



[Oceane Sluizer](#) , a 13-year-old Jewish girl, was beaten by five female classmates of Moroccan origin on Nov. 18, 2011 in Brussels, Belgium. Following an altercation at a sport training centre, Oceane was beaten by the girls who also shouted: 'Shut up, you dirty Jew, and return to your country'. Then they just left her there, at the sports center, not far from the school, while those who witnessed the incident quickly ran away.

Oceane gave [more details](#) of the incident to Yedioth Ahronoth correspondent Menachem Gantz.

"I play soccer at the sports center," she says. "It was a routine afternoon training session organized by the school." She says the abuse was nothing new. The girls of Moroccan descent used to regularly address her with exclamations of contempt.

"In the past month and a half it became worse," she says. "That day I just had enough. I said to myself that today I would answer them, that I wouldn't take it anymore."

She mustered the courage and answered back. "The fact that I'm not Moroccan doesn't give you permission not to respect me," she told the girls. "They began cursing and insulting me." Oceane didn't break down: "I don't want to keep quiet. I live in my country." Her comment cost

her two slaps in the face. "It was an act of provocation and they wanted me to hit them back. I was gripped with fear and realized I must walk away."

But the girls wouldn't let her go. "They followed me and began assaulting me. The attack lasted five minutes, which seemed eternal. A friend of mine of Indian descent was the only one who intervened. She tried to protect me. She prevented a disaster. Their hatred would have left me bleeding on the grass without anyone there to help me."

It turns out that the girls only found out about Oceane's Jewish roots about a year ago. "We're Arab. We don't want you to be part of our group," they used to tell her. "The Muslim girls created a balance of fear threatening everyone. I got used to not having the Belgian girls defend me, because I knew they were scared too."

Tensions mounted at the school every day. "I got used to being called a dirty Jew. It wasn't unusual, although I was burning up inside."

In shock, the young Jewish girl filed a complaint with the Brussels police. Her blue eyes still look empty, her blond hair hides the heavy strokes she received. For 10 days, 13-year-old Oceane Sluijzer didn't leave her house, terrified, afraid to go out.

"The police suggested that I keep quiet about the incident. They asked me, 'Don't say that it's anti-Semitism,'" Oceane reveals. "They even suggested that I avoid going to the hospital."

According to her father, Dan, "The police said they would collect the five girls' testimonies and settle for that. If they attack her again in the future, they promised to act differently. The police wanted to bury this affair as soon as possible."

The educational system's response was similar. Oceane returned home that day and didn't leave her house for the next 10 days, but no one at the school even bothered to check on her. Her schoolmates disappeared too.

"A week later, the principal called and asked me to visit his office with Oceane's mother," the father says. "He said he had decided to suspend the girls' leader. I informed him that my daughter would not be returning to a school which is incapable of protecting her. As far as he was concerned, it was enough. It was the ideal solution."

Her father, whose grandfather was murdered in the Holocaust, says that "last year I already went to the school and warned the principal that there is a problem of anti-Semitism here, but he said they were just children and that I mustn't make generalizations. I was concerned by the fact that my daughter and her older sister are the only Jewish girls in the school."

And he had good reason to be concerned, as the verbal violence turned into physical violence. While the Moroccan girl has appealed the decision to suspend her and may return to the educational institution, Oceane must now look for a new school.

She wasn't raised in a religious home, and her identity as a Jew never bothered her or was part of her life. "Until now I was never afraid to say that I'm Jewish, but it's different now," she says.

Going to a Jewish school which practices Halacha and where classes are in Hebrew seems too difficult. Therefore it was decided that she would go to a different public school, which has other Jewish students.

Indeed, the fact that the incident was not reported in Belgium and that elected representatives had nothing to say about it points to the problematic situation in the country. The exception was Brussels Jewish parliamentarian Viviane Teitelbaum who denounced the "silence" of political leaders and most of media after this attack.

A visit to the school in Brussels' Laeken neighborhood by correspondent Menachem Gantz supports this feeling. Rochelle, Ali, Antoine and Orly – Oceane's classmates – stand at the entrance. "Do you know why Oceane was attacked?" I ask them, and Orly responds: "Yes, she was attacked because her father is Jewish."

"We don't know what happened there, if Oceane teased them or not," says Rochelle, without

rushing to point a finger at anyone although Orly explained the situation to her.

None of the teachers or educators discussed the incident with Gantz. The principal refused to talk to me although he was informed that an Israeli journalist was waiting for him.

Gantz was sent to Madame Fauzia Harisha, the Muslim woman in charge of the education portfolio at the Brussels City Hall. When she finally picked up the phone, she explained that she could not talk to me as long as the Muslim student's appeal process was ongoing.

The Coordinating Committee of Jewish Organizations of Belgium (CCOJB), the umbrella group of Jewish organizations in Belgium, expressed "shock" at the attack and asked the judicial authorities to make sure that the investigation would proceed quickly conducted without delay.

The Jewish group added it is considering filing a civil suit and said the Jewish community is "exasperated" by repeated attacks on Jews, 40,000 of whom live in Belgium. They also requested that the Belgian French community Education Minister "introduce appropriate educational programs in schools to prevent unjustified tensions between communities."

As a "moral authority", the central Jewish Consistory, the representative body of Jewish religious congregations in the country, also intervened with the authorities to take action and to prevent such acts.

Oceane will soon be receiving legal aid too. The EJU's cooperation with an association of Jewish European lawyers fighting for Israel is already working to put the Moroccan girls on trial.

"I don't care if we're called a Jewish lobby," says Aviel Attias, one of the organization's founders. "If we must demonstrate legal aggressiveness in order to insist on our rights, it will be done. Oceane won't be left alone. That's a promise."

A previous study in 2009 showed that anti-Semitic attacks [skyrocketed](#) in Belgium, according

to The Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism. The Centre is a Belgian government agency under the responsibility of the Prime Minister of Belgium. A particularly atrocious incident occurred on November 18, 2004 in Antwerp, Belgium, when a Synagogue worker was gunned down on the street.

Muslims now make up one-quarter of the population of [Brussels](#) , according to “The Iris and the Crescent,” a book written by sociologist Felice Dassetto that is the product of more than one year of field research (Catholic University of Leuven, 2011).

In real terms, the number of Muslims in Brussels — where half of the number of Muslims in Belgium currently live — has reached 300,000, which means that the self-styled “Capital of Europe” is now the most Islamic city in Europe. In practical terms, Islam mobilizes more people in Brussels than do the Roman Catholic Church, political parties or even trade unions, according to The book’s author, the, predicts that Muslims will comprise the majority of the population of Brussels by 2030.

According to Dassetto, Islam is becoming increasingly visible in Brussels: there are more and more mosques and minarets, more veiled women and more Muslim organizations. The book also warns that ultraconservative elements within Islam are increasingly gaining ground in Brussels.

Of the many strands of Islam represented in Brussels, Salafism is apparently far and away the most popular. Salafism, the highly conservative pan-Islamic movement, seeks, among other objectives, to unite the Muslim world under the leadership of a single Caliph, or ruler, who would govern based on Islamic Sharia law.

[A research study](#) found that fully one-half of the Muslim students in Brussels are anti-Semitic, according to a 426-page study titled “Jong in Brussel” (Young in Brussels). Mark Elchardus, one of the authors of the report, said: “...those anti-Jewish feelings have nothing to do with a low educational level or social disadvantage.... The anti-Semitism is theologically inspired and there is a direct link between being Muslim and having anti-Semitic feelings.”

A group consisting of Islamists (The Sharia4Belgium) is openly committed to bringing everyone living in Belgium — including all non-Muslims — under the submission of Islamic Sharia law.

They have already initiated a Sharia court located in Antwerp's Borgerhout district to mediate family law disputes for Muslim immigrants in Belgium.

Although Sharia4Belgium's website was recently shut down by the Belgian authorities, a partial archive of the site can be found at the WayBack Machine. There, Sharia4Belgium issues a threat — in the guise of an invitation — calling for all Belgians to convert to Islam and to submit to Sharia law or face the consequences. As the text, in parts, states:

“As in the past we [Muslims] have saved Europe from the dark ages, we now plan to do the same. Now we have the right solution for all crises and this is the observance of the divine law, namely Sharia. We call to implement Sharia in Belgium.”

“As a result, we invite the royal family, parliament, all the aristocracy and every Belgian resident to submit to the light of Islam. Save yourself and your children of the painful punishment of the hereafter and grant yourself eternal life in paradise.”



A cache of the background image for the Sharia4Belgium website has the black flag of jihad flying above the Belgian Parliament (see picture above).

Further Reading:

[Complaint against Sociologist for linking Muslim anti-Semitism to Islam](#)

[As Anti-Semitism Rises, More of Belgium's Jews Immigrate to Israel](#)

[Report: Antwerp Jews to Disappear in Fifty Years](#)

[Report: 2009 record year for anti-Semitic incidents](#)

[EU Report: Anti-Semitism: Summary Overview of the Situation in the European Union 2001-2008](#)