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## New Actors in Egyptian Post-Revolutionary Politics: Soccer Hooligans **Kelly Poupore**

"You don't want to involve football hooligans into politics, or piss them off."<sup>1</sup>

- Adel Bassiouni, a civilian onlooker

"The two biggest political parties in Egypt are Ahly and Zamalek."<sup>2</sup>

- Assad, leader of Al Ahly's football ultras

"Soccer is a massive thing in Egypt. It is like religion. In most countries you are born Jewish, Muslim or Christian. In Egypt you were born Ahly and Zamalek. People would not ask your religion, they would ask whether you were Ahly or Zamalek."<sup>3</sup>

- Adel Abdel Ghafar

"Soccer is bigger than politics. It's about escapism. The average [soccer] fan is a guy who lives in a one bedroom flat with his wife, mother-in-law and five kids. He is paid minimum wage and his life sucks. The only good thing about his life is that for two hours on a Friday he goes to the stadium and watches [soccer]."<sup>4</sup>

- Assad, leader of Al Ahly's football ultras

### **Introduction**

Since the overthrow of former Egyptian President Mubarak in February 2011, Egypt has been thrown into instability and uncertainty.<sup>5</sup> Despite taking power amidst a democratic revolution, current Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi has been widely criticized as implementing authoritarian policies that are similar to those of President

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<sup>1</sup> Mohamed Fadel Fahmy, *Day of the Hooligans*, FOREIGN POLICY, Sept. 15, 2011, available at [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/09/15/day\\_of\\_the\\_hooligans](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/09/15/day_of_the_hooligans) (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> James Montague, *Egypt's politicized football hooligans*, ALJAZEERA ENGLISH, Feb. 2, 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/02/20122215833232195.html> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> James M. Dorsey, *Pitched Battles: The Role of Ultra Soccer Fans In The Arab Spring – Analysis*, Dec. 24, 2012, 17 MOBILIZATION: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL 411, 414 available at <http://www.eurasiareview.com/24122012-pitched-battles-the-role-of-ultra-soccer-fans-in-the-arab-spring-analysis-2/> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> James M. Dorsey, *Soccer Fans Emerge as Driver in Egyptian Protests*, Jan. 30, 2011, MIDEAST SOCCER BLOG, available at <http://mideastsoccer.blogspot.com/2011/01/soccer-fans-emerge-as-driver-in.html> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Olga Khazan, *Why Egyptians are angry at Morsi, in charts*, THE WASHINGTON POST, Dec. 8, 2012, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2012/12/08/why-egyptians-are-angry-at-morsi-in-charts/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

Hosni Mubarak.<sup>6</sup> Since 2011, a new kind of revolutionary violence has taken hold; termed “soccer hooligans” or “ultras”, young, male Egyptian soccer fans have taken to the streets -- and the soccer pitch -- to voice their discontent with the current regime.<sup>7</sup> Many recent commentators have argued that what is going on behind the Egyptian ultras is about politics, not football.<sup>8</sup> This appears to be true on some levels, but what is also clear is that Egypt’s “soccer hooligans” are different from their European counterparts.<sup>9</sup> Unlike Europe’s fierce regional hooligan rivalries that are widely apolitical, in Egypt, football and politics are so intertwined that there is almost no way to untangle them.<sup>10</sup>

In the last few months, Egyptians have become increasingly angry over rising unemployment, the effect of the global economic crisis, and widening political divisions.<sup>11</sup> Having successfully ousted a repressive regime in large part through en masse demonstrations, and encouraged from their success, the people are more prone to descend into the street to voice their discontent.<sup>12</sup> Those who do protest are becoming more and more militant, led in part by the ultras.<sup>13</sup> Violence between fans and against police has increased in post-revolutionary Egypt, culminating in a huge brawl in which

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<sup>6</sup> Id.

<sup>7</sup> Arslan Lehmici, *Quand la guerre du foot annonçait la révolution* [When Football Wars Announce Revolution], Feb. 2, 2012, SLATE AFRIQUE, available at <http://www.slateafrique.com/551/foot-egypte-algerie-violences-revolte-moubarak> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Laurent Dubois, *The Ultras, the Military and the Revolution*, SOCCER POLITICS/THE POLITICS OF FOOTBALL, available at <http://sites.duke.edu/wcwp/2012/02/02/the-ultras-the-military-and-the-revolution/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Id.

<sup>10</sup> Id.

<sup>11</sup> Laurent Dubois, *Soccer protests highlight Egyptian president Morsi’s fragile ties to the military*, SOCCER POLITICS/THE POLITICS OF FOOTBALL, available at <http://mideastsoccer.blogspot.com/2013/03/soccer-protests-highlight-egyptian.html> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> Ahmed Aboul Enein, *Labour strikes and protests double under Morsi*, Apr. 28, 2013, DAILY NEWS EGYPT, available at <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2013/04/28/labour-strikes-and-protests-double-under-morsi/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> *Protesters clash with police near Egypt’s presidential palace*, Apr. 26, 2013, AL ARABIYA ENGLISH, available at <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/04/26/Egypt-protesters-clash-with-police-near-Cairo-s-presidential-palace-.html> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

73 people were killed after a soccer match in the Suez city of Port Said.<sup>14</sup> These events coupled with the protests against death sentences handed down for 21 ultras involved in the Port Said massacre has left some analysts concerned that football fans might provoke a new revolution in Egypt.<sup>15</sup> Considering the deteriorating state of the Egyptian economy and the weak central government, if the unrest continues, the general population may unite behind the ultras against the Morsi regime.<sup>16</sup>

This paper argues that the ultras in Egypt are not just soccer hooligans, but a new hybrid political movement. Though the end results of this movement are not complete, I will first discuss the soccer hooligan movement in Europe, and how it differs from the Egyptian movement. I will then examine the Egyptian revolution in the context of the Arab Spring in order to put the Egyptian hooligans into their proper context. Next, I will explain where and how the ultras in Egypt fit into the revolution. Finally, I examine what this ultra movement could mean for future legal affairs in Egypt and, perhaps, the rest of the Middle East region.

### **Soccer Hooliganism in Europe**

“Hooliganism” is the term used broadly to describe disorderly, aggressive and often violent behavior perpetrated by spectators at sporting events.<sup>17</sup> Soccer hooliganism, in particular, is thought to have originated in the present day United Kingdom.<sup>18</sup> Soccer

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<sup>14</sup> *Deadly riots in Egypt after football hooligan death sentences*, EURONEWS, Jan. 27, 2013, available at <http://www.euronews.com/2013/01/27/deadly-riots-in-egypt-after-football-hooligan-death/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> Robert Walker, *Egypt: Too Big, Too Late to Save?*, Apr. 29, 2013, HUFFINGTON POST, available at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-walker/egypt-too-big-too-late-to\\_b\\_3178979.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-walker/egypt-too-big-too-late-to_b_3178979.html) (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> *Football Hooliganism*, POLITICS.CO.UK, available at <http://www.politics.co.uk/reference/football-hooliganism> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013) [hereinafter *Hooliganism*].

<sup>18</sup> *Hooliganism*, *supra* note 17. Though the official origins of soccer hooliganism are disputed, one of the earliest instances occurred in 1314, when King Edward II banned football in England. At that stage the

teams began usually as a social organization for members of an ethnic, economic, or religious group that served as the community focal point for that group.<sup>19</sup> As regional rivalries developed in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century in Britain, concerns were frequently voiced about groups of “roughs” causing trouble at matches by attacking not only opposing supporters, but also players and referees.<sup>20</sup> As gang-presence and a police crackdown increased in the UK during the 1960s and 1970s, hooligans began meeting outside of the pitch in pre-organized brawls.<sup>21</sup> Elsewhere in Europe, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Hungary and France were experiencing similar acts of hooliganism which were largely attributed at least in part to a visiting British team’s presence at an away match.<sup>22</sup> Overtime, many “ultra” fans on the European continent adopted the brawling habits of many English teams.<sup>23</sup>

While many European countries have experienced domestic hooligan problems – intense conflict between supporters of rival clubs – these have not typically translated into hooligan support for their respective national teams.<sup>24</sup> Even during the World Cup, there are generally not outbreaks of violence to support the national team. This could be due to football’s origins during pre-nationalistic Europe or due to a general lack of nationalistic tendencies post World War II.

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game was described as a nasty free-for-all involving rival villages kicking a pig's bladder across the local heath. Edward II believed the disorder surrounding matches might lead to social unrest or possibly even treason if players were left to their own devices. *See also* Sean Ingle and Mark Hodgkinson, *When did football hooliganism start?* THE GUARDIAN, Dec. 13, 2001, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/2001/dec/13/theknowledge.sport> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> *Football Hooligans*, CRACKED, available at <http://www.cracked.com/funny-2156-football-hooligans/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Hooliganism, *supra* note 17.

<sup>21</sup> Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research, *Football and Football Hooliganism: Fact Sheet 1*, Jan. 2001, available at <http://www.furd.org/resources/fs1.pdf> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013) [hereinafter “Sir Norman”].

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* at 89.

<sup>23</sup> *Id.* at 90.

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

Specifically in Europe, many commentators also mention soccer teams working class roots as a factor contributing to its links with aggressive and disorderly behavior.<sup>25</sup> In Europe studies suggests that the average hooligan is generally in their late teens or their early 20s and are mainly in manual or lower clerical occupations, and coming from a working class background.<sup>26</sup> This is not to say that only working class people have been involved in soccer brawls, but by and large, such circumstances tend to be the norm.<sup>27</sup>

Though alcohol seems to play heavily into hooligan offenses in English matches, it doesn't appear that alcohol *causes* outbreaks of hooligan violence. Many Danish, Scottish and Irish football supporters get very drunk at matches, yet the supporters of teams in these nations are now among the least violent of all major football followings.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, ultra fans in Italy drink very little, but some of the most violent ultra outbreaks have occurred there.<sup>29</sup> Overall, the links between heavy drinking and violence seem to be both culturally and situationally specific and at least some of those ultras seem to be aggressive in certain circumstance with or without being inebriated.

In short, there is no single, specific, universally adopted definition of football hooliganism, though the similarities are clear: rowdy young men who often see fighting opposing fans as more of the attraction than the actual soccer game. Across Europe it seems that without adequate security or police presence during a match with a large

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<sup>25</sup> Id.

<sup>26</sup> Id.

<sup>27</sup> *Millwall riot stockbroker jailed*, Sept. 13, 2002, BBC, available at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/2256132.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/2256132.stm) (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> Steve Fosdick, *Football Hooliganism*, Social Issues Research Centre, 2005, available at <http://www.sirc.org/publik/fvexec.html> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>29</sup> Giovanni Carnibella et al., *Football violence in Europe*, July 1996, Social Issues Research Centre, at 10, available at [http://www.sirc.org/publik/football\\_violence.pdf](http://www.sirc.org/publik/football_violence.pdf) (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

turnout, the stadium is often a tinderbox waiting to ignite into an explosion.<sup>30</sup> However, rarely in Europe do fans specifically target police; rather, they usually fight each other.<sup>31</sup> Most clashes with police usually occur when police forces attempt to prevent fights before or after a match.<sup>32</sup>

### **Egyptian “Ultras”**

Though alcohol is not a clear indicator of violence in Europe, when considering the ultra movement in Egypt, one should subtract alcohol almost entirely from the equation.<sup>33</sup> Egyptians are mostly Muslim, and since President Morsi has come to power, restrictions on the relatively scarce alcohol supply have been enacted.<sup>34</sup> Though tourists in Egypt can access alcohol, Egyptian locals are discouraged from drinking for social reasons, and due to the new alcohol taxes consuming alcohol in excess is becoming prohibitively expensive.<sup>35</sup>

In Egypt, intense soccer fans are known as “ultras”, and though often termed “hooligans” by the media, they are more appropriately termed as “ultras”.<sup>36</sup> The ultras as a general movement aim to support football teams.<sup>37</sup> Each chapter of ultras supports its favored team by attending all games both home and away, dedicating their time, effort

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<sup>30</sup> Nick Jardine, *Bruisings, Burnings and Beatings: Europe’s Worst Soccer Hooligans*, Sept. 28, 2011, BUSINESS INSIDER, available at <http://www.businessinsider.com/europes-worst-soccer-hooligans-2011-9?op=1> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>31</sup> Id.

<sup>32</sup> Id.

<sup>33</sup> Oliver Smith, *Egypt’s alcohol ban raises tourism doubts*, Feb. 15, 2013, THE TELEGRAPH, available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/travelnews/9872242/Egypt-alcohol-ban-raises-tourism-doubts.html> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>34</sup> Id.

<sup>35</sup> Patrick Kingsley, *Egypt’s Islamist rulers get tough on alcohol*, Mar. 24, 2013, THE GUARDIAN, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/mar/24/egyptian-alcohol-sales-cairo> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> Montague, *supra* note 2.

<sup>37</sup> Heba Elkayal, *The Ultras White Knights: Football hooliganism or social movement?*, Sept. 16, 2011, DAILY NEWS EGYPT, available at <http://www.masress.com/en/dailynews/132718> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

and personal money to funding their support for the team.<sup>38</sup> “They don’t simply stop at football,” says blogger and political pundit Mahmoud Salem, “they actually have a philosophy and stand for a number of values and are not simply football hooligans. Theirs is a way of life, a subculture with its own rules, music and art. That makes them very unique”.<sup>39</sup> Because of deep loyalty to fellow members, “Ultras” groups have traditionally attracted young people who found in them a form of safe refuge.<sup>40</sup> No similar rapport exists between them and family members or with official institutions.<sup>41</sup> Sociologist Soumia Noumane Guessous says: “we are dealing here with young people with no sense of direction. They tend to identify with groups with high sense of solidarity, such as those of religious extremists and fanatical sports fans. They may even be co-opted by gangs.”<sup>42</sup>

The Egyptian ultras were instrumental in the overthrow of former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak (which I discuss in more depth *infra*).<sup>43</sup> The ultras had been known to be prone to clashes with police forces in Egypt for decades before the Revolution.<sup>44</sup> Former President Mubarak allowed soccer hooligans to vent their anger and they became hardened and experienced in fighting the police.<sup>45</sup> However, until recently

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<sup>38</sup> Id.

<sup>39</sup> Id.

<sup>40</sup> Oussama Romdhani, *Football violence in North Africa is not all about the game*, Apr. 28, 2013, AL ARABIYA, available at <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/africa/2013/04/28/Football-violence-in-North-Africa-is-not-all-about-the-game.html> (last visited May 1, 2013).

<sup>41</sup> Id.

<sup>42</sup> Id.

<sup>43</sup> Malika Bilal, *Egypt’s ‘Ultras’ pitch in a Tahrir protest*, ALJAZEERA, Nov. 29, 2011, available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/11/201111284912960586.html> (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>44</sup> Id.

<sup>45</sup> Id.

the ultras have been notoriously media shy, even “anti-media” in order to keep their identities secret, presumably to avoid unwanted police attention.<sup>46</sup>

In a post-Revolution Egypt, the ultras have received increased media attention, been more visible in the streets and in the political scene, and have organized their own political party.<sup>47</sup> The Egyptian ultras have thus far refrained from adopting the right-wing ideology of some of their counterparts overseas, or the nihilistic violence common to European soccer hooligans.<sup>48</sup> “We are normal people. We love our country, our club and our group. We are fighting for freedom. That was the common thing between the revolutionaries and the ultras. We were fighting for freedom in the stadiums. The Egyptian people were fighting for freedom. We invested our ideas and feelings in revolution,” said Ahmed Fondu, co-founder of one of the Egyptian ultra groups.<sup>49</sup> Though their political goals remain unclear, what is clear is that Egyptian ultras are battle-hardened and ready to fight for their agenda, whatever that may be.

### **Algeria-Egypt 2009**

One of the most notable examples of former President Mubarak’s leniency towards soccer hooliganism occurred during the World Cup Playoffs.<sup>50</sup> In November 2009, Egyptian civilians attacked a bus full of Algerian soccer players on their way to play a match against the Egyptian national team.<sup>51</sup> Egyptian soccer fans threw stones at

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<sup>46</sup> Id.

<sup>47</sup> Dina Demrdash, *Egypt’s Ultra football fans found new political party*, Jan. 5, 2012, BBC ARABIC, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16435132> (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>48</sup> Dorsey, *supra* note 3.

<sup>49</sup> Id.

<sup>50</sup> Abigail Hauslohner, *The Political Fallout of Egypt’s Soccer War*, Nov. 22, 2009, TIME WORLD, available at <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1942089,00.html> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>51</sup> *Egypt fans stone Algeria players*, Nov. 13, 2009, CNN, available at <http://www.cnn.com/2009/SPORT/football/11/13/football.algeria.egypt.violence/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

the team bus as it arrived in Cairo for the match, injuring three of the Algerian players.<sup>52</sup> So many huge rocks were apparently hurled at the team bus on its way from the airport that several windows were smashed and three Algerian players arrived at their hotel drenched in blood.<sup>53</sup> Foreign journalists and bystanders commented that “you'd have thought Egypt had won a war”, as thousands of Cairenes took to the streets of the capital bearing the national flag amid a pulsing, chaotic celebration of pounding drums, blaring car horns and exploding fireworks on sidewalks.<sup>54</sup> Buses were commandeered, and mobs ran screaming through the streets.<sup>55</sup> The game ended and Egypt defeated Algeria 2-0.<sup>56</sup>

After Egypt lost the second playoff match against Algeria in Khartoum, the government withdrew its ambassador from Algiers and accused Algerians of menacing Egyptian fans after the game.<sup>57</sup> “[Mubarak] gave the game a sort of political character,” said Mustapha al-Sayyid, a political scientist at Cairo University.<sup>58</sup> “Official newspapers depicted the encounter between the two teams as something very decisive, very important”.<sup>59</sup> Mubarak’s eldest son, Alaa, a wealthy businessman, sounded as if he were calling his nation to war; “we were being humiliated and we can’t be silent about what happened there,” he said in a telephone call to Egypt’s most popular television talk

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<sup>52</sup> Robert Mackey, *Violence Flares Ahead of Algeria-Egypt Soccer Match*, Nov. 13, 2009, available at <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/13/egypt-and-algeria-brace-for-match-of-hate-sequel/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>53</sup> Christian Lowe, *Algeria footballers hurt ahead of Egypt game*, REUTERS, Nov. 12, 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/11/12/soccer-world-algeria-idUSLC7252320091112> (last visited Apr. 29, 2013).

<sup>54</sup> Abigail Hauslohner, *Cairo Braces for a Soccer Bombshell*, Nov. 18, 2009, TIME WORLD, available at <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1939954,00.html> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>55</sup> Id.

<sup>56</sup> Id.

<sup>57</sup> Martin Peretz, *A Soccer Riot in Egypt and the Ongoing Human Catastrophe in Syria*, NEW REPUBLIC, Feb. 5, 2012, available at <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/politics/100414/soccer-riot-in-egypt-and-the-ongoing-human-catastrophe-in-syria#> (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>58</sup> Hauslohner, *supra* note 50.

<sup>59</sup> Id.

show.<sup>60</sup> “We have to take a stand. This is enough. That’s it, this is enough. Egypt should be respected. We are Egyptian and we hold our head high, and whoever insults us should be smacked on his head.”<sup>61</sup>

In the aftermath, Egyptian and foreign observers marveled at a level of nationalistic fervor and mass mobilization rarely seen before, and at a time when Mubarak was facing a rising tide of domestic dissent.<sup>62</sup> “Football is the opium of the people,” said Hossam el-Hamalawy, an Egyptian journalist.<sup>63</sup> “Both Egypt and Algeria have been going through severe economic turmoil recently, in addition to political crises. What better way to divert the people’s attention than a football war?”<sup>64</sup> A few days later the government sent out a signal that it was time to stop, that perhaps things had gone too far.<sup>65</sup> The Foreign Ministry said the government would not “tolerate violations against Algerian interests” in Egypt, and the unrest slowly stopped.<sup>66</sup>

### **Egyptian Revolution**

Under the rule of former President Hosni Mubarak, opposition was ruthlessly crushed.<sup>67</sup> Before the Revolution, Mubarak was as strong as he had ever been and the idea that an Arab Spring could sweep him from power was impossible to imagine.<sup>68</sup> But in two spheres, two very different groups were given space to breathe before the Revolution: the Muslim Brotherhood in the mosque and the Ultras in the football

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<sup>60</sup> Michael Slackman, *This Time, Egyptain Riot Over Soccer, Not Bread*, NEW YORK TIMES, Nov. 20, 2009, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/21/world/africa/21egypt.html> (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>61</sup> *Id.*

<sup>62</sup> Hauslohner, *supra* note 58.

<sup>63</sup> *Id.*

<sup>64</sup> *Id.*

<sup>65</sup> Slackman, *supra* note 60.

<sup>66</sup> *Id.*

<sup>67</sup> *Id.*

<sup>68</sup> Montague, *supra* note 2.

stadium.<sup>69</sup> The soccer pitches, as well as mosques, are two centers in which dissent and opposition to the regime thrived, hence the symbolic importance of football in Egypt.<sup>70</sup>

Every weekend the ultras of Egyptian football would ignite rivalries between local clubs but more importantly, they would fight the heavy-handed police that became symbolic of Mubarak's authoritarian rule.<sup>71</sup> As one Egyptian football journalist explained, “[t]he battle we fought was against the tear gas and rubber bullets that they launched at us prior to the revolution when we were prevented from cheering and supporting our team... This was a battle we had to fight during the January revolution to end the war between the police and us. So it wasn't about football, it was about fighting for freedom [of expression].”<sup>72</sup> Signs began to appear proclaiming: ACAB or “All Cops Are Bastards”.<sup>73</sup> Leaders of the ultras were arbitrarily arrested and detained because the chants of the crowds were becoming increasingly anti-government as the violence increased in the days leading up to the Revolution.<sup>74</sup>

The Arab Spring first ignited in Tunisia after a man named Mohammed Bouazizi self-immolated in front of the municipal offices in the town of Sidi Bouzid.<sup>75</sup> His act of self-immolation was done out of personal frustration rather than for political reasons. However, it ignited a revolution, which spread across the region like wildfire.<sup>76</sup> Within

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<sup>69</sup> Id.

<sup>70</sup> Jais Mehaji, *Egypt: Revolutionary Football*, Feb. 8, 2012, GRAPHITE PUBLICATIONS, available at <http://graphitepublications.com/egypt-revolutionary-football/> (last visited May 4, 2013).

<sup>71</sup> Id.

<sup>72</sup> Elkayal, *supra* note 37.

<sup>73</sup> Bilal, *supra* note 43.

<sup>74</sup> Montague, *supra* note 69.

<sup>75</sup> Peter Beaumont, *Mohammed Bouazizi: the dutiful son whose death changed Tunisia's fate*, Jan. 20, 2011, THE GUARDIAN, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/20/tunisian-fruit-seller-mohammed-bouazizi> (last visited May 2, 2013).

<sup>76</sup> Id.

months, Tunisia had ousted its authoritarian president Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali after 23 years of rule and protests in other Arab countries including Egypt had begun.<sup>77</sup>

The ultras were largely considered to be apolitical before the events of Tahrir Square, but were known for their rowdy behavior, obscene chants and apparently endless enthusiasm for clashes with the often-brutal Egyptian police.<sup>78</sup> “There is no competition in politics, so competition moved to the soccer pitch. We do what we have to do against the rules and regulations when we think they are wrong,” an El Ahly ultra said after his group overran a police barricade trying to prevent it from bringing flares, fireworks and banners into the stadium.<sup>79</sup> “You don’t change things in Egypt talking about politics. We’re not political, the government knows that and has to deal with us,” he added.<sup>80</sup> However, as the first waves of protesters entered Tahrir Square, the ultras joined the revolt against Mr. Mubarak, taunting and harassing the police as they tried to crack down on thousands of other marchers heading for Cairo’s Tahrir Square.<sup>81</sup>

The first major protest in Egypt was planned for Cairo’s Tahrir Square on January 25, 2011.<sup>82</sup> The day before the protest, the two leading ultra groups in Cairo issued statements on their Facebook pages stressing that they were non-political organizations, but that their members were free as individuals to participate in the protests.<sup>83</sup> “The group emphasizes that its members are free in their political choices,” said the statement by the

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<sup>77</sup> Id.

<sup>78</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, *Egyptian Soccer Riot Kills More Than 70*, NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 1, 2012, available at [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/02/world/middleeast/scores-killed-in-egyptian-soccer-mayhem.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/02/world/middleeast/scores-killed-in-egyptian-soccer-mayhem.html?_r=0) (last visited, Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>79</sup> Dorsey, *supra* note 4.

<sup>80</sup> Id.

<sup>81</sup> Demrdash, *supra* note 47.

<sup>82</sup> Dorsey, *supra* note 3.

<sup>83</sup> Id.

Ultras Ahlawy, supporters of the Ahly club.<sup>84</sup> Privately, both groups told their followers that the demonstration was what they had been working towards in four years of almost weekly clashes with security forces in the stadiums of Cairo.<sup>85</sup> The ultras, unlike most other groups in Tahrir Square, were braced for violent confrontations.<sup>86</sup> “We fought for our rights in the stadium for four years. That prepared us for this day. We told our people that this was our litmus test. Failure was not an option,” said one ultra leader.<sup>87</sup>

Protest organizers said that the ultras had played a key role in the Battle of the Camels, helping to beat back mobs of Mubarak supporters in a daylong battle of rocks and gasoline bombs.<sup>88</sup> With few groups in Egyptian society having any experience in resisting the police, the ultras found themselves on the front line and helped other protesters break down barriers of fear that had kept them from confronting the regime in the past.<sup>89</sup> “We were in the front line. When the police attacked we encouraged people. We told them not to run or be afraid. We started firing flares. People took courage and joined us, they know that we understand injustice and liked the fact that we fight the devil,” said Mohamed Hassan, a leader of the Ultras White Knights.<sup>90</sup>

During the 18-day occupation of Tahrir Square, the battle experience of the ultras was evident in the organization and social services that they helped to establish.<sup>91</sup> Protestors were assigned tasks and wore masking tape on which they were identified by their role, such as medic or media contact.<sup>92</sup> The ultras patrolled the perimeters of the

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<sup>84</sup> Id.

<sup>85</sup> Id.

<sup>86</sup> Id.

<sup>87</sup> Id.

<sup>88</sup> Kirkpatrick, *supra* note 78.

<sup>89</sup> Dorsey, *supra* note 3.

<sup>90</sup> Id.

<sup>91</sup> Id.

<sup>92</sup> Id.

square and controlled entry and manned the front lines in clashes with security forces and pro-government supporters.<sup>93</sup> Years of confrontation with security forces prepared them for the struggle for control of the square when the president's loyalists employed brute force in a bid to dislodge them.<sup>94</sup> The ultras' battle order included designated rock hurlers, specialists in turning over and torching vehicles for defensive purposes, and a quartermaster crew delivering projectiles like clockwork on cardboard platters.<sup>95</sup> Pro-democracy activists welcomed the ultras.<sup>96</sup> "In fact, the ultras, the football fans' associations, have played a more significant role than any political movement on the ground at this moment. Maybe we should let the ultras rule the country," said Alaa Abd El Fatah, an Egyptian blogger and activist.<sup>97</sup>

Mubarak eventually left power, but more than 800 protesters were killed during the Tahrir Square demonstrations.<sup>98</sup> Since President Morsi has stepped into power, not a single police officer or security official has been held accountable for those killed during the demonstrations, which has increased the unpopularity of the police and security forces among the ultras as well as among the general population.<sup>99</sup> Since the end of the Revolution, clashes with police and security forces have become more commonplace, more violent, and more deadly.<sup>100</sup> The pressure for reform of the police and security forces has been further fueled by the release of a human rights report that concluded, "the

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<sup>93</sup> Id.

<sup>94</sup> Id.

<sup>95</sup> Id.

<sup>96</sup> Id.

<sup>97</sup> Dorsey, *supra* note 4.

<sup>98</sup> James M. Dorsey, *Egyptian football becomes a test of political fortune*, 1 ICSS JOURNAL 33, 33 (2013) available at <http://icss-journal.newsdeskmedia.com/files/ICSS-Journal-1-1.pdf#page=33> (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>99</sup> Id.

<sup>100</sup> James M. Dorsey, *Police refusal to secure Egyptian matches spotlights rift with military*, Feb. 8, 2013, MIDEAST SOCCER BLOG, available at <http://mideastsoccer.blogspot.com/2013/02/police-refusal-to-secure-egyptian.html> (last visited May 1, 2013).

Egyptian police continue to systematically deploy violence and torture, and at times even kill. Although the January revolution was sparked in large part by police practices and vocally demanded an end to these practices, accountability for all offenders and the establishment of permanent instruments to prevent their recurrence, two years after the revolution the situation remains unchanged.”<sup>101</sup>

### **Israeli Embassy Riots**

After the overthrow of former President Mubarak, Egyptian national pride was at an all-time high, and was turned toward a familiar enemy: the Jewish state of Israel.<sup>102</sup> Despite 32 years of peace under the Camp David Accords, Egyptian national pride remains tied to the country’s previous wars with Israel, and their subsequent quick defeat in the military ventures.<sup>103</sup> A terrorist attack by Palestinian radicals on Israeli tourists at Eilat, Israel’s southernmost city on August 18, 2011, which killed 8 civilians, elicited an Israeli response that led to the deaths of about 15 Palestinians.<sup>104</sup> Five Egyptian border guards (i.e. troops) were caught in the crossfire, provoking intense anger in Cairo.<sup>105</sup>

Egyptians were rallied to the streets on Sept. 9 for protests that were dubbed as a step toward "correcting the path of the revolution."<sup>106</sup> But anger over a political transformation that has been slow in coming turned into an attack on the Israeli Embassy

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<sup>101</sup> Id.

<sup>102</sup> Eric Trager, *Cairo’s Embassy Riots: Anti-Israeli Sentiment in Egypt Has Nothing to do with Palestine*, NEW REPUBLIC, Sept. 13, 2011, available at <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/world/94826/egyptian-nationalism-anti-israel-gaza-arab-spring-sinai-embassy> (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>103</sup> Id.

<sup>104</sup> Ari Rusila, *Sinai Emerged as New Front in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, Aug. 27, 2011, ARI RUSILA’S BALKANBLOG, available at <http://arirusila.wordpress.com/2011/08/27/sinai-emerged-as-new-front-in-israeli-palestinian-conflict/> (last visited May 4, 2013).

<sup>105</sup> Juan Cole, *State of Alert in Egypt after Breach at Israeli Embassy*, Sept. 10, 2011, INFORMED COMMENT, available at <http://www.juancole.com/2011/09/state-of-alert-in-egypt-after-breach-at-israeli-embassy.html> (last visited May 4, 2013).

<sup>106</sup> Fahmy, *supra* note 1.

in Cairo that dramatically altered the course of Egypt's domestic uprising.<sup>107</sup> The angry crowd was a combination of ultras and pro-democracy protesters who have two common enemies: the police and Israel.<sup>108</sup>

The ultras burned the first two trucks they came across, and claimed their victory as they ran out of the trucks, waving two stolen machine guns, tear gas bombs, helmets, and protective gear.<sup>109</sup> The Giza police headquarters was the next target of the protesters.<sup>110</sup> The provocative, organized tone and lyrical structure of the chants were reported as resembling what one might hear in an Egyptian soccer stadium.<sup>111</sup> "You don't want to involve football hooligans into politics, or piss them off," Adel Bassiouni, a civilian onlooker was quoted as saying, as he shielded his head from the flying rocks.<sup>112</sup> The headquarters went up in flames and burned for approximately a half-hour before firefighters contained the fire.<sup>113</sup> Police forces fired tear gas, and warning gunshots echoed in the air nonstop in a 13-hour battle before the conflict was finally put to rest.<sup>114</sup> The demonstrators also tore down a recently constructed wall built to protect the embassy and invaded the building.<sup>115</sup> Some 450 persons were wounded, and the scene in front of the embassy looked like a war zone, with cars set on fire.<sup>116</sup>

After the violence, law-enforcement officials pulled an Egyptian affiliate of the Qatar-based satellite news channel Al Jazeera off the air on Sunday as Egypt's interim

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<sup>107</sup> Id.

<sup>108</sup> Id.

<sup>109</sup> Id.

<sup>110</sup> Id.

<sup>111</sup> Id.

<sup>112</sup> Id.

<sup>113</sup> Id.

<sup>114</sup> Id.

<sup>115</sup> Matt Bradley, *Egypt Curbs Media After Cairo Melee*, Sept. 12, 2011, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, available at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111904353504576564750678637340.html> (last visited May 4, 2013).

<sup>116</sup> Cole, *supra* note 105.

leadership struggled to deflect blame onto foreign media for a violent attack on the Israeli embassy.<sup>117</sup> "The fear of the outside continues to dominate the discourse and the actions now for the military council," said Hossam Bahgat, a pro-democracy activist and the director of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights.<sup>118</sup> "This is typical of security agencies under Mubarak: They always seek to keep independent media outlets and human-rights organizations on fragile grounds so that they can always decide when to stop tolerating these independent voices."<sup>119</sup>

### **Port Said Massacre**

In February 2012, at least 73 people were killed when fans of rival teams brawled at the Port Said stadium in Egypt.<sup>120</sup> After the underdog team El Masry came from behind to win in a 3-1 upset, its fans stormed the field, chasing Al Ahly's players back to their locker room and attacking its fans with knives, clubs and stones.<sup>121</sup> During this panic, spectators as well as staff died from head concussions, asphyxiation, and other injuries from stampeding and trampling.<sup>122</sup> The police around the stadium appeared unable or unwilling to control the violence, and video footage showed officers standing idle as the melee exploded.<sup>123</sup> Other eyewitnesses claim that security was largely absent when the Masry fans stormed the field, or alternatively that they allowed Masry fans to enter to visitor team's stands.<sup>124</sup> Some attribute the police inaction to Al Ahly's role working with

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<sup>117</sup> Id.

<sup>118</sup> Bradley, *supra* note 115.

<sup>119</sup> Id.

<sup>120</sup> Kirkpatrick, *supra* note 78.

<sup>121</sup> *Egypt football riot: Port Said officials sacked*, BBC, Feb. 2, 2012, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16848473> (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>122</sup> Mehaji, *supra* note 70.

<sup>123</sup> Kirkpatrick, *supra* note 120.

<sup>124</sup> Robert Mackey, *Egyptians See Political Overtones in Deadly Soccer Riot*, THE LEDE, Feb. 1, 2012, available at <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/02/01/dozens-killed-in-egyptian-soccer-riot/> (last visited Apr. 8, 2012).

ultras from Cairo's other leading club to fight back against the police in the revolution's first days.<sup>125</sup> Some Egyptian activists like Mostafa Hussein have speculated that the violence against the club's players and fans was allowed to play out in revenge for the team's past clashes with police.<sup>126</sup> The incident is widely seen as having been precipitated by the police and security forces, which are despised by many fans who regard them as the enforcers of the Mubarak regime's repression, as well as of the military rulers who succeeded Mubarak.<sup>127</sup>

The Port Said case goes to the core of the need for reform of state institutions still rooted in the era of toppled President Hosni Mubarak.<sup>128</sup> Most people in Egypt believe that the lethal fight between fans of the home team, Al Masry, and the Cairo club, Al Ahly, and between fans and the police, was planned rather than spontaneous.<sup>129</sup> "There was something planned our security knew about it. People were tweeting before the match. I saw a tweet with my own eyes 13 to 14 hours before the match in which a Masri fan was telling Ahly supporters: 'If you are coming to the match, write your will before you come,'" said Dīaa Salah, a member of the women's committee of the Egyptian Football Federation (EFA).<sup>130</sup> "The government is getting back at the ultras. They are saying: 'you protest against us, you want democracy and freedom. Here is a taste of your democracy and freedom,'" Ms. Salah said.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Id.

<sup>126</sup> Id.

<sup>127</sup> Dorsey, *supra* note 99, at 33.

<sup>128</sup> Id.

<sup>129</sup> James M. Dorsey, *Ultras play into the hands of the military by default or by design*, Feb. 2, 2012, MIDEAST SOCCER BLOG, available at <http://mideastsoccer.blogspot.sg/2012/02/ultras-play-into-hands-of-military-by.html> (last visited May 1, 2013).

<sup>130</sup> Id.

<sup>131</sup> Id.

The fact that the riots are emblematic of a precarious domestic situation and a mirror for the street's discontent and disaffection is a very telling picture indeed.<sup>132</sup> It is still too early to tell whether the attacks were deliberately allowed, or whether police negligence was simply a result of a post-revolutionary security vacuum.<sup>133</sup> That riot, along with other acts of violence and vandalism, has brought additional attention to Egypt's "ultras", and "have added a volatile element" to post-Mubarak Egypt.<sup>134</sup> Incredibly, some ultras have fused their passion for soccer with a "jihadist mentality."<sup>135</sup> At least that is what a Facebook page devoted to the Ultras Yellow Dragons is now marketing.<sup>136</sup> The Ultras Yellow Dragons are fans of the Ismaily Sporting Club, which is based in Ismailia, a city in northeastern Egypt on the west bank of the Suez Canal.<sup>137</sup>

### **Black Bloc**

Those people that were instrumental in encouraging the Port Said riots were put on trial.<sup>138</sup> As the city braced for a court ruling about responsibility for the deadly riot at Port Said, security forces fled the city and turned over their burned-out headquarters — as well as sole responsibility for public safety — to the military.<sup>139</sup> The few local police stations where the staff was still present “suspended” their work, officers said, in what

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<sup>132</sup> Mehaji, *supra* note 70.

<sup>133</sup> *Id.*

<sup>134</sup> Kirkpatrick, *supra* note 120.

<sup>135</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, *Social Media Jihad: Soccer fanatics with a 'jihadist mentality'*, LONG WAR JOURNAL, Apr. 1, 2013, available at [http://www.longwarjournal.org/threat-matrix/archives/2013/04/social\\_media\\_jihad\\_soccer\\_hool.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/threat-matrix/archives/2013/04/social_media_jihad_soccer_hool.php) (last visited Apr. 30, 2013).

<sup>136</sup> Ultras Yellow Dragons – Uyd07, FACEBOOK, <https://www.facebook.com/UltrasYellowDragons07?fref=ts> (last visited Apr. 8, 2013).

<sup>137</sup> Joscelyn, *supra* note 135.

<sup>138</sup> Sarah Lynch, *37 dead in Egypt riot after verdict in soccer deaths*, Jan. 27, 2013, USA TODAY, available at <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2013/01/26/egypt-soccer-death-penalty/1866025/> (last visited May 7, 2013).

<sup>139</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick and Kareem Fahim, *As Crisis Deepens in Egypt After Ruling on Riot, Calls for a Military Coup*, Mar. 9, 2013, THE NEW YORK TIMES, available at [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/10/world/middleeast/egypt-sentences-2012-soccer-riot.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/10/world/middleeast/egypt-sentences-2012-soccer-riot.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0) (last visited May 7, 2013).

appeared to be part of a widening strike by police officers and security forces across the country.<sup>140</sup> Though police and security officials were also involved in the violence and killings of fans during the riot, 21 soccer fans were sentenced to death, whereas only 2 security officials were given jail time.<sup>141</sup> After the sentence was read, two policemen were shot dead outside Port Said's main prison when angry relatives tried to storm the facility to free the defendants.<sup>142</sup> Police fired tear gas and rubber bullets, as well as live rounds, at the crowd outside the prison.<sup>143</sup> In other parts of the city, residents tried to storm the governor's office, police stations, the power station and the main court building.<sup>144</sup> People chanted for a military coup to overthrow the current Islamist government lead by President Morsi.<sup>145</sup> Overall, around 300 people were injured and about 37 were killed.<sup>146</sup>

In Cairo, hard-core soccer fans initially cheered the death sentences to their rivals in Port Said, but then shifted to anger at the police acquittals.<sup>147</sup> They burned the headquarters of the Egyptian soccer federation and the ornate Police Officers Club, a complex of pink buildings including a restaurant, a wedding hall and a hotel.<sup>148</sup> "Step aside! We are here for the police," the soccer fans storming the club told its staff.<sup>149</sup> The police were nowhere to be found during the attack, and employees said that many of the club's members had stayed home in anticipation of violence after the verdict.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Id.

<sup>141</sup> Id.

<sup>142</sup> Lynch, *supra* note 138.

<sup>143</sup> Id.

<sup>144</sup> Id.

<sup>145</sup> Id.

<sup>146</sup> Id.

<sup>147</sup> Kirkpatrick, *supra* note 141.

<sup>148</sup> Id.

<sup>149</sup> Id.

<sup>150</sup> Id.

Since the reaction to the sentence for the ultras, increased police violence has sparked the emergence of the Black Bloc. The Black Bloc is a group of protesters reminiscent of football hooligans and anarchists in Europe and Latin America, believed to largely consist of ultras who dress in black and whose faces are concealed by black masks, a tactic used by the fans during the revolt against Mubarak.<sup>151</sup> The group vowed through a Facebook page to protect demonstrators against the security forces and what they termed ‘ruling Muslim Brotherhood thugs’, a reference to Brotherhood supporters who attacked demonstrators in December 2012 in front of the presidential palace.<sup>152</sup> The bloc said in a statement on its official Facebook page that they can no longer stand still towards the government’s “campaigns against the revolution’s youth.”<sup>153</sup> Also on their Facebook page, the activists say they are a "generation born of the blood of the martyrs" from the 2011 revolution that toppled former president Hosni Mubarak.<sup>154</sup> Originating out of a plan to protect women protesters from sexual assault, this huge band of men and women numbering in the thousands (the exact number is not known) form a dedicated and determined corps of combatants divided into local groups of 30-50 individuals in Egypt's communities.<sup>155</sup> The Black Bloc mission is to ensure that no more assaults, kidnappings, and torture occur from Morsi's security forces (the Muslim Brotherhood militia) and so-called law enforcement, and that a "camel gazwa," (invading crowds on

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<sup>151</sup> Dorsey, *supra* note 99 at 35.

<sup>152</sup> *Id.*

<sup>153</sup> *Egyptian police arrest 12 ‘black block’ members after presidential palace clashes*, Apr. 27, 2013, AL ARABIYA, available at <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/04/27/Egypt-s-oppositional-Black-Bloc-rally-demanding-release-of-members-.html> (last visited May 7, 2013) [hereinafter Egyptian police].

<sup>154</sup> *‘Black Bloc’ clashes with police near Cairo’s Tahrir Square*, May 4, 2013, MIDDLE EAST ONLINE, available at <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=58529> (last visited May 7, 2013).

<sup>155</sup> Ashraf Ramelah, *Egypt’s New Anti-Muslim Brotherhood Militia*, May 7, 2013, RIGHT SIDE NEWS, available at <http://www.rightsidenews.com/2013050732500/life-and-science/culture-wars/egypts-new-anti-muslim-brotherhood-militia.html> (last visited May 7, 2013).

galloping camels) as in the early days of the revolt, never takes place again.<sup>156</sup> Many Black Bloc members carry firearms, most likely acquired through the illegal networks smuggling weapons from Libya and Gaza.<sup>157</sup>

Egypt's Black Bloc grew out of the chaos of President Morsi's actions, which necessitated a course correction – such as the use of security, weaponry and attacks -- for freedom-fighters in their struggle for liberation from an authoritarian system.<sup>158</sup> Egypt's fighters do not seek anarchy; they are not fighting just to fight.<sup>159</sup> Furthermore, the Shariah religious state is contrary to the western democratic state, and the roles of their respective revolts find their meaning and identity by way of the system they fight, not the tactics and strategies they use.<sup>160</sup>

If the best defense is a good offense, the forceful Black Bloc has aggressively expanded its scope beyond the scene of gathered protesters and their protection.<sup>161</sup> With a physical presence in more than eight cities across Egypt, the anonymous soldiers have claimed responsibility for ransacking at least eight separate Muslim Brotherhood Freedom and Justice Party offices.<sup>162</sup> Black Bloc soldiers lock arms to create a human shield in defense of pro-freedom protesters -- the Black Bloc's number-one priority -- in the streets and squares of Egypt.<sup>163</sup> In keeping with their mission statement, Egypt's Black Bloc members claim they have nothing against state institutions *per se*, "but against control by a particular system, the supremacy of a certain group."<sup>164</sup> They further

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<sup>156</sup> Id.

<sup>157</sup> Id.

<sup>158</sup> Id.

<sup>159</sup> Id.

<sup>160</sup> Id.

<sup>161</sup> Id.

<sup>162</sup> Id.

<sup>163</sup> Id.

<sup>164</sup> Id.

contend that "the best thing is to hit the existing system and its economy by sabotaging the system's institutions and not ones belonging to the public."<sup>165</sup>

In April 2013, Egyptian public prosecutor Talaat Ibrahim ordered the detention of 22 suspected Black Bloc members accused of funding the mysterious group.<sup>166</sup> The group of masked young protesters has been linked to violent attacks on public and private properties, and present themselves as the defenders of protesters opposed to President Mohamed Morsi's rule, as well as the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>167</sup> In late April 2013, Egyptian police arrested 12 members of the Black Bloc after clashes outside Cairo's presidential palace.<sup>168</sup> Protesters hurled rocks and firebombs at the walls of the presidential palace in Heliopolis, and torched a police vehicle.<sup>169</sup> Since April, other members of the Black Bloc have been labeled terrorists and have been arrested and detained.<sup>170</sup>

### **Affects on the future of Egyptian politics**

"Egyptians are very worried about what is happening because they feel the country is getting into a very difficult situation," said Said Sadek, professor of political sociology at the American University in Cairo.<sup>171</sup> "Any revolution is like an earthquake, with aftershocks," Sadek said. "So we have aftershocks continuing from time to time, and the country will be very unstable for at least four to five years."<sup>172</sup> The unparalleled levels of football violence in Egypt reveal something structurally deeper than a simple

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<sup>165</sup> Id.

<sup>166</sup> Egyptian Police, *supra* note 153.

<sup>167</sup> Id.

<sup>168</sup> Id.

<sup>169</sup> Id.

<sup>170</sup> Id.

<sup>171</sup> Lynch, *supra* note 138.

<sup>172</sup> Id.

outpouring of violence after a soccer game.<sup>173</sup> Egypt's Premier League football will serve as a barometer of President Morsi's political performance in the months ahead.<sup>174</sup> The ultras demand that President Morsi do better in coping with key issues, including reform of the hated police and security forces and their role in the new Egypt, holding those responsible for the death of hundreds of protesters in the last two years accountable and rooting out corruption.<sup>175</sup> So far, the barometer shows a mixed record at best.<sup>176</sup> "The Egyptian Football Association (EFA) and the clubs' managements should reach out to fans in order to avoid unrest inside and outside the stadiums," the soccer association said.<sup>177</sup>

Much of the post-Mubarak violence stems from clashes between the militants and security forces.<sup>178</sup> Their battle is a battle for *karama*, or dignity, and their dignity is vested in their ability to stand up to the *dakhliya*, or interior ministry, the knowledge that they no longer can be abused by security forces without recourse and the fact that they no longer have to pay off each and every policemen to stay out of trouble.<sup>179</sup> That dignity is unlikely to be fully restored until the police and security forces have been reformed - a task Mr. Morsi's government has so far largely shied away from.<sup>180</sup> Official foot-dragging in holding security officers accountable as in the case of Port Said and the deaths of hundreds of protesters in the last two years reinforces the perception of the police and security forces as an institution that in the words of scholars Eduardo P. Archetti and

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<sup>173</sup> Mehaji, *supra* note 70.

<sup>174</sup> James M. Dorsey, *Re-Launching the Egyptian Premier League: A Barometer for Morsi's Performance*, Dec. 31, 2012, THE HUFFINGTON POST, available at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/james-dorsey/egyptian-premier-league\\_b\\_2390630.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=egypt-news](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/james-dorsey/egyptian-premier-league_b_2390630.html?utm_hp_ref=egypt-news) (last visited May 8, 2013).

<sup>175</sup> *Id.*

<sup>176</sup> *Id.*

<sup>177</sup> *Id.*

<sup>178</sup> *Id.*

<sup>179</sup> *Id.*

<sup>180</sup> *Id.*

Romero Amilcar is "exclusively destined to harm, wound, injure, or, in some cases, kill other persons." It gives "police power... the aura of omnipotence" who "at the same time lost all legitimacy both in moral and social terms. To resist and to attack the police force is thus seen as morally justified," they argue.<sup>181</sup>

Reforming the police however is no mean task and is likely to prove far more difficult than Mr. Morsi's taming of the military last summer by sidelining the country's two most senior military commanders with the help of the next echelon of officers.<sup>182</sup> Reform will have to mean changing from top to bottom the culture of a force that is larger than the military and counts 450,000 policemen and 350,000 members of the General Security and Central Security Forces.<sup>183</sup> Ending football violence requires establishing new rules of engagement.<sup>184</sup> New generations must come to believe they have a stake in the future of the country, and that uninhibited expression can be peaceful and lawful.<sup>185</sup> What is certain, however, is that Egypt is still in the midst of severe turmoil with the gap between the revolutionary "street" and the police authorities yet to be redressed.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Id.

<sup>182</sup> Id.

<sup>183</sup> Id.

<sup>184</sup> Romdhani, *supra* note 40.

<sup>185</sup> Id.

<sup>186</sup> Mehaji, *supra* note 70.