you look at French history, going back to the Dreyfus Affair—look at Émile Zola and his famous public letter, **J'accuse**. He had to leave France; for a while, he had to go into exile. People don't like the truth being spoken. People who identify with the French state don't like that state being exposed for the racist and dishonest institution that it was. And the great French military was willing to sacrifice one of its members on the altar of chauvinism.

And so, people who speak the truth—as somebody once said—if you're going to speak the truth, you should keep your horse saddled. So, you know, what they can't do is argue. I mean, they can't actually argue history, because everything I'm saying has been proven and over-proven and documented a zillion times over by Jewish Israeli historians. Anybody can read that, anybody can do that research; it takes nothing. Let me say one more thing, by the way. Albert Speer, Hitler's economist and architect, spent twenty years in Spandau as a war criminal, as he deserved to. But in his memoirs, he said people kept asking him, "What did you know?" And he said, that's not the right question. The right question is, "What could I have known?" And he describes a couple of incidents where he had hints about what was going on in the East, but he didn't want to find out.

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah. Yeah.

#Gabor Maté

The difference is that in Nazi Germany, they really tried to keep it a secret. There wasn't a so-called free press, and there certainly wasn't the internet or social media. But even then, Speer says, "I could have known if I'd wanted to."

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah, that's exactly it. My grandfather was German, and he said the same thing. He said, "We didn't want to know. We just kept using these euphemisms—you know, the horrible things happening in the East—and people just got away with murder."

#Gabor Maté

Well, today it's much easier to know. I mean, if you read **Le Monde International**, it's in there—not as clearly as one might like, but it's there. If you read the **New York Review of Books**, they talk about the genocide. If you follow social media, if you follow alternative news sources, if you listen to what Israelis themselves are saying, it's available. Anybody who doesn't know today—you have to work very hard not to know.

#Felix Marquardt

So I hear you, and I took notes several times during this interview about your reluctance to psychologize everything. And I hear you, yeah. But this will be my final question. There's—well, it's one last attempt at some form of psychologizing, I guess. But I'm curious to hear what you think. As you know, Carl Jung described addiction as a misguided attempt to fill the hole left by spirituality with spirits.

#Gabor Maté

It's alcohol. It's horseshit.

#Felix Marquardt

Okay.

#Gabor Maté

Fair enough. But you never dealt with the trauma, so you end up spiritualizing things.

#Felix Marquardt

Fair enough.

#Gabor Maté

And you talk about the shadow. Look, Freud and Jung had some deep insights, but they were also really limited in their perspective. Freud and Jung spiritualized things rather than dealing with—yeah,

we all have the shadow. What is that shadow? It's trauma-based. So addiction is not some need to fill a spiritual void; addiction is very literally an attempt to soothe the pain of trauma. And that's my work on trauma, which I've written about in my book on trauma—actually, in a couple of books. So what Jung calls a spiritual void is actually a deep wound of trauma, a pain that people are trying to soothe through their addictions.

#Felix Marquardt

Still? Fair enough. But I want to ask about—there's another guy I find very interesting, who's much less known than Jung, named Jacques Ellul. He's a weird Christian anarchist type, a strange dude. But he came up with this idea—he wrote a book about propaganda long before Chomsky and others. And he argued that propaganda was not merely manipulation, you know, which is the part that's very obvious—the control, the power, the structural side. He said it also—one of the things that explains why some people still want to believe a certain story—is because they crave that story. So I guess what I'm trying to say is, he saw propaganda not merely as a political phenomenon but as a sociological one, as something that—so don't you think that's part of the answer to why some people, despite all the evidence, are still latching on to this idea that, no, genocide is not the right word, and blah, blah, blah?

#Gabor Maté

Sure. So I don't want to—I don't want to dismiss psychology as irrelevant to the situation. I don't. I just resist using that as the main explanation. But of course, everything in human life has its psychological dimension. So does this. If you look at the ancient Hindu view of the mind, it describes different dynamics. There is manas, which is our memories, conscious and unconscious. There is sattva, which is our capacity for awareness. There's buddhi, which is our capacity for discernment. Then there's what they call ahamkara—aham means "I," and kara means "maker." So the ahamkara is our ego. It's our identity, our deepest identity.

#Felix Marquardt

Mm-hmm.

#Gabor Maté

And that identity drives all the others. There are a lot of people who are perfectly intelligent, intellectually capable, but whose identity is unconsciously tied to a certain view of themselves. That intellect becomes a servant to their identity. And that's where propaganda comes in—it feeds people's identities, it justifies that identity, it makes them comfortable with that unconscious identification. Now, yes, it's a manipulation—a very deliberate and conscious one. I mean, Goebbels was very clear about that.

#Felix Marquardt

And his teacher, Edward Bernays.

#Gabor Maté

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

#Felix Marquardt

That's right—the double nephew of Sigmund Freud.

#Gabor Maté

That's right, that's right. So, yeah, there's certainly that aspect to it. It serves the identification so that the propaganda falls on fertile soil. I mean, the Jews needed to identify as victims—entitled victims—and Hitler comes along, and his propaganda fell on fertile soil. So, the same thing today. In France, the French invented liberty, equality, and brotherhood—you know, fighters for freedom and justice—and of course, in some ways they have been. But if that's what they identify with, they're not going to look at their colonial past with any kind of clarity, or their colonial present for that matter. Nor were they representatives of human freedom. So it's identification, then that propaganda—which is on a psychological level—that political propaganda exploits and finds a home for. I hope that answers your question. By the way, as we're speaking, my today's edition of **Haaretz** has arrived, and it says, "Jerusalem demolishes home for construction violations—if they're Palestinian." Every day you get this. Imagine, they just show up and bulldoze your home. Palestinian. In your home city. Yeah.

#Felix Marquardt

And the Meerkat is in one of those stolen homes in Jerusalem.

#Gabor Maté

Is that right? I wouldn't be surprised.

#Felix Marquardt

Bought by the paper from its star columnist, Tom Friedman.

#Gabor Maté

Oh, really? That's how they roll. There's a special hell where Friedman will fry, I think—for a long time—for all his honesty and his...

#Felix Marquardt

Absolutely.

#Gabor Maté

It's a willful blindness he has. It's hard to explain.

#Felix Marquardt

So there you go—that's what I was referring to.

#Gabor Maté

Yeah, yeah. Well, no, I agree. I agree. I don't dismiss—look, even when it comes to Nazism, you can't dismiss the psychology of Hitler.

#Felix Marquardt

Of course not.

#Gabor Maté

But the psychology by itself wouldn't have created it.

#Felix Marquardt

Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, I get the distinction, and it's important—especially for people like me who tend to over-psychologize. Gabor Maté, thank you so much for taking the time to be with us.

#Gabor Maté

Felix, it's a pleasure to speak with you. Thanks for the conversation.

#Felix Marquardt

Bye-bye.

#Gabor Maté

Bye-bye. Good luck.