Contentious politics and bottom-up mobilisation in revolutionary Egypt: the case of Egyptian football supporters in Cairo

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Introduction

Recent development in the Middle East and North Africa have raised fundamental questions about political change, the development of collective action as well as the making of a common struggle. The uprisings in Tahrir Square have further led to the examination and interrogation of the different ways by which collective action is thought, organised and staged. It additionally questions the production as well as the formation of political protest in areas dominated by authoritarian rule. Egyptian football fans, in particular, have taken centre stage in the clashes with security and police forces. Indeed, established social movements such as the 6th of April movement and Kefaya called upon these football supporters because of their experience in street fights against the police. Subsequently, they played a key role in some of the deadliest clashes, pushing security forces to retreat and securing decisive victories against the Mubarak regime.

This paper will address the football supporters' role and participation in the revolution, as well as what the implications of their participation can tell us about contentious politics in Egypt. In other words, this essay aims at examining how and in what ways football supporters played a significant role in the historic developments unfolding in Egypt. The paper will be divided into three main sections. The first will address the issue of contentious politics in authoritarian regimes by focusing firstly on

the Egyptian political system and secondly on the security forces as powerful agents of government. Next, the essay will focus on the Egyptian Ultras and their identification processes; what it means to be an Ultra, how they identify themselves and why they mobilise. Finally, the paper will analyse the implications of the Ultras in the uprisings, as a result of a combination of factors, including the Ultra code, their experience in street fights, the feeling of injustice and the will to "fight for what is right".

A study of the Egyptian case, and more specifically of a bottom-up case focusing on traditionally non-political groups such as the Ultras, is useful as it provides new insights for the study of contentious politics in the Middle East. These everyday dynamics are reshaping societies in the Middle East in ways that are not usually acknowledged by Western onlookers and unwelcomed by authoritarian power-holders in the region[i]. Recognising the power of local actors such as the Ultras and examining the day-to-day activities of these "non-political movements" sheds light on the new ways by which ordinary individuals diminish the state's overwhelming power, resulting in profound changes within their communities[ii].

The idea here is not to elaborate nor develop existing theories, but rather to analyse and question these supporters' action through the use of existing theories and concepts related to theories of collective action, collective identity and mobilisation. Although collective action is a core characteristic of social movements, it is too soon, in our view, to dub these supporters "social movement" because of their will to refrain from the political debate as well as the lack of hindsight allowing for a proper analysis. The subject may be too current to conduct a rigorous analysis without risking a misguided and misinformed examination.

It is hoped that this paper will contribute to the growing literature on contentious politics by focusing on a topic that has rarely been studied in this regard, namely the implication of football supporters. How and in what way(s) did football supporters play a significant role in the events unfolding in Egypt? The goal is to examine the ways by which a non-political group of football supporters was brought to engage in a highly political contentious struggle with the Egyptian

authorities, alongside activists, protesters and established social movements. Through the use of concepts relating to identity and a perceived sense of injustice, the essay will shed light on the growing phenomenon that is the "Oltras"[iii].

The study is based on 7 semi-structured interviews conducted with supporters of the two main football clubs in Cairo, namely Ahly and Zamalek as well as a participatory observation conducted between May and June 2013. The use of interviews is an important tool for "making sense of political phenomena"[iv]. For research that focuses on what Mosley calls "microfoundations", meaning research in terms of beliefs, incentives, and behaviours of individuals, interviews can thoroughly gauge the foundations of individuals' attitudes and actions. Such interviews can further be used to reveal causal mechanisms or to test the accuracy of theories[v]. For the purpose of the case at hand, the choice of interviews is motivated by the desire to understand the supporters' motives for participation in the uprisings as well as to grasp the elements of their identification process that help shed light on these same motives. Although interviews include a smaller sample of respondents than surveys, they gather a much wider and deeper range of responses which can lead to follow-up questions, penetrating more acutely in the actions and attitudes of the participants. Follow-ups can be of particular interest when the respondent appears to hold a contradictory rhetoric, and came in handy when interviewing the Ultras especially with regard to the contradiction between their will to refrain from political participation and their highly political actions.

The sample does not aim at being representative of Egyptian supporters. It includes six young men between the ages of 19 and 27 and one young 24 years old woman; four are Ahly supporters and three are Zamalek supporters. Among the respondents, five are university students and two are working: one in the textile industry, the other, as a freelance photographer and artist. The female respondent is a leading figure in the Women's Ultras White Knights (Zamalek), while the male respondents cover a wider range within the group. Two of them are prominent figures within the Ultras Ahlawy (Ahly), and Ultras White Knights (Zamalek) respectively. The remaining 4 are active members of the group

but do not hold key positions within it. The difficulty in such groups is the heterogeneity and multifaceted diversity. In addition to being supporters, some are involved in political or religious movements. To overcome the diverging opinions and religious confessions, the different supporter groups collectively agreed to avoid discussing sensitive issues such as religion or politics and focus on its original purpose, which is football. The gathered data helped to establish connections between members of the group as well as between the members of opposing groups. The interviews finally and more importantly reveal a strong presence of collective identity within the supporter groups and a strong sense of belonging and identification to the country and its struggle.

Contentious politics in authoritarian regimes

When approaching the study of contentious collective action in the Middle East, the first question to raise, is when are these mobilisations most likely to emerge, especially in authoritarian contexts. While many scholars give a central role to grievance[vi], it is not sufficient to be turned into a sustained protest and have to include the availability of resources (material and symbolic), regime opponents, changes in the international context, and changes in the political opportunity structure to name but a few[vii]. Indeed, according to Paszynska, the emergence and presence of fissures among the ruling elite is often accompanied by the appearance of elite allies willing to establish an "alliance" with the social groups. The State becomes less willing or less able to deploy repression, meaning that challenging authority is less costly and more likely to succeed. Contentious collective action is more frequent when the "*perceived probability that social protest actions will lead to success in achieving the desired outcome*"[viii].

Egypt's democratic façade and the development of contentious collective action

When contentious collective action develops in authoritarian contexts, another question is the probability of the dictatorship leading to a process of democratisation rather than its replacement by another authoritarian rule. The political system in Egypt, since the abdication of King Farouk in 1952, has been a succession of semi-authoritarian rules. When news broke that Mubarak had stepped down

from power on 11 February 2011, it came as a surprise, not only to the world, but also and more importantly to specialists in the study of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. Albrecht's book *Contentious Politics in the Middle East*[ix], although published a few months before the beginning of the uprisings, failed to underline the gaping level of discontent among the population that lead to the countrywide and large scale popular mobilisations of January 2011[x].

Building upon the literature of authoritarian politics, Geddes[xi] focused on the strategies of cooperation and conflict among elites in the different kinds of authoritarian regimes and divided them into four categories, namely *personalist*; *single party*; *military*; or *hybrid regimes*. *Single party regimes* are characterised by the dominance of one party who controls policy, though other parties may legally exist. *Military regimes* are ruled by a group of officers who influences policy and decides who will rule. *Personalist regimes* on the other hand, are based on the accession to power of a single charismatic leader (who may wear a uniform or create a single party) but where neither the military nor the party exercise independent power in the decision-making process. Their leaders emerge through different selection processes, use different decision-making procedures and rely on various portions of society for backing and support. They further deal with opposition as well as with succession in contrasting ways, which highly depends on the nature of intra-elite competition[xii]. Finally, *hybrid regimes*, combine characteristics from both single-party regimes, and either, personalist or military regimes. In practice, most hybrid regimes are single-party personalist amalgams because there are very few single-party military combinations[xiii]. Key characteristics of authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes include the use of formally democratic rhetoric and institutions; limit the risks of plurality and free competition; use new institutions to maintain their grip on power; allow for political pluralism, free media and free association while establishing several unofficial instruments and tools of corruption, violence and intimidation[xiv].

Egypt, according to this classification, combined[xv] features pertaining to all three regimes, with a strong military, the presence of a single party as well as the establishment of a long-lasting charismatic

leader (personal authoritarian rule having lasted for almost sixty years). According to Bishry, the regime that ruled Egypt was not only authoritarian, defining the problem as one relating to the "personalisation of power". He explains that unlike traditional authoritarian regimes, the ruling elite does not represent a particular fragment of society. Rather, it controls power simply by empowering its own personnel, overcoming pressures for change by keeping a small circle of loyalists, thus creating a system in which professional and political exchanges are replaced with personal interests and individual ties[xvi]. Consequently, all branches of government remain under the overpowering control of the executive body, hindering the development of autonomous groupings[xvii]. In a context where military officials are linked to regime elites through bonds of blood or sect or ethnicity, where career advancement is dependent on political loyalty rather than merit, where the distinction between public and private is obscure, and where economic corruption, and patronage is ubiquitous, then the fate of the army's leadership becomes inherently linked to the regime's capacity to remain in power[xviii]. The presence of such a regime in Egypt has strong consequences on collective mobilisation. Civil society is subject to the overwhelming power of the executive apparatus and strong state control on a daily basis, which discourages mobilisation. Public gatherings and all forms of political contestation are violently repressed by the police and all political activists are arrested under random pretences and locked away[xix].

Democracy and elections are, in regimes such as Egypt, a façade providing the regime with the needed legitimacy without truly exposing it to the risks of political competition[xx]. Indeed, before the outbreak of the uprising, the regime had adopted coercive measure to stop other political parties for developing, including the "Law on political parties". This law included certain articles that limited the opposition's actions thus preventing the new parties from conducting their activities until the approval was granted by the regime – a lengthy process more often than not resulting in a rejection[xxi]. The law was notably used for the elections of October 2010 in which Mubarak's party got 95 Percent of the seats, alienating the population. One of the 25th of January's early demands was the abrogation of the rigged parliament.

By providing institutional mechanisms to regulate access to public office and by promising future opportunities for career advancement, ruling parties manage to generate a sense of "security" among power holders "that their immediate and long-term interests are best served by remaining within the party's organisation"[xxii]. To survive, however, – and preserve its legitimacy – such a system must allow for the development of the counter-powers that they try to neutralise, which opens up new opportunities and spaces for contention.

Contentious collective action is defined as "*collective events, which represent potentially subversive acts that challenge normalized practices, modes of contestation, or systems of authority*"[xxiii]. Scholars in the field of contentious politics conclude that collective action, though not a sufficient condition for democratisation, can be a decisive factor in regime transformation[xxiv]. More recently, McAdam & al. made a stronger claim, arguing that democratisation and contentious collective action are inseparable: "*Democracy results from, mobilizes, and reshapes popular contestation*"[xxv]. In their opinion, contentious collective action is an "episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants."

As mentioned earlier, the development of contentious action in Egypt is complicated by the regime's response to counter-powers: strong "coercive agencies" who have "carte blanche" when it comes to 'defending state interests'. These police forces usually resolve to "routine" forms of repression, such as surveillance, threats, harassment, detention and "legal persecution", to restrict and discourage any kind of dissident behaviour. The Egyptian case is interesting in this regard; firstly because it sheds light on the weaknesses of such authoritarian regimes and secondly because it allows for a first-hand analysis of the development of large-scale mobilisation.

The police: a powerful agent of government

In the next section, we will focus on the government's instrumentalisation of police forces as a means to resist any opposing force, regardless of its political orientation. It is important to underline that national security in Egypt is divided between the police and the army. Collective mobilisations are complicated by the presence of a strong and stable state control in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes. It is important to distinguish between the police and the army. While the army was credited by the population for restoring stability to the country after the ousting of Mubarak in the wake of the uprisings[xxvi], the police's role was that of the oppressor and the physical representative of the Ministry of Interior. In Egypt, the police act not only as the organisation in charge of public security but first and foremost as an agent of government. In addition to ensuring public and national security, the police's power covers other areas, such as the market, transport, roads, food supplies, public utilities, taxation and public morality[xxvii]. The Egyptian police apparatus is, by design, intrusive, abusive and violent. The organisational chart of Egypt's Ministry of Interior is quite revealing with regard to the extensive remit of the police's monitoring and surveillance as well as the degree of specialisation and complexity of its departments[xxviii].

This intrusiveness can be attributable to several political factors that have aided the police in consolidating their power, notably the role it was assigned in repressing the Islamist opposition, dating back to the 1950s and 1960s. Another important factor was the state's decision to withdraw from certain welfare provisions and its promotion of neo-liberal economic policies, which led to the development of an informal labour market as well as the privatisation of social services[xxix]. Both these factors resulted not only in the heightening of security controls, but also and more importantly, it reinforced the existing corrupt system. In addition to serving the interests of the ruling elite, security forces developed their own corrupt culture, instating a system of bribes and placing what is known as "plain-clothes" policemen – civilians hired by police and security forces to collect information – in neighbourhoods under the pretence of ensuring stability and peace. To do so without raising suspicion[xxx], the police usually position their undercover informants in local communities by providing them with a vending kiosk or by appointing them to the *carta* system, shuttle buses and vans. As an

Egyptian aptly put it, "we don't feel safe because we always feel like we are being watched. […] The other day, I was coming home and I was approached by a policeman. I got fined because I did not have my passport. I am Egyptian, I don't need a passport. It's their way of showing who is the boss"[xxxi].

Many Egyptians view the police as a way of corrupting society[xxxii]; by using violence, security forces become the instigators of corruption and unrest. The police justifies the use of force against any person suspected of taking part in "dubious activities" by the need to ensure public safety against the *baltagiyya* or thugs. Originally, *baltagiyya* was a name given to the subjects attached to the Islamist activists in the popular quarters[xxxiii]. Later considered a national security issue, the term was used by the Mubarak regime to justify the containment of militant Islamist groups in the mid-1990s. The police instituted fear of these "young and violent men" to justify their presence in different neighbourhoods or their use of violence. The meaning of *baltagiyya,* however, varies. While the state and its bodies describe them as a "social problem" and aims at "young troublemakers", they are known to the population as "police informants", drug dealers; "people paid by the police to spy on the population and report back to their superior"[xxxiv].

A key characteristic of the 25th of January Revolution was the fact that the extent of the protest caught the police off guard, as they were not expecting such an outcome. On 28 January (Friday of Anger), police forces were overwhelmed and forced to retreat. Because of the increase of desertion within their ranks, as well as the army's refusal to use fire against "the people of Egypt"[xxxv], regime officials called upon the *baltagiyya* – the hired armed thugs – to disperse the crowds of protesters in exchange for money. This manoeuvre however, was not successful. One of the hired thugs explains: "[Anti Mubarak protesters] *were willing to die for what they believed in, and I was just fighting them because I had been paid LE200* (about £30) *to do so*"[xxxvi]. This phenomenon however, remains unobservable to international actors because of the authorities' tendency to rely on arbitrary, informal social control of protest[xxxvii]. Intimidation, harassment and threats of violence are tools used by both

"local police officers" and the *baltagiyya;* by "*state agents loosely connected to national political elites*"[xxxviii].

Egyptian football supporters – the Ultras – have a long history of encounters with police forces and the *baltagiyya*. These Ultras are an organised group of supporters, officially active since 2007 (as the group "Ultras"; the supporters were active before that but were not a distinct group). The Ultras groups evolve in a context that still relies on "*violent, state-based repression*"[xxxix]. Generally speaking, Ultras are groups whose activities centre around the stadium, their support for their team and violence[xl]. Football supporters, and Ultras in particular, resort to violence in cases of "self-defence", notably when they are being hassled by the police at the end of football matches due to their use of flares and "politically incorrect" slogans[xli]. Police forces routinely arrest supporters the night before the game for "questioning", to ensure that they do not represent a threat to "national security" and release them the day after, sometimes in a bad shape[xlii]. Their use of violence is not only limited to self-defence. Some of the more "hard-core" fans customarily organise "street fights" with rival supporter clubs bringing their activities closer to those of traditional hooligans[xliii].

The Ultras' clashes with the police are cultivated in a long history of violent encounters, of humiliations (the police often use the expression "*ya walad*" meaning "you boy", closely related to the reference to "boy" used during the segregationist period in the United States) and harassment[xliv]. One of the respondents explained his encounter with the police in these terms: "*I was arrested by the police because he recognised me. The day before we went to Tahrir with the oltras and he saw us. He feared us when we walked by him. But felt so powerful when I was alone with him and his "friends". The difference is we didn't attack him. It's a question of principle*". He was released the day after, and had been beaten up when he refused to give up information regarding his "suspicious activities" (he implied that they wanted information regarding his activities as an Ultra but they never said it openly): "*It's easier to attack someone when they are alone and cannot defend himself. They are cowards*".

The feeling of anger and humiliation is an important feature of the relationship between the Ultras and the police, as it contributes to the development of a sense of injustice, which in turn encourages an upsurge of violence against police forces and shapes the supporters' identity ("I am an Ultra, and as an Ultra, I am opposed to any kind of figure of authority").

Egyptian Ultras: identity, idealism and politics

One key component of the Ultras' identity is this intrinsic opposition to police and security forces. This relationship structures their motives for mobilisation as well as it reinforces their sense of belonging to the Ultras as a group. Identity refers to a place occupied by an individual in society. A person can, therefore, occupy many different places depending on the context as well as he/she can share this identity with other people[xlv]. It then becomes a *collective identity* and a motive for mobilisation. In the next section, theories of collective identity will be analysed to understand the Ultras' patterns of mobilisation and identification to the group and the motives for participating in the Egyptian Revolution, which will be the subject of the following section.

Port Said: a powerful catalyst for mobilisation

On 1 February 2012, 74 Ahly fans were killed in what was presented as a "riot between football fans gone wrong"[xlvi]. The Ultras interpret the Port Said clashes as a kind of vendetta on the part of security forces for their participation in the Revolution. Following the events, massive protests erupted in Cairo and around the country, with people coming out and blaming security forces for the deadly violence: "*This is a conspiracy. We wouldn't do this to our brothers,"* said Mohamed Abdel Fattah, standing outside of the governor's office. *"The Ahly supporters were predominantly from Port Said. My brother was one of them. Port Said is sad today; all residents of the city are sad and feel as if their own relatives have died"*[xlvii]. An Ultra Masrawy added that the "*situation was strange. To see people dead at a football game.* […] *This is something unheard of. This could never come from us"*[xlviii].

Al-Masry supporters, as well as Al-Ahly supporters, that were interviewed, insist there was a security lapse, saying that they saw supporters storm onto the pitch without being stopped by security

forces. One Masry Ultra said that he did go onto the pitch to celebrate with his friends, but when he saw what was going on in the Ahly stands, "*we ran to form a cordon at the bottom and prevent more people from going up*." He added: "*At half time, four buses with* [so called][xlix] *Masry fans arrived. I had never seen them before. They were the ones who attacked them. The others — the infiltrators — ran past to chase the Ahly fans. We won the game, why would we attack them?*"

Masry Ultras later pointed out that the governor and head of security were absent from the match, which was uncommon for games against Ahly. Many agreed that those who attacked the Ahly supporters were not regular Masry Ultras, one of them (Yasser) adding, "*are you trying to convince me that the police and the military can secure parliamentary elections involving 27 million people and they can't secure two stands with a few thousand people?*"

Many sources confirmed what had been said by Masry Ultras, saying that it was the government's way of taking its revenge for the "*humiliation we inflicted during the battles*". One of my respondents – a Zamalek Ultra – who lost his best friend in the violent clashes of Port Said, explained that they "*are not afraid of police brutality. If anything, it motivates us even more to fight for what is right. We have lived in fear and violence for so long. We have seen death and experienced the pain of gunshots and loss. What worse could happen? If we die, we will have died fighting and there will be many more after us to fight for Egypt*".

Ultras in Egypt have always had a difficult and "dysfunctional" relationship with security forces. Many of them, as well as an abundant portion of the protesters believe the Port Said clashes to be a way for security forces – and by extension, the government – to take revenge for the supporters' participation in the uprisings. One of the respondents explained that in his opinion, "*we are a threat to them* [the police and regime] *because we were there in Tahrir. We know what they did.* […] *We know who the agents* [the undercover agents] *are so we mess with their investigations. We can also spot the baltagiyya who help the police and that is why we get arrested and beaten up. And that is why they killed them in Port Said*"[l].

More than just a “football riot”, Port Said represents a breaking point in the involvement of the Ultras in the large-scale mobilisation. While their participation was undeniable in the first days of the uprisings, it was limited to a passive engagement. Their presence in Tahrir Square was specifically aimed at defending the protesters against police brutality. It is essential to bear in mind that the Ultras were not one of the leading forces of the movement. They responded to a call from the organising social movements, namely Kefaya and the 6th of April Movement by uploading an anonymous video to YouTube where they assured those committed to demonstrate on 25 January and those fearful of police brutality, that there would be an Egyptian *fasil*, squadron, present and competent to defend them. The video also showed footage of clashes between Ultras groups, particularly Al-Ahly and Zamalek fans, and the police[li].

On the days leading up to the 25th of January, messages that the Ultras would come were posted on the *Kullina Khaled Saeed* - We Are All Khaled Said – page[lii]. To emphasise and stress their non-political affiliation however, Ahlawy Ultras posted a message on their Facebook page saying: “Ultras Ahlawy declares that it is a sports group only, which has no political inclinations or affiliations of whatever kind. Therefore the group is not participating in the demonstrations planned to take place on this Tuesday 25 of January...”[liii] Similarly, the Ultras White Knights underlined that “[The report saying that the Ultras White Knights are participating in the January 25 demonstrations] are without any truthful basis and are lacking in consideration of the role of the group and the fundamental reason for its establishment.”[liv]

It is therefore very difficult to establish the Ultras’ intentions in the early days of the uprisings and it seems improbable that there was any collective intention in participating as a distinguished group, the Ultras. They basically brought their years of experience in fighting against the police – and rival supporter groups – from the stadium to the streets, thus playing an indispensable role in major key battles, including the Battle of the Camel and the infamous Battle of Mohammed Mahmoud.

The clashes of Port Said, on the other hand, were, from the Ultras' point of view, a direct attempt, from the Ministry of Interior, on the Ultras as a social group and resulted in nationwide mobilisations. The whole incident raises too many questions to be dismissed as a violent act of hooliganism. Seen as an act orchestrated by the Ministry of Interior, and moving up the hierarchy as high as the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the ruling force at the time of the events, the Ultras massively mobilised to voice their discontent, shifting their energy and activities from the stadium to civil society.

Their politicisation process was epitomised by the truce called between both Ahly and Zamalek clubs. In effect, after the death of the 74 Ahly fans, both supporter groups decided to suspend their rival activities and unite in support of the victims. This decision can be explained by the fact that the "Ultras", as a social group, felt under attack and were singled out – in their view – by the Ministry of Interior as a threat, causing the deaths of Port Said. Symbols of this union adorn the walls of Cairo, Alexandria and Egypt as a whole. It also galvanised a wave of solidarity among supporters in other major cities such as Istanbul and Rome, revealing the extent of solidarity between these supporter group as well as a strong "supporters' identity" which cuts through linguistic, cultural and territorial boundaries. Indeed, the Port Said incident threatened their *identity* as a social group, independent from their other activities, and explains their mobilisation.

The "Ultra identity": football, loyalty and collective action

"What does it mean to be an Ultra"?

"Being an Ultra is more than football. Being an Ultra means you respect the code and live by it. […] Being an Ultra is about loving football, your team and your people. You know…we look out for each other"[lv].

The Ultras' identity is deeply rooted in football and is revealed most frequently during the games, but is not limited to the sporting arena. Ultras groups started forming in the early 2000s via the Internet and through fan forums before materialising into distinctive organisations in 2007, based on

the Italian model[lvi]. They differ however, from their Italian counterparts, in the sense that Italian Ultras have right-wing tendencies whereas Egyptian Ultras lean towards anti-authoritarian tendencies[lvii]. Ultras Ahlawy and Ultras White Knights are the first groups to appear in Egypt and became the two largest and two most visible organisations in the country[lviii]. Their activities are focused on the club and the support for their respective teams, and are aimed at inspiring a sense of belonging among the supporters, impressing spectators with the flare shows and the chants, and intimidating rival teams' supporters.

What is ignored about these football supporters is their high level of organisation and structure within the group. The leadership structure is centralised, subdivided into regional structures, and local meetings are organised when important decisions need to be made. However, in practice, the organisation is both centralised and decentralised. The predominance of a horizontal structure helps reinforce group attitudes and moderates divisive issues between members with diverging ideological opinions or convictions[lix].

Castells defines *identity* as referring to social actors; as being a process of "construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is given priority over other sources of meaning"[lx]. For any given individual or collective actor, there may be a plurality of identities. Identity however, must be distinguished from what sociologists call "roles" or "role-sets". According to Castells, roles (being a student, a mother, a politician, a football player) are defined by society and its definition of norms. This paper will apply the definition of identity as "a source of meaning for the actors themselves, constructed through a process of individuation[lxi], as well as a way of distinguishing themselves for other people/groups".

Identity is a key concept when analysing the dynamics of social protest in Egypt. According to Klandermans & Simon, "people evince political collective identity to the extent that they engage as self-conscious group members in a power struggle on behalf of their group knowing that it is the wider, more inclusive societal context in which this struggle has to be fought out"[lxii]. A special emphasis is to

be put on the role of space in the formation of collective identity, especially when studying groups such as the football supporters. Fernando Bosco argues that "place-based collective rituals" serve to maintain social network cohesion both spatially and symbolically[lxiii]. Places that are collectively identified as meaningful to the cause become symbols to build and maintain existing network connections[lxiv]. The concept of territory and public space is closely related to the Ultras and their activities. As was noted in an earlier segment, Egypt's authoritarian rule and the overbearing presence of police reduced public space considerably through extensive surveillance techniques and physical intimidation and abuse[lxv]. The stadium and its surroundings, as well as the groups of Ultras, became virtual spaces of freedom and autonomy where the frustrations of humiliation and abuse could be channelled. Tahrir Square, became in this respect, a public space of transformative political action and radical progressive change, in the heart of the government's quarters[lxvi]. Collective rituals reinforce participants' feelings of group membership, their "basic moral commitments and group solidarity and ... their activist identities"[lxvii].

As discussed above, the identity of football supporters is consolidated around team commitment, but also and more importantly around pride and discipline. Beshir explains: "Your eyes cannot miss an Ultra, whether inside or outside the stadium. By nature, he is proud, aware of his importance among the rest of his people who respect him for his capabilities."[lxviii] More importantly, it seems that their identity as football supporters, as Ultras, goes beyond the stadium and guides their daily lives, as is shown by the presence of an Ultra Code. This code includes notably the obligation not to get involved politically, (remain neutral with regard to political ideas – this is to be understood as political in the sense of "party politics"); to treat everyone equally, regardless of gender, class, religion, conviction; not to attack the weak; and to always stand for what is right[lxix]. Though they claim to be "just a group of supporters" who express their love and loyalty to their club as well as to set themselves apart from regular fans, the presence of such a code implies that their identity may exceed the sole purpose of supporting and conceal another, deeper dimension.

The most striking element in this set of rules is the obligation to remain "politically neutral", which contradicts what has been observed during the uprisings. How to explain the inconsistency between their actions and their discourse? Jean Leca underlined that the definition of the "political object" depends on two factors, namely the value given to an action by the subject and its evaluation by the power-holders[lxx]. The limits of the "political object" are thus to be found in the balance of powers between the different groups at play as well as by the group/subject itself. In other words, the Ultras' actions can be interpreted as political, essentially because they are given a political overtone by power-holders and analysts, even though the group itself has not grounded its actions politically.

Football supporters in Egypt (and around the world) do not wish to be seen as political or politicised, because being "political" to them, relates to "party politics" and being "politicised" implies that they are being used by political forces: "We steer clear of politics. Competition in Egypt is on the pitch. We break the rules and regulations when we think they are wrong. You don't change things in Egypt talking about politics. We're not political, the government knows that and that is why it has to deal with us"[lxxi]. Their refrain from the political sphere is also justified by the fact that it would question their autonomy as well as clash with the group's core beliefs. They set themselves apart from any other group of supporters and identify themselves only with the club. Being subject to "political manipulation" or allowing politics to enter the group would undermine its credibility and even its existence. One respondent explains: "In the Ultras you have leftists, and liberals, and salafis, and Ikhuan (Muslim Brotherhood). There are even Jews and Copts so we don't talk about those things. Politics is not important. We love our club so we don't lose time fighting for no reason. We let politicians do that"[lxxii].

Bottom-up mobilisations in Egypt: the Ultras' participation in the Revolution

The Ultras identify by way of their love for their club and direct their mobilisations towards visibility and support. In the context of the Egyptian Revolution however, their actions took a highly political turn, not because they chose to fight for political ideals, but because their actions were

interpreted by onlookers – national and international – as being highly political. We have chosen to stick to a broad conceptualisation of political participation with reference to activities of "political nature or having political implications that aim at affecting policy change whether formally or informally by actors within civil society organisations, social movements, and/or citizens"[lxxiii].

What role, what motives?

The established social movements such as Kefaya and the 6th of April Movement called upon the Ultras to ensure the security of protesters during the first demonstrations on 25 January 2011. These movements turned to the Ultras because they are notorious for their clashes with police and security forces. Cultivated in a history of violence due to their football-related activities, the Ultras were seen, by the population, as one of the only groups, not only capable of resisting the riot police, but also competent enough to teach them the necessary guerrilla techniques to fight back if push came to shove.

Ultras became a surprisingly central actor in the large-scale popular uprisings, bringing their organisational unity, their turbulent spirit and their fighting experience to Tahrir Square. As their actions against riot police became increasingly visible, and their participation and numbers grew, their reputation shifted. They went from "stadium hooligans" to "national heroes"[lxxiv]. Their efforts were massively relayed on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as by bloggers and journalists such as James Montague, Ali Mustafa, Alaa Abd El Fattah or James Dorsey among others[lxxv]. Among the thousands of featured posts, tweets such as "*The Ultras have arrived!*" or "*Ikhuan tremble! The Oltras are coming!*"[lxxvi] are fairly representative of the newly found respect the Ultras inspire among the public. Nawara Negm, a well-known opposition activist and journalist tweeted: "During the revolution sit-in in Mohamed Mahmoud, Ultras youth used to donate their blankets to the women sleeping in the street in the cold winter days. They usually gave the excuse that they are not continuing and will go home. I followed one of them from a distance to see if he was really going home. But no. He

walked away a short distance and then crouched in the entrance of a building to sleep. Without cover"[lxxvii].

The football supporters' will to maintain a "neutral political colour" should be regarded as an asset rather than a weakness, according to Melucci's theory of collective action[lxxviii]. Rather than rallying with a given political or religious force, the Ultras used their dynamism, group mentality, and turbulent attitude to rally protesters and give them the necessary motivation and positivity to pursue the political struggle[lxxix].

Defrance further noted that apoliticism could be described as "a way of doing politics, by seeking to unite unanimous masses and shared goals beyond partisan divisions"[lxxx]. Following this logic, the supporters' apolitical stance enables them to legitimise certain positions or actions passed as "actions of collective good" that transcend any political opinion. The Ultras do not relate their demands for justice to any kind of political or social activism, but as a way of "*doing what is right – for the group*". They view themselves as entirely independent from the world of party politics, which they condemn as *"just a bunch of rich men drinking tea and talking about nonsense. They don't care about the real problems*". The Ultras Code is a guideline in daily life for these supporters and abide by its rules whether they are in or out of the stadium: *"When we are in the stadium with our colours, we are the Ultras. When we are outside on the street even with your mother, you are an Ultra. When something happens and it goes against your rules, you have the obligation to do something. That is what we do"*[lxxxi].

The supporters' participation in the Egyptian revolution can be understood by utilizing the theories of collective identity. It is important, nonetheless, to highlight that collective identity refers to a sense of solidarity among members of a social group. It helps define the group's interests and cultural attributes, including skills, habits, loyalties, beliefs, and ideologies[lxxxii]. In the Ultras' case, this collective identity defines who they are as a group, but also what they support and where their loyalty stands.

Even though the Ultras refrain from politics, some of their basic values include the notions of freedom, justice, and dignity. The first element is related to the Ultra Code and their determination to do what is right. The Ultras are idealists and their acute sense of justice is one of the reasons they decided to return to Tahrir day after day. Even though their activities are intrinsically related to violence, may it be in their encounters with the riot police or in the staging of organised "street battles" with rival clubs[lxxxiii], one of their rules clearly states to "always stand for what is right". "At first I didn't want to go [to Tahrir]. But then I saw that people were getting beaten up by the police. People that didn't have what the police had. I called some of my friends and we went together. When your people are being attacked you cannot watch and not act. It is not who I am…who we are"[lxxxiv].

By doing "what was right" in their opinion, these supporters implicated themselves in a political struggle alongside political activists and normal citizens, even though they did not necessarily adhere to the ideals they were defending. They got involved, firstly because violence is a central part of their activities, but mainly because the use of violence, limited to self-defence, is justified by their moral obligation – as members of the Ultras and believers of the "Code" – to act on behalf of "morality" and "righteousness"[lxxxv]. The Ultras resort to violence in two cases. The first is related to their supporting activities and is tightly connected to their opposition with the riot police. They justify these violent encounters by underlining the fact that they are fighting on a levelled playing field; against an equal opponent. This element is strongly related to the second case in which they resort to violence, which is the case in which a person in being attacked by a stronger opponent. This last element is unequivocally correlated with their participation in the uprisings. The respondents' justification was to say "they were doing what was right", however one the leading figures of Ultras Ahlawy explained that "doing what is right" is rooted in a complete aversion for injustice.

The second factor which provides an explanation for the supporters' motives for mobilisation, which is intrinsically linked to the first, is their fundamental opposition to police brutality. Football supporters and the police share a long history of violence and confrontation, dating back to their early

actions as supporters. During the uprisings, the Ultras used their experience to resist police brutality. Their presence was unmistakeably visible in some of the major battles, including the battle of Mohamed Mahmoud Street. Their involvement there was crucial because it marked the first big victory against the oppressive system. More importantly that victory exposed the cracks of a declining regime, which, in turn, encouraged current and future demonstrators to take to the streets[lxxxvi].

The final element refers to the perception of injustice developed within the group as a result of years of harassment, intimidation and humiliations. The Egyptian Revolution was used as a pretext to unleash the anger and satisfy a desire for retribution fed by years of conflict and violent encounters with government officials. This factor took a particular meaning in the aftermath of the events of Port Said, when thousands of supporters around the country took to the streets and demanded the prosecution and incarceration of those responsible for the incidents. Ahly Ultras as well as Zamalek Ultras converged to different points of interest around Egypt (Tahrir, Port Said, Alexandria, the stadium) for weeks before the verdict, even threatening the regime: "justice or chaos"[lxxxvii].

The truce called between both rival clubs (and between all rival supporter groups around the country) can be explained by the desire to fight injustice. These groups share the same basic ideals. The only detail setting them apart from one another is the fact that they support rival clubs. So when the group of supporters (as a whole, no distinction between clubs or affiliations) comes under attack, it would be normal to see them express their support and rally against a common enemy or for a common cause. The events of Port Said not only affected the supporters but also the country as a whole. As mentioned previously, identity is central to the individual because it places him within broader society. More than just football supporters, these youngsters were also sons, brothers, cousins, friends, and students in a bigger social milieu. It is worth mentioning that the will of rival camps to make peace with one another and look in the same direction is symptomatic of the level of identification with the nation. As one respondent put it: "We are the Ultras, we are Egypt".

The elements presented above may suggest the development of a social movement, given that the Ultras share many common characteristics such as their high organisational skills, their will to congregate and their willingness to mobilise. Nevertheless, it seems a bit premature to give them that label, mainly because the Ultras have yet to clearly express their determination to get involved politically and influence the public debate. Their mobilisation is centred on the club, its members and its interests and their participation in the large-scale popular uprisings is ascribed to their shared enmity with police forces and the Ministry of Interior. This being said, their mobilisation has evolved in two regards since the Port Said incident. First, their array of tools mobilised in their "supporter activities" have been reinvested in their "civic" mobilisations. Tools such as the songs and the use of graffiti, which were written and painted to glorify the club and the team, have taken a political turn with songs glorifying the fallen and ridiculing Ministry officials and the police (although they already used these satiric songs), and graffiti bearing political messages. Second, the Ultras have adopted other resistance and mobilisation techniques from traditional social movements, such as sit-ins and roadblocks, which can suggest a change in their participation and/or the nature of the movement.

Conclusion

The Egyptian Revolution impacted on the dynamics of political participation. Formal political participation in Egypt was predominantly restricted to regime-affiliated party activity, co-opted civil society participation, and/or voting in non-transparent and fraudulent elections[lxxxviii]. This compelled the development of "underground movements" and alternative spaces of freedom. The stadium and the football arena as a whole became one of those spaces, allowed the free expression of opinions and catalysed social tensions and frustrations, ultimately become a space of political socialisation, a space where individuals familiarised themselves with politics and social issues[lxxxix]. These spaces defied the coercive measures put in place by the government – such as the Law on political parties – to avoid any political opposition and limit the influence of social movements and opposition forces[xc].

The aim of this paper was to use the concept of collective identity to explain the supporters' motives for mobilisation. Through the analysis of their powerful sense of belonging and strong ties to the group and the nation, it was possible to identify several aspects that can be useful in deepening our knowledge of the issues and factors interfering in the mobilisation processes and involvement of football supporters, including their strong identification to the group, their intrinsic opposition to police forces as well as their use of tools such as slogans, chants and graffiti.

Their participation started off passive and was specifically focused on security and defence against police brutality. There was no desire to get involved politically and their message was clear going into the Revolution: "Ultras Ahlaway declares that it is a sports group only, which has no political inclinations or affiliations of whatever kind […]."[xci]Other Ultras groups such as Ultras White Knights also circulated similar messages. Their involvement later developed into a more politicised one after the clashes of Port Said, precisely because it was interpreted as a personal attack on the and it threatened the identity of Ultras groups, as a social category, in and out of the country.

When it comes to the Ultras' participation in the large-scale popular uprisings, one must distinguish between their participation as a group and their participation as individuals. The group's involvement in the mobilisation is intrinsically linked and highly dependent on the individual Ultras' choice to take part in the action. This dichotomy further explains the discrepancy in the Ultras' discourse as opposed to their actions. Though the Ultras, as a social group, refuse to associate themselves with any form of ideology and refrain from participating in the political debate, the Ultras, as individuals have been socialised to political issues within and outside of the stadium, which explains their will to mobilise and participate in the revolutionary movement, even supposing its limited scope in the early days.

The study of the Ultras' participation sheds light on the way traditionally non-political groups such as sports groups or musicians and artists come to participate in a revolutionary process and contribute to the movement, even though their primary purpose is not to influence the public debate. More than

just being about social movements and their mobilisation, the popular uprisings in Egypt have brought focus to a wide range of actors. The Ultras' participation further suggests the permeability of boundaries between the different portions of society. As Sidney Tarrow pointed out, contentious politics "emerges in response to changes in the political opportunities and threats when participants perceive and respond to a variety of incentives: material and ideological, partisan and group-based, long-standing and episodic."[xcii] Recognising the power of local actors such as the Ultras and examining the day-to-day activities of these "non-political movements" sheds light on the new ways by which ordinary individuals diminish the state's overwhelming power, resulting in profound changes within their respective communities, as well as within society as a whole.

Future research in the field of sport and the Ultras should include studies on the issue of gender. Though the purpose of the present essay was not to address these issues, they are a key element when it comes to the study of contentious politics in Egypt and in the Middle East as a whole. One cannot deny the fundamental part the women played in the uprisings. With regard to the Ultras, the question of gender is interesting in three regards. First, because football and football fandom are mostly male dominated. Second, because Egypt is a very conservative society, that the interactions between both sexes are still taboo and that the set of social expectations imposed on women are very different to those imposed to men. Finally, the question of women Ultras groups is very rarely addressed in the literature, and their presence is not always acknowledged. These women groups do not only dismiss the sexist bias that dominates the world of football, but also question the whole conservative nature of the society in which they are evolving.

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[i] A. Bayat (2010), Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, p. 22-26

[ii] Ibid., p. 26-28

[iii] "Oltras" refers to the Egyptian pronunciation of the word "Ultra".

[iv] L. Mosley (2013), Interview Research in Political Science, New York, Cornell University Press, p. 2

[v] Ibid., p.3

[vi] T. R. Gurr (2011), Why Men Rebel? Fortieth Anniversary Edition, Boulder CO, Paradigm Publishers, p. 68

[vii] A. Paszynkova (2013), "Cross-Regional Comparisons: The Arab Uprisings as Political Transitions and Social Movements" Symposium teaching about the Middle East since the Arab uprisings, PS, pp. 217-221

[viii] J. Goldstone; C. Tilly (2001),), "Threat and (Opportunity): Popular Action and State Response in the Dynamics of Contentious Action" *in* AMINZADE & al., *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics*, New York, Cambridge University Press, p. 182

[ix] A. Albrecht (ed.) (2010), *Contentious Politics in the Middle East: Political Opposition under Authoritarianism*, Gainesville, University Press of Florida, p. 10-15

[x] See also H. Khashan (2011), "Contentious Politics in the Middle East: Political Opposition under Authoritarianism", *Middle East Quarterly*, p. 92

[xi] B. Geddes (1999),), "Authoritarian Breakdown: Empirical Test of a Game Theoretic Argument", *American Political Science Association*, Atlanta, 47p

[xii] B. Geddes (2004), *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, University of Michigan Press, p.5

[xiii] *Ibid.*, p.10

[xiv] G. André; M. Hilgers (2009), « Entre contestation et légitimation : le religieux en contexte semi-autoritaires en Afrique », *Civilisations*, 52(2), pp. 2-13

[xv] The use of the past tense here is deliberate as it accounts for the events preceding the Revolution. It is too soon still to classify the actual regime.

[xvi] T. Bishry (2006), *Masr bayna al tafakkuk wal 'essyan al madani* (Egypt between Dissemblence and Civil Disobedience), Cairo, Dar El Shorouk, p. 27-29

[xvii] M. Kassem (2004), *Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule*, Boulder CO, Lynne Rienner Publishers, p. 64

[xviii] E. Bellin (2004), "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspectives", *Comparative Politics*, 36 (2), p.142

[xix] A. Bayat (2009), Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, p. 31-34

[xx] M. Shorbagy (2009), "Egyptian Views on the Politics of Egypt Today", *International Political Science Review*, 30 (5), p. 521

[xxi] L. Khatib (2012),), "Political participation and democratic transition in the Arab world", *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law*, 34 (2), p. 322

[xxii] J. Brownlee (2007), *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*, London, Cambridge University Press, p. 39

[xxiii] M. Beissinger (2002), *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 14

[xxiv] M. Bratton; N. Van de Walle (1997), *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 59

[xxv] D. McAdam; C. Tilly; S. Tarrow (2001), Dynamics of Contention, London, Cambridge University Press, pp. 267-269

[xxvi] I. Karawan (2011), "Politics and the Army in Egypt", *Survival*, 53 (2), p. 45

[xxvii] S. Ismail (2012), "The Egyptian Revolution against the police" *Social Research*, 79 (2), p. 438

[xxviii] S. Ismail (2006), *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, State and Islamism*, London, I. B. Tauris, p. 102

[xxix] S. Ismail (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 442

[xxx] Although this has never been an official practice, the use of these "agents" is knowledge to the great majority of the population

[xxxi] Part of an informal conversation with a person in a café, based on a clarification of the research project. Cairo, end of May 2013

[xxxii] S. Ismail (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 441

[xxxiii] S. Ismail (2006), *op. cit.*, p. 56-58

[xxxiv] Answer given by a respondent, interviewed on 29th May 2013. The initial question concerned the events of Port Said and the *baltagiyya*

[xxxv] Although this essay does not aim at addressing the army's role in the uprisings, it is important to keep in mind that its action in avoiding a descent into chaos was highly welcomed by the Egyptian population. The military establishment has been an important deciding force between opposing viewpoints, however its role, as

Karawan puts it, "is just one factor in the broader transformation of power structures in Egypt." (Karawan, 2011:47)

[xxxvi] N. Idle; A. Nunns (2011), *Tweets from Tahrir: Egypt's Revolution as it Unfolded in the words of the people who mad it*, OR Books, New York, p.68

[xxxvii] F. Vairel (2011), "Protesting in Authoritarian Situations: Egypt and Morocco in Comparative Perspective", BEININ, J.; VAIREL, F. (2011), *Social Movements, Mobilization and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*, Stanford CA, Stanford University Press

[xxxviii] J. Earl (2009), "Introduction: Repression and the Social Control of Protest", *Mobilizations*, 11, p. 130

[xxxix] *Ibid.*, p. 129

[xl] A. Testa (2009), "The UltraS: An Emerging Social Movement?", *Review of European Studies*, 1 (2), p. 58

[xli] G. Beshir (2011), *Kitab al Oltras* (The Ultras Book), Cairo, Dar Diwan, p. 21

[xlii] J. Dorsey (2012), "Pitched Battles: The Role of Ultra Soccer Fans in the Arab Spring", Mobilization, 17 (4), p. 413

[xliii] For further information on hooliganism, consult Hourcade, 2004; Bodin et al, 2005.

[xliv] S. Ismail (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 442

[xlv] B. Klandermans (2002), "Identity Processes in Collective Action Participation: farmers' Identity and Famers' Protest in the Netherlands and Spain", *Political Psychology*, 23 (2), p. 242

[xlvi] This reference can be found in papers such as *Egypt Independent*, *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *Al-Jazeera*

[xlvii] Quote extracted from an article published in *Egypt Independent* "Port Said Violence was work of infiltrators, not ultras, says locals" by Abdel-Rahman Hussein, 02/02/2012

[xlviii] Extracted from "Port Said fans blame security, infiltrators for match violence" by Abdel-Rahman Hussein, *Egypt Independent*, 03/02/2012

[xlix] Here, the respondent used the air quote when speaking of the people he saw

[l] Zamalek Ultra, interviewed on 2 June 2013

[li] G. Beshir (2011), *op. cit.*, p. 70

[lii] *Ibid.*, p. 71

[liii] Message posted on the Al Ahly Fans Facebook page on 23 January 2011. Page last consulted on 2 December 2013

[liv] R. Woltering (2013), "Unusual Suspects: 'Ultras' as Political Actors in the Egyptian Revolution", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 35 (3), p. 295

[lv] Extract from an interview with an Ahly Ultra, 1 June 2013.

[lvi] G. Beshir, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9

[lvii] T. Dunmore (2007), "First Person Ultra: Ultras Ahlawy, Egypt", Pitch Invasion, http://pitchinvasion.net/blog/2007/11/27/first-person-ultra-ultras- ahlawy-egypt/

[lviii] I. Mazhar (2009), "Ultras Invasion", Al-Ahram Weekly, http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2009/934/fr3.htm

[lix] R. Woltering, *op. cit.*, p. 297

[lx] M. Castells (2010), *The Power of Identity*, West Sussex, Blackwell Publications, p. 6

[lxi] Based on Castell's definition, 2010 : 6

[lxii] B. Klandermans, *op. cit.*, p. 319

[lxiii] Bosco (2001), "Place, space, networks, and the sustainability of collective action: the *Madres de Plaza d Mayo*", *Global Networks*, 1(4), p. 312

[lxiv] See also D. K. Leach & S. Haunss (2009) *Scenes and social movements*, Bibliothek der Universität Konstanz ; K. Creasap (2012), "Social Movement Scenes: Place-Based Politics and Everyday Resistance", *Sociology Compass*, 6(2), p. 185

[lxv] S. Ismail (2012), *op. cit.*, 439

[lxvi] A. Ramadan (2013), "From Tahrir to the World: the Camp as a Political Public Space", European Urban and Regional Studies, 20 (1), p. 151

[lxvii] Bosco (2001), *op. cit.*, p. 315

[lxviii] A. A. Shawky (2012), "The Ultras Book: Ethnography of an Unusual Crowd", Egypt Independent, www.egyptindependent.com/news/'-ultras-book'-ethnography-unusual-crowd, p. 5

[lxix] This "Ultra Code" is a set of unwritten rules established, recognised and followed by the supporters of Ahly. A similar code exists for the Zamalek Ultras and other groups around Egypt. The respondents (one, Zamalek, interviewed on 1 June 2013; and one Ahly interviewed on 29 May 2013) both listed the same kinds of rules and emphasised the importance of abiding by those rules in order to be a part of the group.

[lxx] J. Leca (1973), "Le repérage du politique", *Projet*, 71, p. 17

[lxxi] Ultra interviewed by James Dorsey in 2010. Quote can be found in DORSEY, J., " Pitched Battles: The Role of Ultra Soccer Fans in the Arab Spring", *Mobilization*, Vol. 17, n°4, December 2012, p. 412

[lxxii] Zamalek Ultra interviewed on 1 June 2013

[lxxiii] Based on definition found in KHATIB, L. (2013 :318)

[lxxiv] J. Dorsey (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 3

[lxxv] For more information, consult newspapers such as Al Ahram, The Guardian, Al Masry Alyoum (and the English version, Egypt Independent). For different blogs, see "The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer" (James Dorsey) http://mideastsoccer.blogspot.be; "Tahrir and Beyond" (Gigi Ibrahim) http://theangryegyptian.wordpress.com.

[lxxvi] Featured in a broader list of tweets with reference to the Ultras. Last consulted on 9 December 2013.

[lxxvii] Tweet by Nawara Negm, journalist and writer, November 2011

[lxxviii] A. Melucci (1989), Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, p. 68

[lxxix] A. El Sherif (2012), "The Ultras' Politics Confront Tyranny", Jadaliyya http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4243/the-ultras- politics-of-fun-confront-tyranny

[lxxx] J. Defrance (2000), « La politique de l'apolitisme. Sur l'autonomisation du champ sportif », *Politix*, Vol. 13, n°50, p. 18

[lxxxi] Ahly fan interviewed on 30 May 2013. This was his answer when asked what the difference was between who he is in the stadium and who he is when he comes home.

[lxxxii] J. Jasper (1998), "The Emotion of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotion in and around Social Movements", *Sociological Forum*, 13 (3), p. 403

[lxxxiii] J. Montague (2012), "Egypt's politicised football hooligans", Al Jazeera, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/02/20122215833232195.html

[lxxxiv] Ahly Ultra, interviewed on 2 June 2013

[lxxxv] J. Montague, *op. cit.*, p. 2

lxxxvi For further information, see Dorsey, 2012; Montague, 2012

[lxxxvii] Based on an article published in *Al-Ahram*, "Egypt's Ultras march to Tahrir demanding justice for Port Said victims", last consulted on 10 October 2013

[lxxxviii] L. Khatib (2012),), "Political participation and democratic transition in the Arab world", *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law*, 34 (2), p. 315

[lxxxix] C. Bromberger & al. (2002), "Les nouveaux lieux du politique", *La pensée du midi*, 7, p. 83-84

[xc] L. Khatib (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 322

[xci] Quoted in WOLTERING, R. (2013), *op. cit.*, p. 295

[xcii] S. Tarrow (2011), *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, London, Cambridge University Press, p. 16