

Haaretz| Opinion

Opinion | The Amsterdam Attack Shows Israelis' Denial of the Reality They Created

Monday 11 November 2024, by [LEVY Gideon](#) (Date first published: 10 November 2024).

Supporters with Palestinian flags take part in a demonstration on the sideline of a Europa League football match between Ajax Amsterdam and Maccabi Tel Aviv, in Amsterdam Thursday. Credit: Jeroen Jumelet/ AFP

An ugly, criminal pogrom against Israeli soccer fans took place in Amsterdam on Thursday. Similar pogroms, carried out by settlers, take place almost daily in the West Bank. The pogroms in Hawara, for example, surpassed in their scope and violence even Holocaust II in Amsterdam. The day after the pogrom in the Netherlands, violent settlers rampaged in Surif; two days before it, they rampaged in Al-Maniya.

While Israelis were being [beaten in Amsterdam](#), in the Gaza Strip dozens of people were killed indiscriminately, including many children, as they are every day. The daily pogroms in the [West Bank](#) and of course the war in Gaza were not compared to the Holocaust; the chair of Yad Vashem was not interviewed about them; no rescue force was dispatched to save their victims; Israel's foreign minister and Knesset speaker did not view them as a chance for a photo op. These pogroms happen every day and no one bothers to report most of them to you.

Israel set another record Thursday for the self-victimization it so very much enjoys, and the media set another record for the incitement, exaggeration, fearmongering and, above all, the concealment of information that doesn't fit the narrative, that its consumers enjoy. Amsterdam provided an unmissable opportunity: Once again, Jews are beaten in Europe.

A Maccabi Tel Aviv soccer fan related that just the day before he had visited the [Anne Frank House](#) - what a spine-chilling coincidence - and the radio host almost burst into tears. The right-wing, ultranationalist, German Israeli propaganda correspondent in Germany, Antonia Yamin, explained that "Europe does not understand the problem": In the last year, 300 members of a family from Khan Yunis came to Berlin and some of them are already known to the police. Gaza is to blame in Amsterdam, too. Yamin forgot, of course, to mention the hell this family had come from and who created it.

That's how it is when you live in the warm, cozy bubble, completely disconnected from reality, in complete denial, that the Israeli media builds for us: We are always the victims and the only victims; there was a massacre only on [October 7](#); all of Gaza is to blame; all of the Arabs are bloodthirsty; all of Europe is antisemitic. Do you have any doubt? See Kristallnacht in Amsterdam.

And now for the facts: In Amsterdam, some of the Israeli fans rampaged in the streets even before the pogrom: disgusting, shouted chants of "We'll screw the Arabs" (in Hebrew) and the removal of a Palestinian flag legitimately hanging from the balcony of a building were almost never shown in the Israeli media, which could spoil the image of antisemitism. No one asked the first question that the sight of the violence and hatred in Amsterdam should have raised: Why do they hate us so much?

No, it's not because we are Jews.

Not that there isn't antisemitism: Of course there is, and it must be fought, but the attempt to pin everything on it is ridiculous and mendacious. An anti-Israeli wind blew in Amsterdam Thursday, and that's what ignited the pogrom. The North African immigrants, the Arabs and the Dutch people who rioted saw the [horrors in Gaza](#) over the past year. They are not willing to remain silent about them.

For them, the victims are their brothers and their compatriots. And who can remain indifferent when your people are slaughtered so cruelly? Every Moroccan waiter in every remote Dutch town has seen much more of Gaza than the experts on Arab affairs in Israel. No decent person could remain indifferent to the images from Gaza. The rioters in Amsterdam committed egregious violence and deserve condemnation and punishment. Nothing can justify a pogrom, neither in Amsterdam nor in [Hawara](#).

But the Amsterdam riots also have a context, and Israel is unwilling to address it. It would rather send a bodyguard with every Israeli soccer fan who travels to Europe from now on than to ask why it is that they hate us so much and how this hatred can be quelled. After all, it did not erupt like this before the war in Gaza.

This is another cost of the war in Gaza that should have been considered: The world will hate us for it. Every Israeli abroad will be a target for hatred and violence from now on. That's what happens when you kill almost [20,000 children](#), carry out ethnic cleansing and destroy the Gaza Strip. It's a little quirk of the world; it doesn't like those who commit these sorts of crimes.

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P.S.

• Haaretz. Nov 10, 2024:
<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-11-10/ty-article-opinion/.premium/from-amsterdam-to-the-hawara-pogroms-are-wrong/00000193-128f-d304-a3db-16ff60fb0000>