

RUNNING HEAD : POLITICAL ACTIVISTS OR VIOLENT FANS

Independent Practitioner Inquiry Capstone Paper

Political activists or violent fans? Understanding the Moroccan Ultras perspective through social media discourse analysis

Mamer Alomari – PIM 77

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**Student name:** Mamer Alomari

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the origins, traditions, reasons behind rapid numbers expansion, and violent tendencies of organized groups of young football fans called Ultras. It also sheds the light on Al Raja Ultra groups, the first Moroccan Ultras groups and the most violent who started emerging in Casablanca in 2005, and since then thrived and diversified, not only in Casablanca but in Morocco as a whole. It's unknown where the culture was derived from due to lack of literature on this matter but speculated to be a mimicking of neighboring countries such as Spain, and Tunisia where this phenomenon has been more prevalent. Ultras groups are the most loyal fans to Moroccan football clubs that created an entire culture surrounding teams of allegiance, and soccer in general.

This paper was initially proposed to evaluate the Ultras activism against a ban that has been instituted against them. Yet, the research uncovered an unsolved problem of Ultras rioting even after the ban was lifted, indicating urgency to understand The Moroccan Ultras culture. Therefore, the research has been repurposed to tend to the violence problem. The back and forth battles amongst Ultra factions, and between Ultras and security forces has been leaving a trail of loses between lives and public-private properties. Through discourse analysis, this paper is going to attempt to present the Ultras perspective of rioting events and identify key themes to their involvement of such actions.

It concludes with; if the Moroccan regulating bodies and security forces keep the lazy politics top down approach and do not take an inclusive approach to try and solve the issue of rioting, they're risking further radicalization of the Ultras that might evolve into a much larger problem.

*Keywords: Moroccan Ultras, Eagles Ultras, Winners Ultras, Ultras violence, Ultras ethnography, stadium safety.*

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## Introduction

Lately, a video of the football fan group, Eagles Ultras, went viral, singing what is now AL

Raja's Fans anthem:

أووه شكوى لرب العالي، اووه غير هو الي داري

I can only complain to God, he only knows our grievances

فهل البلاد عايشين فغمامه، طالبين السلامة، انصرنا يا مولانا

In this country we're living miserably, we're only asking safety, help us God

صرفو علينا حشيش وكتامه، خلونا كاليتامي، تتحاسبوا في القيامة

They flooded us with weed and drugs, made us like orphans, they'll pay for it in judgment day

المواهب ضيعتوها، بالدوخة هرستوها، كيف بغيتوا تشوفوها

Talents you burned out, with the drugs you crushed, how is it going to surface?

فلوس البلاد كع كليتوها، للبراني عطيتوها، جينيراسيون قمعتوها

You depleted the country's resources, gave it to foreigners, oppressed a whole generation.

وقتلوا لا باسيون وبديتو برفوكاسيون

you killed our passion and started the provocation. (في بلادي ظلموني بصوت جماهير الرجاء البيضاء " " في

YouTube, "2018). -مشهد تقشعر له الأبدان لن نندم

This video went on to be aired on almost every Arabic news channel where dissident commentators called it the new Arab anthem. This song signifies most of the Arab grievances, not just Moroccans, since Arabs in general view their governments as satellite governments

executing the orders of their overlords in Tel Aviv, Washington, London, and Paris. The Arab spring brought about that perspective to the forefront of the Arab struggle against neo-colonialism, revolutions against the perceived satellite regimes took place in Tunis, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Morocco, that resulted in the collapse of four regimes. The Moroccan government marketed conforming to the public's demands as the Moroccan exceptionalism, where the King addressed the public stating reforms in the kingdom's way of handling the upheaval, transforming Morocco from oppressive to democratic, and opening the door to Moroccans to voice their opinions in public free from harm. Movements mobilized across the Kingdom demanding better outcomes and rectifying years of oppressive and undemocratic management. An interesting latecomer to this wave of democratic assembly was the Ultras, who entered the political field after a ban instituted on Ultras in soccer stadiums following a riot event.

Stadiums have been historically a place to derive joy or voice discontent, and Ultras, who are organized groups of fans committed to supporting their team and are a significant element of youth culture (Guschwan, 2007), represent much more than a club affiliation, or a positive, unified front cheering a team. In the Moroccan context, Ultras represent a section of the population with their social manifestations including their view on politics and social issues. Ultras picked up freedom of speech and expression as a pet cause since 2016, and successfully advocated for their ability of self-expression in the stadiums which resulted in lifting the previously instated ban on Ultras in Moroccan stadiums. Members of the Ultras have been involved in numerous movements across Morocco, supporting a wide spectrum of issues, such as

the <sup>1</sup>Amazigh Cause where Ultras Hociema protested, booed, and whistled the Moroccan anthem while raising the Amazigh flags in an attempt to bring Amazigh issues to the forefront of the national discourse. There has been plenty of instances where the ultras aided other movements due to their ability to emotional provoke and their sense of security through numbers.

The Ultras' political involvement inspired optimism through Morocco, where plenty of articles and videos published of their new role of magnifying marginalized voices through artistic visual and auditory representations that are catchy enough to go viral, thus, delivering the Moroccan experience to a much larger audience than conventional movements could (Abrook, 2018). "Fe Bladi Dalamouni" the previously translated anthem has not only delivered the Moroccan experience, in this case the Arab experience, it reignited the spark for movements in Morocco to continue the struggle in advancing causes for a better future for Morocco (Aisa, 2018). The anthem also inspired some politicians to take a step towards addressing issues facing the Moroccan youth and the Moroccan public in general. A parliamentary representative quoted the song to make a point about secret migration towards Europe (Escape to paradise, 2018).

Nowadays, the Ultras are facing scrutiny from the government under the pretenses of ensuring the safety of stadiums and protecting stadiums from acts of vandalism and destruction. They also have been suffering an ever-increasing negative public opinion as a result of some bad actors amongst their groups according to the Moroccan press. Some Ultra groups are being pushed to the margins of society and being entirely demonized as a result of the more extreme individuals' actions such as riots and clashes with security forces.

A specific group is facing more scrutiny and oppression than others, Al Raja fans, the same

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<sup>1</sup> The Amazigh are the indigenous people of Morocco and North Africa. In the complex linguistic milieu of Morocco, their language, Tamazight, is marginalized, behind Arabic (both modern standard and colloquial darija) as well as French, the language of the former colonial power (Cornwell & Atia, 2012).

groups that brought the previously translated song “Fe Bladi Dalamouni” to being. The Moroccan Football Association and the Moroccan Royal Football College in cooperation with the Internal Affairs Ministry have been active in creating obstacles for Ultras in their journey of supporting their team. These acts further marginalize Ultra members that are already suffering from the marginalization of being Moroccan youth. Such policies could have plenty of ramifications if not handled delicately and carefully to deliver the desired outcome.

This research paper was initially proposed and designed to evaluate Ultras activism and produce lessons learned report from their approach. Yet, on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a riot took place and changed the course of this research from evaluating activism to understanding the reasons behind the riots. In my perception, it felt more pressing to understand the phenomenon of Ultras violence to produce an ethnography that proves helpful for later research or produce recommendations that has the potential of curbing violence.

This paper attempts to answer a wide spectrum of questions in two sections. The literature review will attempt to answer; why did the Moroccan Ultras enter the sphere of activism? What are the strategies employed by Ultras to advocate for policy change? What are the reasons behind Ultras riots and violence?

Meanwhile, the discourse analysis will be complimenting the Lit-review by filling the gaps in the literature, and simultaneously attempting to answer the following questions; what is Al Raja Ultras perspective of the riots? What are the common theories along Al Raja fans that explain the rioting events? How do they view sanctions imposed on their club of allegiance? And what are the possible ramifications of the consistent marginalization of these groups?

### **Positionality**

I'm a politics enthusiast, Arabic speaking Syrian male with a multi-layered identity consisting of Arabic nationalism, Syrian libertarian, democratic socialist ideologies, affiliated with Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religions, and most of all, an opponent of totalitarian regimes and supporter of public struggles for equality, opportunity, and freedom in every form or shape.

My past experience as an activist in Syria taught me many lessons such as; when protesting a totalitarian regime that is willing to use force against its own citizens, it is better to stack odds in citizens' favor to limit harm on both sides, and a unified front and chants could instill fear into the tyrannical forces and may result in less lethal retaliation from the troops. As well as, numbers are a key in limiting confrontation between protestors and security officers, the more demonstrators there is, the better the odds in defining confrontation between protestors and oppressive forces. As for my experience being an Ultra in Syria, I learned a lot about methods of organizing crowds, forming visual and auditory displays, and creating a sense of unity through common identity factors.

As a researcher, I'm fascinated with every form of activism meant to advance any social cause or objective; hence my fascination could form a bias towards the method of activism being studied. My thoughts on the topic could potentially amplify the utility, validity, or effectiveness of the approach since the matter falls under both categories of my interest. Therefore, I'll limit my thoughts concerning the topic and focus on examining the existing information and set up boundaries of using empirical evidence to showcase the validity, utility, or effectiveness of the case. I will also study the data from a third-party perspective to further limit my positionality from interfering with the research being conducted.

### **Methodology and Rationale**

Individuals within the Moroccan sphere perceive the Ultras differently; some view them as a group of young men filled with energy, passion, and disappointment of their current status, while others tend to view them as a group of unproductive, ungrateful young men with violent tendencies looking for handouts from the government. This division of perception is mainly attributed to the perceiving party's current benefit from the state.

Since personal knowledge is dependent on many factors such as lived experiences, self-awareness, and understanding of others' lived experiences, and due to limitations of academic literature around the football Ultra fandom in Morocco, an organization and analysis of data around this section of the population is needed to further study and understand their perspectives and lived experiences.

As a result, a case study of the Moroccan Ultras as a group has the potential of forming an overview of this section of the population for any further investigation of this phenomenon. The case study approach allows the room to establish an initial, holistic overview that is specific and inclusive of relevant and essential details surrounding the Ultras (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Through understanding the rise of the Ultras phenomenon, data collection will be performed by examining relevant media coverage and researching the targeted group aimed to extract sufficient information to form somewhat descriptive ethnographic overview.

The researcher uses social media as a starting point of the data collection to find references about the targeted demographic, then analyze these references to locate more credible resources targeting Moroccan Ultras. Desk review research and analysis will work towards synthesizing enough information to be provided as a literature review that captures the Moroccan experience and the Ultras experience as a whole. The desk review will be complemented with a social media

discursive analysis to compensate the researcher's inability of interacting with human subjects, due to limitations concerning the reach and safety of willing subjects to be interviewed. Thus, the discourse analysis will work on adding the human perspective to the researched topic through the use of readily available row data on social media.

***Discourse analysis:***

Discourse analysis is best described as the study of talk and texts, with a set of theories investigating language in use, and language in social contexts (Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001). Study of discourse is one of the tools used by political scientists to determine topics of political messaging and debates. It is useful to formulate basic understanding of the prominent issues being discussed in the public sphere, and capable of impacting the overall perception of an entity through defining the entity's interest in certain topics or causes (Wetherell et al., 2001).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a methodology used to extract information from discursive human behavior such as convictions, ideas, perspectives, and overall sentiment towards certain topics (Barber & Salam, 2013). Social scientists use CDA to address certain social topics either through videos, debates, conversations, and dialogues. CDA has been utilized to study social phenomenon in a variety of fields such as politics and gender (Barber & Salam, 2013). The analysis eventually provide a synthesis of discourse evaluation usually represented by a cross referenced quantitative and qualitative conclusions (Barber & Salam, 2013).

Discourse analysis in social media is a relatively new use to the methodology. Social scientists are still debating the validity of social media being a reliable source of data mining and analysis. Yet, in my opinion social media provides a rare access to valuable information helping the researcher to make more informed decisions regarding the researched topic. The discourse

analysis is used as the foundation of the research by identifying main topics of interest and value to the work in progress. It will also compliment the research by assessing the public sentiment towards the targeted issues and groups through information extraction from the readily available Moroccan discourse on social media. The discourse analysis is also the fundamental approach to extract the Ultras perspective, lived experiences, sentiment towards the government, and opinions of their current state of affairs. Though the information provided may not be reliable nor factual, it has a high potential of developing the topic to mirror reality and provide insights. Otherwise, the researcher cannot attain even after interviewing participants (Boles, 1998).

***Sampling:***

Throughout the research, one fan group dominated the news cycle, Al Raja fans, who are the most well-known Moroccan Ultras across the world and in Morocco. They also contribute disproportionately to activism as well as rioting events in stadiums. Hence, the discourse analysis will be almost dedicated completely to analyze Green Boys Ultras, Curva Sud Ultras, and Ultras Eagles Facebook pages and YouTube videos, to acquire the desired information. A total of 399 comments from seven different posts, and two different platforms, YouTube and Facebook, were viewed to extract the data specific to the topic studied. The data mining process started at an initial glance over different Facebook pages and YouTube videos that either discussed rioting events or exhibited Ultra shows in the playfield. After vetting a large number of Facebook posts and YouTube videos, some discussions on certain posts seemed rich enough for relevant data to use and analysis more than others. The following seven posts were selected for different reasons mentioned in the rational section in Appendix B.

**Appendix (B)**

discourse analysis post selection and Rationale

Page	Post	# comments	Rationale
Facebook صوت الشعب	<p>This page was selected for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-This page represents an opposition party to the current ruling party. Choosing an opposition discussion platform in an inclusive approach geared towards capitulating the largest amount of voices possible.</li> <li>-after investigating almost 400 follower's Facebook profiles, the conclusion was that most commentators are well educated based on professed education in their Facebook profiles and linguistic expressive variables use.</li> </ul>		
	<p>علاش كانكر هو حزب العدالة والتنمية</p> <p>Link: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cha3bpress/posts/2300300803627887">https://www.facebook.com/cha3bpress/posts/2300300803627887</a></p> <p>Translation: Why do you hate the Justice and Development party</p>	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-This post was selected to extract the public's perception of the ruling party and creating a baseline for further research the issues raised by the Moroccan public.</li> <li>-This post is Biased against the current Moroccan ruling party. Yet after examining the comment section, the bias served as an incentive for the commentators to voice their opinions more freely and discuss plenty of issues that lead the researcher to formulate the issues discourse and activism section in its current form.</li> </ul>
YouTube	<p>You tube was selected to be included in the discourse analysis for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- its large user base around the world.</li> <li>-the anonymity it provides for commenters where they are able to express their opinions of the Ultras without the fear of being tracked down or terrorized.</li> <li>-videos are more expressive than written media, and it allows the viewers to formulate their own opinions of the matter discussed “ the researcher has taken into consideration the angle in which the videos were recorded and the coverage time of participants , as well as the title bias ,and the Bias against the perpetrators to which the comments are expected to be against”</li> </ul>		
	<p>1.1 خطير.. شرارة الشعب تشتعل بعد كلاسيكو الرجاء والجيش-مشاهد مروعة</p> <p>Link: (alyoum 24, 2019)</p> <p>Translation: Dangerous .. Riot erupts after Classico Al Raja and Royal Army - horrific sights.</p>	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-This video was selected to extract the overall averaged opinion towards rioting, and the sentiment towards police forces performing riot-control measures.</li> <li>-the researcher is well aware of the bias against rioters in this video and will take into account the possible generalizing defamation of the entirety of the Ultra group.</li> </ul>

			-the researcher is aware of the description Bias and the effect of commenter expectations and the psychological process of forming the comments.
1.2 أسباب شغب مباراة التتويج 12/06/2017  (Belkihel, 2017) Translation: The reasons for the riot match the coronation 12/06/2017.	Total 360 Relevant 73		-this video offers a unique perspective of the Ultras ability to manipulate and force the security forces into clashing with the Ultras. -this video was used in the Lit-Review as a vehicle to extract the Ultras strategy in changing the public opinion. -this video will either validate hypothesized analysis of the Ultras strategy or refute it through the comment section. -the researcher will take into consideration the lenses in which the security forces are being portrayed in therefore no comments regarding oppression will be accounted for or analyzed by the researcher.
1.3 "بعضور "باتمان" .. مناقشات عسكرية في "دونور"  (Kifache Tv, 2017) In the presence of "Batman". Royal Army Ultras skirmishes in Donor	93		-This video was included in the research analysis, but was not intended to be included in the discourse analysis, but after reading the comment section this post was added for the following reasons: -Commenters on this post seem to be heavily Biased against Al Raja fans (in this case the victims) and in support of the royal army Ultras. -Many commenters self-identified as Al Wedad Ultras (Rivals of Al Raja). - Al Raja Ultras chanting in solidarity with their attackers (Royal Army Ultras) against their protectors in this case (security forces). - The dichotomy of this video seems of interest for the comment section to be analyzed.
Facebook البرتوش			- Based on the reviews, reviews over this Facebook page contrast between anti-Islamic and subjective reporting and integrity. - The researcher concluded that, this Facebook page could be used as representative of the Moroccan society, and the Moroccan political discourse.

	<p>-After investigating the comments section on few posts of this page, the researcher concluded that this page has the potential of delivering divergent opinions on different matter and it could be beneficial to form a sample of conflicted opinions regarding social issues. therefore, could be provide a sufficient insight to the mechanism in which the Moroccan online discourse operates.</p>	
	<p>رفض جماهير حسنية اكادير للنشيد الوطني وتصفير ورفع الاعلام الامازيغية في ملعب أدرار اليوم Link: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/albartouch/videos/2212901848959776/">https://www.facebook.com/albartouch/videos/2212901848959776/</a> translation: Hassania Agadir fans rejected the national anthem and screamed and raised the Amazigh media in Adrar Stadium today.</p>	<p>52</p> <p>This post was selected for the following reasons: -It taps into an emotional and divisive issue in Morocco. -It has the potential of delivering an insight to the opinions formulated over peaceful protesting. -It includes Ultras peacefully protesting, isolated from violence and conflicts. -It supplements an overall susceptibility to democracy indicator.</p>
Facebook Ultra-Green boys	<p>This Facebook page was selected for the following reasons: -This is the official page of the second most famous and most controversial ultra-group in Morocco. -Acquiring the Green Boys perspective towards rioting events. -Acquiring hypotheses adopted by the Ultra group in explaining rioting events. -Acquiring ultras perspective over sanctions from the government on their club of allegiance.</p>	
	<p>فسلام على كل شهيد سار على درب محاربة الطغيان وسلام على من شارف على أعواد المشانق ليعدم فنظر للسماء يبث شكواه لله ونطق الشهادة وأسلم روحه وسلام على أطفال تيمّموا ونساء ترمّلوا وسلام على كل أم تكلّى تتحسس الآن سرير ابنها الفارغ المرثب إلى الأبد.. قبرة على ارتعاشه يذكّم ورحمة كائنة وحق سيكون. (دولة الرجاء العظمى, 2018). Translation: A salute to every martyr walked on the path of fighting oppression, and a salute to everyone walking the path of execution, whom looked up to the sky and told god about his suffering then gave his life. and a salute to children whom became orphans and women whom became widows, and a salute to every mother bereaved feeling the empty bed of her son forever. A kiss on your shaky hands.</p>	<p>47</p> <p>This post was selected for the following reasons: -This post was published on 02-26-2019 after the rioting events took place in Rabat analyzed in 1.1 post of the discourse analysis. -It is charged with linguistic values that symbolizes martyrdom and struggle against oppression. -It is charged with linguistic values reflect sacrifice, and sadness. - This post may provide valuable insight into the ultras perspective of the following issues: Hypotheses adopted by the Ultra group in explaining rioting events perspective towards rioting events perspective over sanctions from the government on the club</p>
Facebook	<p>This Facebook page was selected for the following reasons:</p>	

<p>دولة الرجاء العظمى</p>	<p>-This is the official page of the most famous and most controversial ultra-group in Morocco. -Acquiring the Green Boys perspective towards rioting events. -Acquiring hypotheses adopted by the Ultra group in explaining rioting events. -Acquiring ultras perspective over sanctions from the government on their club of allegiance</p>		
	<p>عد القرار القاسي في حق الرجاء وجمهوره، بإجراء مقابلتين بدون جمهور، الشيء الذي يخالف القوانين الجديدة للجامعة والتي تنص على الحكم بمقابلة واحدة كحد أقصى من العقوبات ، إضافة و عليه نهيب لجمهور الرجاء عامة المساهمة في حملة شراء تذاكر ما المقابلات القادمة و بشكل كبير لتعويض الفريق في سنكبه من خسائر مالية، وهذا من أجل تشجيع وتحفيز اللاعبين للحفاظ على روح التحدي ومواصلة المنافسة على البطولة، ومن هذا المنبر نطلب رفع ثمن التذكرة إلى 40 درهم في المقابلات المقبلة , كما نقترح بيع تذاكر مقابلة الجمعة بثمان رمزي . إصرارنا في الدفع بالفريق إلى الأمام و الإخلاص له، أقوى من مكائد المتربصين ، حرية الألتراس هي قضية جميع الجماهير المغربية متحدين من أجل كرامة المشجع، لهذا وجب على الجميع الحيطة والحذر من أي استهداف محتمل في قادم الأيام إلى حكم الغرامات المالية المبالغ فيها والتي لم تكثر فيها الجهات المعنية للأزمة المالية التي يمر منها الفريق ، ملامح الاستهداف بدأت في مقابلة الرجاء بالرباط الأسبوع الماضي حين تم السماح لخروج جمهور الفريقين في دفعة واحدة ومن نفس المنطقة، فلولا الألطاف الإلهية لكان سيناريو مراكش سيقدم قبلا في الرباط. (Boubrdn, 2013) After the harsh decision on Al Raja and its fans, to play two matches without an audience, a sanction that violates the new laws of the college, which institutes a maximum of one match of the penalties. We plea Al Raja Fans contribute to the campaign and buy tickets for the upcoming match and to compensate the team in what is lost. We will ask you to raise the price of the ticket to AED 40 in future interviews, and we propose selling tickets for Friday's match at a symbolic price. Our insistence on pushing the team forward and loyalty to it, stronger than the intrigues of the traitors, freedom of patronage is the cause of all the Moroccan masses united for the dignity of the Ultras, so everyone should be wary of any possible targeting in the coming</p>	42	<p>This post was selected for the following reasons: -This post was issued after the sanctions was posted on AL Raja following the fan riots. -This post is advocating for members of the Ultras to buy match tickets to support the club financially and Make up for the losses caused by the rioting event. - This post carries a hypothesis of Ultras being freedom fighters, therefore, the comment section could either confirm or refute the theory, the analysis will look at the confirmation rate, as well as, internal debate between members regarding the recent rioting event.</p>

	<p>days to the rule of excessive financial fines which did not bother Where the parties concerned to the financial crisis experienced by the team. the features of the targeting began in the match Raja vs Royal Army Rabat last week. when the departure of both fans of the two teams together from the same area fell swoop. without the divine intervention was the scenario of Marrakech will be repeated later in Rabat.</p>		
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The discourse analysis page selection objective was to highlight different perspectives from the Moroccan public, then average to an overall sentiment towards the government and the ultras.

The discourse analysis measures connotations of words and sentences towards the studied topic, assuming that sentences and words carry either positive or negative connotations (Boles ,1998).

The language measurement system will assume that the language used in the comments analyzed carries either positive, negative, or neutral connotations, and based on the connotative assumption the language will be assigned the value deemed to fit the statement assessed (Appendix A).

Discourse Analysis (sentiment towards government)							
Post	comments	% value		Linguistic value		Keyword Selection	researcher's comments
Why do you hate the government		Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos		
	I don't hate the government	0%	100%	5	0	Don't	The subject insinuating a certain degree of love to the government.
	The government is corrupt	100%	0	5	0	corrupt	The subject implying that the government is corrupt.
results		50%	50%	2.5	2.5	Corrupt	Research recent government corruption scandals

Total of analyzed comments will be then added and averaged to achieve average value that is indicative of the overall targeted topic, transforming a large qualitative data to presentable and easy to conceptualize quantitative data. Metrics used are indicated above in Appendix A.

### **Limiters and delimitation strategy**

This study encounters many limitations such as shying away from The Ultras perspective due to self-censorship by studied subjects since the information extraction will be performed through analysis of public posts. Also, inability to contact nor interview members of the organizations studied out of fears of endangering subject's well-being, either from security forces or from the Ultras collective.

The parameters will be confined to violence in the football fandom world of Morocco; therefore, the project study will be limited to soccer and Ultra-violence in Morocco and will be unable to cross the boundaries of the sphere to intersect it with other issues around the world. Throughout my research, I found plenty of media reports, blogs, and YouTube videos on the topic. Yet, since this phenomenon is very recent, there is a gap of peer-reviewed literature on the Ultras in Morocco, which causes a limitation.

The amount of information analyzed will be insignificant to the magnitude of the issue and the discourse around the violence. Therefore, one other limitation to this study is the inaccurate representation of the Ultra's voices and perspectives. While performing the discourse analysis, I will address any predisposed convictions and acknowledge conformational bias towards the extracted information. My delimitation strategy will be to cross-reference the Ultras activism and events timeline with similar cases across the world that is documented in the existing literature. I will also cross-reference the discourse analysis with the existing literature for accuracy. The delimitation strategy adopted in this research paper is based entirely on the discourse analysis. The discourse analysis will provide rare access to the Ultras perspective without the invasiveness of formal interviews and could also eliminate the bias of interviewees, but it can't eliminate the researcher's bias and positionality. Social Media provides a rare access to emotional states and

honest opinions through anonymity that is hypothesized and somewhat proven to provide a better insight into subjects real and controversial thoughts (Zhang & Kizilcec, 2014).

### **Moroccan Issues Discourse and Activism**

Symptoms of the Arab spring have appeared on the Moroccan public since 2011. After the escape of the Tunisian president, the fall of the Egyptian president, and the widespread protests across the Arab world, with plummeting public satisfaction of the Moroccan experience and fading public trust in political parties and governmental institutions (Al Bali, 2018), Morocco seemed to be a fertile ground of another movement targeting regime change. On February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, independent youth groups, youth political associations, and opposing Islamic parties started a movement demanding a holistic change in Morocco. The movement identified itself as a youth movement unaffiliated with any political party or political organization (Hwaidi, 2011). Feb 20<sup>th</sup> movement called for the dissolve of the parliament and government, establish a new constitution and parliamentary system unaffected by the monarchy, release political prisoners, initiate national resources redistribution mechanism, investigate and hold corrupt individuals accountable, and institute the Amazigh language as an official language in Morocco alongside Arabic (Al Bali, 2018). The king reacted quickly to contain the movement after the oppression campaign failed in suppressing the movement through a royal address in March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The royal address acknowledged some of the protestors' demands and put forth a timeline to address public's grievances to dissolve both the government and parliament and find a committee to draft a new constitution. The response inspired dissatisfaction through the movement's participants who protested relentlessly despite the government's harsh approach in suppressing protestors. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, a referendum on the new constitution took place, where the new constitution passed with 98.48% approval, putting an end to Feb 20<sup>th</sup> movement, and marking a new era of Moroccan politics that is shaped by the youth and public activism (DroitArab, 2012).

This period inspired the term Moroccan exceptionalism by academics that emphasized the

civility of Moroccan protestors while faced with all forms of oppression by the government. The term was later adopted by the new Moroccan governments that led the country after the constitutional reforms (Altaweel, 2018).

After the February 20<sup>th</sup> movement, the Moroccan political sphere got along very well with activism that became the setter of the Moroccan political and social discourse. The Moroccan exceptionalism seemed to be operating very smoothly through the security forces protecting peaceful protestors and help them in advancing their causes until 2018.

Moroccan exceptionalism opened the doors to educate generation about activism and overall public involvement in the country's discourse and policy making. The combination of governmental leniency, poor quality of life, and fertile ground exhausted by protests contribute largely to the riot scene in Morocco. The Moroccan exceptionalism motto permitted a mass mobilization movement advocating for numerous causes and inciting legislative and policy changes, hence, city streets in Morocco have been occupied by an impressive wave of activism. Corruption scandals caused a lack of trust in the political parties and the Moroccan Do process and incentivized the public to take on the streets daily advocating for causes. Activist groups took advantage of the King's newly issued order, which prevents security forces from harming protestors and allow the public's voices to be heard. It gave space for different social and political groups to work on expanding their subscription bases and increase the intensity of activism over the issues or solutions.

The discourse analysis establishes a connection between social media activism and actual activism on the ground through numerous topics that have been consuming the Moroccan public discourse in the past nine months. The most pressing issues is the governmental failure in addressing the swine influenza (pig flu) epidemic that has harvested 30 lives so far (Mubarak,

2019). Also, the average Moroccan citizen is now complaining from a sharp increase in prices of essentials such as medications and food, despite the currency being stably traded between 8.0 and 9.5 against the dollar. There has not been any media coverage on that matter (Tradingeconomics, 2019).

Facebook discussion forum or group Boycott monopolies in Morocco (Boycutt, 2019) has been posting products that skyrocketed in price to boycott. The page started as a movement to boycott all monopolies and now seems to be shying away from that and focusing mostly on news about corruption and police brutality. Yet, the boycott movement had some success stories, where it forced three monopolies to drop down prices and launch a Lets Make Up campaign around Moroccan cities (alyoum24, 2019). Through consumption power, the Moroccan public achieved what legislatures couldn't. The boycott targeted amongst other monopolies the dairy products giant, DANONE, who has a tremendous Moroccan market share that enabled the company to sharply increase prices to a point where it forced a widespread boycott against the company costing it 35% drop in sales (alyoum24, 2019). The boycott movements are still active in morocco as concluded by the discourse analysis and social media activities, where activists promoting to boycott the African cooperation for gas and oil distribution and other conglomerates controlling the Moroccan markets.

Issues such as corruption of the current government and the scandals around the chairman and his appointees all over ministries (لا سماحة مع الفساد - Home, 2019.) This page has been mainly concerned about exposing government corruption scandals. Lately the page has been notifying the public about a retirement agreement issued by the government to its chairman giving him a second retirement of 15,000 Euros a month in a country where the median income is \$3292.40 (Tradingeconomics, 2019), which is outrageous to the active users comments on that page.

Observers are claiming that the period of Moroccan exceptionalism reached its limit in 2018 after what is commonly known as Al Reef Movement. Through the aforementioned movement, Moroccan security forces used violence and oppressive approaches such as mass arrests to dial down the movement and prevent it from expanding (Altaweel, 2018). The movement was declared unconstitutional as it advocated for separation and the establishment of the Al Reef state according to the internal affairs ministry's official page on Facebook (MIAM, 2018). Al Reef movement resulted in over 50 sentences between life in prison and 5 years based on arbitrary charges. Nowadays, teachers' movement is active in Rabat and Casablanca demanding unionization, better contracts, and a living wage (El-Masaiti, 2019b). The movement has been facing a brutal suppression by the security forces, and non-responsiveness or disregard from the current government (El-Masaiti, 2019). Movements across Morocco has been facing similar reaction from the government and security forces indicating that the Moroccan exceptionalism era has come to an end. Moroccans in general seem to perceive the government as oppressive and cite incidents such as roughening up teacher protestors, or the deployment of violence to dissolve Al Reef movement and Jarada movement as examples of the non-democratic system that is ruling the country.

## The Ultras

Some of the game-attending soccer fans state that “if not for the ultras, soccer matches would be better watched on TV”. Such statement precludes the role Ultras play in the football industry as a whole. Ultras bring value to the field not only as consumers, but as an attraction to big-ticket club sales and matches (Wakefield, 1995). Ultras are well known for creating a festive and celebratory atmosphere adding a celebratory flavor to a delightful sport. Their visual and auditory displays in the quest of supporting and lifting moral amongst team players and management to deliver the best results possible are unique to only football fans (Newman, 2015).

The Sao Paulino Torcida is believed to be the First organized Ultra-fan group on Earth, inception in Sao Paulo By Manoel de Almeida Paes in 1939 (Mastrogiannakis, 2016).

In the 1960's in Italy, groups of young men started occupying the blind spot in the stands the “curva”. The Curva is the curved area in the stands (Definitions.com, 2019) that is usually considered to be a less desirable and cheaper area of the stadium. These groups defined their main conquest of being in the stands is to support their teams. Inspired by the Brazilian Torcidas, they designed visual and auditory presentations transforming the field into festivals set out to support their teams. Globalism contributed in the spreading of the Ultra's methodology of team support, and football fans across the world started forming Ultras associations that are similar in structure of the Italian model.

### *Characteristics:*

The Ultras are groups of young soccer fans typically 18 to 25 known for their excessive attachment and loyalty to the degree of fanaticism to their team. The term Ultras was first used in Italy in the 1960s to describe groups of fans that developed an identity attachment to a football team (D. A. Testa, 2009).

Fans across the world copied the themes and organizational frameworks from the Italian Ultras then added their own culturally specific flavor to the collective of the Ultras society. That cross-cultural learning later turned into an unofficial competition where sports media outlets such as magazines, newspapers, and sporting tv channels ranked fan groups and Ultras based on a numerous variation such as loyalty to clubs through traveling, and atmosphere created in the field.

The Ultras manifest their support in auditory and visual presentations designed to transform the pitch's sphere from an athletic dimension to festival-like dimension and instill fear into the hearts of the opposing team and fans. They rely on military like organization and artistically strong visual shows and chants. One of the most noticeable features is their visual displays where a predisposed setup of fans wearing different sets of colors coordinate to eventually form a picture or a message to the team. Their visual displays also includes the use of flares at some instances. Using the flares is usually paired with audio effects, which are composed of predisposed songs and chants members of the group are expected to memorize and recite, while drums are setting the tone of the chants and songs combined with orchestrated unified movements that draw an overall unified. It is worth noting that the Ultras have been predominantly from the south as a phenomenon that recently started gaining grounds in northern countries like Germany and Norway.

Most Ultras associations are financially independent, self-funded groups mainly through members' contributions and sales of products that are desirable within their groups such as shirts, flags, banners, and flares. The financial independence help their autonomy in decision making while actively interfering in the club's policy or approach to the game. Their financial power over their club of allegiance made it easier to form parallel bodies of accountability to the club's

management, ownership, and staff.

The importance of Ultras comes from their contributions in uplifting soccer as a sport, increasing games attendance, increase club sales, and increase club's revenues in general enabling clubs to make higher ranking deals with footballers which in perpetuity increase the club's exposure and increase the fan base. Ultras on social media and in other forms of communications always promote their club ticket and merchandise sales.

Ultra-associations differ across countries or regions, affected by many variables such as cultures, societal boundaries, political contexts, financial limitations, and economic compositions of geographical locations.

The mentioned above characteristics and information are applicable to Ultras across the world. Yet, affected by cultures, Ultras could be inclusive or exclusive of certain populations. Economic conditions can also affect the Ultras behavior: wealthier fan basis are capable of manufacturing more extreme shows that requires financial contributions from members, where poor ultra-associations could not carry projects similar to that of the wealthy ones. This divergence is evident when cross examining Ultras displays from different countries such as Borussia Dortmund Ultras from Germany and Alrajaa Ultras from Morocco. Also, cultures play a role in organizational capacities, and evolvement of relationships between members, German Ultras are more inclusive to women than Moroccan Ultras.

***Not Hooligans:***

While the Ultras share some characteristics with their peers, the Hooligans, it is crucial to separate both. Hooligans stands to be more problematic, destructive, disorganized, and violent entity (Hodges, 2014), while Ultras are more organized, less problematic, less destructive, and less violent. Even the demographical composition varies between the two. Hooligans are

predominantly white, middle-aged working-class males (Hodges, 2014), while the Ultras more racially diverse young people from different economic classes and genders. Yet, the most obvious difference between the two groups is the atmosphere created in the soccer field, where the Ultras tend to create a celebratory atmosphere and use the football field as platform to promote their teams and voice their opinions about the current state of affairs of the club or sometimes the country. The Hooligans almost carry one message through their display which is violent loyalty and intimidation.

***Universal Hooliganism:***

Since their inception, Ultras across the world has been presenting a challenge to security forces. Riots have been taking place everywhere from Italy (A. Testa & Armstrong, 2010) all the way to Morocco (Issam, 2016). In February 2012, Port Said witnessed its largest episode of football-related violence in Egyptian history where seventy-four people killed, and hundreds were injured as a result of Ultras rivalry.

Some researchers are linking such events to fanatic attachment to teams, while other social scientists have been theorizing that the combination of young adults being let down by a global economic system and rapid changes to the world landscape, especially at the fans hometowns, and overall frustration with the political class around issues directly impacting communities could explain such behaviors more comprehensively. At the same time regulating agencies and law enforcement agencies have been working tirelessly to minimize or eliminate such events from stadiums and surrounding areas.

Security forces have dealt with such problems according to the policing system in the country, where in Egypt, the dictatorship was capable of eliminating this phenomenon using force and oppression mechanisms such as widespread arrest campaigns and prosecution of non-offenders

(Alkalij online, 2018). On the other hand, Italy, a country where a due process is required to arrest or prosecute individuals, has been suffering in achieving results similar to their Egyptian counterparts (A. Testa & Armstrong, 2010).

Hardcore fans or Ultras through intergroup rivalries are sparking two different representations: The first is the cheering and the festive representation, which seems to be impressive and adored. The second is the face of violence that has been taunting soccer fields and affecting club match sales and inclusiveness of the stands.

### **Why young Moroccans join the Ultras**

In a conference organized by the Network Coalition of Moroccan Civil Youth and Justice Ministry, Moroccan Labor Minister stated that 72% of the youth are not committed to any useful activity and 82% of them don't play sport, leaving 72% of the Moroccan youth as targets for diverse campaigns of recruitment to groups such as the Ultras (Ashkayen, 2019).

Dr Tafroot (2015) in his article the Sociology Of The Ultras argues; when the Moroccan youth are going through identity formation phase, they're challenged with many constraints, mainly financial, to get involved in any productive activity. The Ultras form cheap, convenient alternatives that harness the youth's creativity and energy in the purpose of producing tangible results. These groups offer inclusive admissions to the ranks regardless of skillset; prospects are guaranteed the entry and participation.

Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (ODT) tackles the subject of group affiliation by reverting it back to two fundamental human needs: the need for assimilation and the need for differentiation. The theory states that social identity is driven by these two fundamental human needs. The need for assimilation could be summarized as the sense of urgency to group inclusion and the feeling of belonging to a certain group. The need for differentiation is the need for individual identity that differs from others (L. Absten, 2011). Sports psychology researchers argued; strong identification with a specific sports team provides a buffer from feelings of depression and alienation, and at the same time fosters feelings of belongingness and self-worth (Branscombe et al., 2004). Also, individuals score less on alienation and depression scales when team identification is present, in addition to score less fatigue, confusion, anger, and tension (L. Absten, 2011).

Sports fandom may provide more than just cheering for a team or feeling of belonging, it

seems to trigger reactions associated with happiness and well-being, which could explain the large fanbases for almost every sport across the world.

Moroccan Ultras associations through the previously explained traditions and displays encompass both aspects of the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory. Being an ultra-fulfill the assimilation need by including the individual in a large array of social activities, and assemble similar bond to brotherhood through the common denominator of team spirit (Alyounsi, 2015). Distinctiveness on the other hand, could be carried out on two different fronts in the Ultra's life. The first front is throughout society where members of Ultras achieve that distinction immediately as groups of individuals through their conversational style when it comes to sports (Alyounsi, 2015). The second front is through contributions to the collective in ideological, conversational, and skills. It was mentioned previously that the Ultras are military-like organizationally, and like the military, they capitalize on individual skills to perform through games and trips (Tafroot, 2015). Additionally, many fans join Ultra groups due to their usefulness, especially to fans that are more attached to teams in terms of attendance. Ultra-groups organize logistics for travel, minimize expenses through discounts on ticket sales, hotel stays, transportation expenses, and thus, providing financial incentive in addition to the many other perks of being an Ultra (Alyounsi, 2015).

Many fans thorough the Al Jazeera Documentary point out to their families as the main reason of their involvement in sport fandom and the Ultras. To them, it felt like carrying a family tradition for generations to come. As for the choice of becoming an Ultra, fans emphasize that due to many hardships in every aspect of life, becoming an ultra-guarantees an extended family, identity based social encounters, and occupation of wasted time otherwise (Alyounsi and

Tafroot, 2015). As a result, there are many reasons to join the Ultras from both psychological and psychosocial aspects, as well as financial incentives to join the group.

***Inception and development:***

Moroccan football fan associations have been present since the inception of football clubs in Morocco. Although there has been no documentation on when or where the first football fan association started, speculations point towards Casa Blanca as the inception city of sport fandom since it is the largest sporting city in the kingdom (Alyounsi, 2015).

Sport fandom is intergenerational in Morocco according to Aljazeera's documentary interviewees. Most interviewees state their rootedness in the sports fandom culture through their family and society (Alyounsi, 2015). Morocco's historical drop with nonaligned politically active personnel has not been the best according to many international and national human rights organizations and has been one of the main provocations of the February 20<sup>th</sup> movement. Hence, it makes sense that in the context of authoritarian regime's cultures, sports are considered to be a safe social topic. Thus, it becomes somewhat dominant in day to day conversations with acquaintances and social groups. The growth of sport fandom created space for fans associations to form and prosper opening the room for more fanatic fans to connect and take central position rather than being on the periphery.

The Moroccan Ultras as a phenomenon started surfacing in 2005 (Tafroot, 2015) and since Ultras associations grew in numbers and influence that after the national assembly in accordance to riots law 09/09 passed a legislation in 2016 dissolving the Ultras associations, the Ultras pressured the Moroccan league by boycotting matches and products (Union, 2016; El Masaiti, 2017) until the government was forced to lift the ban in 2018 (Hesport, 2018).

A dispute has been taking place about the first Ultras association in the country. Two claims

have been established to answer the question of which association was the first Moroccan Ultras association? Since there has not been any documentation regarding the matter, there is no way to verify which claim is true. In June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005, a fan group of Al Raja called La Click Celtic convened and concluded the establishment of the Green Boys association. The parallel story is coming from the royal military Ultras whom claim that they have been the first to display their banner on a play field in October 2005 (Souk Sport, 2005).

2006 witnessed a large portion of Ultras associations forming, this information was concluded from the self-assigned abbreviations of the Ultras in Morocco. Moroccan Ultras carry pride in their inception dates. Every abbreviation of Ultra association carries the Ultras initials and inception date. For example, UGB2005 is the abbreviation of Green Boys Ultras: UGB are the initials for Ultras Green Boys and 2005 is their year of inception. The self-assigned abbreviations that I was able to locate was UGB2005 of AL Raja Casablanca, UE2006 Ultras Eagles of Al Raja Casablanca, UGG2006 Green Gladiators of Al Raja Casablanca, UW2005 Ultras Winners of Al Wedad Casablanca, UFT2006 Fatal Tigers of Fas, UA2005 Ultras Askary of Royal Army Rabat, UCR2006 Crazy Boys Alkawkab of Marrakech. Through the abbreviations we can conclude that the inception years of a large portion of the Ultras associations dates back to the years 2005 and 2006.

Sufficient information proven hard to find in regards to the historical development of the ultras, therefore, there will not be any elaboration to how the movement grew to encompass over a million Moroccan according to the assistant chief of public safety in Casa Blanca (Nour, 2016). Anzola suggests that the Moroccan government allowed the Ultras phenomenon to expand and take presence since it seems harmless to the political class, and it provide an alternative to activism through occupying youths time with harmless activities (2018).

Unregulated, unregistered, and unknown, Ultras associations started forming across the country and young people joined them in droves, starting from Casablanca reaching the furthest ends of the Kingdom. These Ultras seemed to be competing amongst each other just as their teams of allegiance, but their battlefield attracted more attention than their teams did. Some unconventional media outlets such as YouTube channels picked their work and displayed it to the rest of the world. YouTube channel, World Ultras, published Ultras Winners choreography as the 8<sup>th</sup> and the coalition of AL Raja Ultras as the 2<sup>nd</sup> best choreographies in season 2013-2014 across the world (World Ultras, 2014). The web site, These Football Times, dedicated an entire article about Green Boys after their relentless support of to their team, Al Raja, in the world clubs championship (Newman, 2014). Ultras Winners also received a worldwide classification in terms of size and organization (Alayame24, 2017).

Ultras society seems to be formed, expanded, designed, and carried out by males in an exclusive manner. Lately, strides have been made by women to enter these all male exclusive tribes. Women have been starting Ultras associations and been joining already existing ultras (Bukamis, 2018). Women in the stands are not a usual seen in Morocco, culturally, it's not acceptable for women to be around that much of men, especially the Ultras kind of males. There are two main blockades for entry to the football stands. The first is the conservative culture, which sees mixing of genders at any event impacts the society negatively and affect the reputation of girls. The second is football fields tradition: football tradition in the fields are exclusively occupied by males, and females' entrance to that world will force them to change their behavior in the field. Hence, many female Ultras reported being verbally harassed or gotten caught at a shaming process by the family for going to the field (Bukamis, 2018). Inclusivity isn't the Ultras best suit, especially in Morocco, where the expected behavior in the culture is

against gender mixing, and since Stadiums are pre-occupied with males, it is only culturally obvious for women to not band up with the pre-existing groups.

*The Ultras way of life:*

“بالتشجيع و الإخلاص نعيش حياة الالتراس” in cheering and devotion we live the life of Ultras is the Ultras motto. Ultras in Morocco live under a strict constitution (Tafroot, 2015), the constitution is divided to three principles; opposing modern football, opposing the media, and opposing the security forces (Adel, 2014).

Their media opposition left a huge gap between the Ultras and the public, their own self-defensive mechanism seems to contribute to them being misunderstood as a group of people (Gritti, 2014). Not many know or understand much about the Ultras culture in Morocco, and there haven't been any sociological or ethnographic studies performed to provide further insights to their moods of operation and organizing.

Their doctrine constitutes full financial independence, innovation in the quest of supporting their teams, ninety minutes stand-off, and extreme devotion to uplifting the players' spirits and tuning off the other team's supporters. They occupy the blind area in the stands “Curva”, and are not allowed to sit down for the whole period of the game (Tafroot, 2015).

Ultras doctrine does not view the Ultras as a political movement or youth groups with political affiliation. It also bans members from affiliating with any political party or social movement that is geared towards any political involvement. Moroccan Ultras have contributed to social movements across the state, especially free speech movements.

Ultras do not all involve in the same collective, rather they assemble in small sub-divisions lead by a person called Kapo. The Kapo is the leader of the an Ultra division, his main responsibilities are to establish communications with other divisions, regulate and organize the

members when performing on the stands, and create excitement around the audience for 90 minutes (Matadores , 2012). Kapos are group of extreme fans that usually initiate the Ultras groups and subdivisions. They design and manage the organizational structures, as well as conduct meetings and devise strategies for the groups (Tafroot , 2015). Kapos are the spirit of the Ultras and the ultimate decision makers according to the Ultras constitution (Matadores, 2012).

Banners carry a large significance in the Ultras culture. Banners to Ultras represent group, pride, team of allegiance, and inception date. Two banners are printed for every group, away banner and home banner. Members of the groups are expected to carry the away banner when team of allegiance is playing at an away field, while the home banner is always hanging on the home field (Tafroot, 2015).

Opposition of the security forces is ingrained in their constitution, they view the security forces as oppressors enforcing regulations to limit their displays, hinder their organizations, and dismantle their shows (Adel, 2014). Hence, there is always tension between security forces and Ultra groups.

### ***Hooliganism:***

Up until 2016, Moroccan Ultras harnessed equal fame of their teams of allegiance, their chants, choreography, and shows affected the wider public and the match day fans positively, and the overall sentiment towards this group of young and passionate people carrying out the best shows in soccer matches. Between 2006 and 2016, it seemed that the movement grew in an upwards in a non-problematic smooth sail. This conclusion was produced through extensive research that couldn't prove otherwise. Some instances of riots and clashes with the security forces have been documented in that period. Yet, it hasn't been as significant in scale as post March 2016 period. Wahbi (2015) talked about the marginalization of the Ultras in the city of

Agadir, and about the constant harassment of security forces of these groups that resulted in plenty of clashes between both parties and the creation of anti-police chants and mottos such as “A.C.A.B” (all cops are bastards) as expressions of marginalization and insecurity.

A series of events took place and initiated a move of the public opinion from adoration to hate and need of regulation moving the overall sentiment towards negative. After all, these groups have been complicit in many fights and riots that left plenty of casualties for the press to document and the public to see. In March 2016, after a match between Al Raja and Al Refe, riots were ignited between Green Boys and Eagles Ultras of Al Raja, causing the destruction of the playfield stands and leaving two deaths and over fifty injured. The event was later called Black Saturday (Issam, 2016). This event triggered a widespread response not only from the government but also from the Moroccan public, calls to dissolve and prosecute leaders of these groups became louder and more prevalent (Issam, 2016).

The Ultras susceptibility to violence formed a dilemma to security forces and legislators symmetrically, and hence, consensus was hard to be made over the kind of retaliation regulatory bodies should make (Issam, 2016). The overall decision instilled harsh sanctions on Al Raja club that are designed to impact the club financially (IRM News, 2016). Prosecutors were able to indict, prosecute, and advocate for a verdict on 36 individuals of conspiracy and active participation in riots to bring the total indictments to 55 (EFE, 2016). Following the indictments, Green Boys published a memorandum of expected optimal behavior of Ultras and issued a non-remorseful apology that listed demands to the club and security personnel (Green Boys, 2016).

2016 has been a year filled with riot events led by the Ultras and costed hefty financial losses to Moroccan clubs and stadiums. With no direct accountability measures and no systems in place to absorb any security threats or enough training for security forces to deflate rather than

aggravate conflicts, regulators at the Internal Affairs Ministry and the Royal Football Association saw that a translation of the Egyptian experience with the Ultras could be beneficial, Hence, they instituted a law similar to the Egyptian version of dissolving and banning the Ultras associations (Aljazeera, 2016). The policy's proposed outcome was to ensure the prevention of riot events in soccer fields and limit destruction of public properties. Hence, save the government time to peruse other irregularities in the system. The ban regulated the field entry and prohibited cheering tools such as flares, flags, banners, and carton boards or any of the tools Ultras may use to form and carry out their shows (Lakm, 2016).

Observers saw the ban as an extreme reaction condemning an entire group for behavior few are responsible for (AL Baraka, 2016). While others speculated that it was a political move considering it lazy politics approach by the Internal Affairs Ministry, they considered it to be an infringement on freedom of expression and choice (Yasin, 2016).

***Political activism:***

The Ultras ban marks the beginning period of directed and coordinated Ultras activism. As a response to the ban, Ultras formed a united front to combat the ban and advocate for Ultras rights on the playfield or out in the streets (Lakm, 2016).

The period between 2016 and 2018 marked a period of solidarity, hostility suspension, and coordination between all Ultra groups (Union, 2016). Their agreed upon strategy was to unite and advocate for the common struggle of rolling back the ban. The overall objective was to force the Royal Football College and the Ministry of Internal Affairs to lift the Ban (Union, 2016; Lakm, 2016). Through the course of a year and half, the Ultras across Morocco produced plenty of material voicing their discontent and disapproval of limiting their freedom of expression. Some Ultra groups like Green Boys and Halala Guys produced songs and videos of politically

heavy content designed to increase sympathy towards their cause and affect the public opinion in a positive way towards their desired outcome. Meanwhile some groups did not conform to the bans, which criminalized Ultras symbols and gave the authorities the right to remove symbols such as banners, flairs, and the Kapos stands. The strategy provided some leeway for the security forces to act upon the laws instituted and actively intervene in the stands. Thus, harassing the Ultras and creating enough tensions to generate constant clashes between both parties. I was unable to find any news articles or documentation of the Ultras strategy, therefore, I had to extract the strategy through analyzing videos of clashes such as (Belkihel, 2017).

Belkihel (2017) provides an insight to the strategy in motion, where the Ultras through extreme organization under the Kapo's leadership are not only able of forcing the anti-riot police to initiate the violence, but ending the clash forcing the police to stand down after forming an existential threat upon them. Ultra-Winners hang the banner forcing the security forces to enter the stands in attempt of applying the law and removing the banner. After entering the stands, in order to get to the banner, the security personnel are forced to roughen some of the Ultras standing in the way of the banner giving the Ultras an opportunity for self-defense. Winners under the command of the Kapo surround the security personnel forcing the rest of the anti-riot police to enter the stands in a rush and employ violence against Winners to ensure the safety of personnel in danger, justifying the Winners retaliation. In the video, the Kapo gives the order to the rest of the Ultras to engage the security and forcing them out of the stands. A giant wave attacks the security personnel forcing them out of the stands via violence. This strategy ensures the delivery of two objectives: the first is enforcing the image of the security forces as violent oppressors and the second is portraying the Ultras as groups of innocent young men retaliating to the violence inflicted upon them. The same mechanism could be witnessed in Kifache Tv (2017)

where disputing Ultra factions Al Raja and the Royal Army's suspend hostilities and stand together forming a united front through chants. After the security forces intervention of pushing back some of the Royal Army's Ultras from attacking Al Raja Ultras section. Although Kifache Tv portrays the security forces in a positive manner, it sheds the light over the Ultras strategy towards advocating for their overall goal.

Ultra-Winners, unlike Eagles and Halala boys, have taken a direct approach with their produced chants. Their most well-known chant is titled "Jena Nklashi El Hokoma". It means "we came to clash with the government" (Appendix). Jena Nklashi El Hokoma carried a charged connotation to standing up the government even through violence. In (Belkihel, 2017) right a few seconds before the Ultras mass offensive on the security personnel, they start singing Jena Nklashi El Hokoma, either to instill fear in security force or to warn them of the retaliation.

Through the period between May 2016 and March 2018, the Ultras employed the strategy of non-conforming to the instituted law and was successful in framing the security forces as the perpetrators of the violence stalking the Moroccan fields, confirming the widespread Moroccan belief of the tyrannical government and gaining widespread support from the public to lift the ban.

The lazy politics approach by the Internal Affairs Ministry and Moroccan Football Association through an uncalculated intervention awakened and incentivized sleeping giant that is the Ultras to participate in the public discourse and champion social movements (Yasin, 2016). Hence, a transformation of the stadiums began to take place making the stadiums more reflective of the Moroccan experience, and effective place to voice dissent without suffering the ramifications of conventional street protesting (Benes, 2018).

The innovative activism delivered optimal outcomes by forcing the Internal Affairs Ministry

to roll back the law 09.09 of anti-riot and stadium safety policy and reinstitute the Ultras rights of freedom of expression and speech in march 2018 (Hesport, 2018b), apparently with no lessons learned from that experience.

***Contributing Factors to hooliganism:***

Black Saturday is one of many instances of Ultras rioting, violent altercations between fans or with the security forces are numerous. Most riots leave a trail of damaged public and private properties that sometimes causes shutdowns to sporting facilities and arenas around the country, hence, impacting other beneficiaries of such facilities. An official count of violent riots has not been released by the Internal Affairs Minister, yet, through the research I came across over 21 documented riot events, fourteen of the documented riots were either between the two Casablanca teams Ultras or between one Casablanca Ultras and Ultras from other cities. Social scientists, such as Dr. Tafroot, tried to conceptualize the sociology of the Ultras and translate the violence phenomenon from a psychological and sociological perspectives, yet, shied away from the Ultras reality in his paper “Sociology Of The Moroccan Ultras” (2015). Through the research I conducted, plenty of underlying reasons that could be contributing to the dilemma of Moroccan hooliganism.

***Sphere of Violence:***

Moroccans as a collective are no strangers to the scene of violence nor are they sheltered away from it. All forms of violence became more of a daily scene in Morocco. Dr, Rashid Jarmoni (2014) in his study of violence in Morocco tried to rationalize the causality behind the violence surge through an intersectional research that dismantled the underlying reasons to this phenomenon. His analysis established a connection between violence and deteriorating trust in the political class. Progressive transition to the unfamiliar democracy after generations of

oppression which rooted the idea of violence as a solution to handle opposition of every sort. The deterioration of educational institutions due to mostly failed development policies and developmental capacity. The regime's fallback from enforcing accepted ideologies and self-expression, which in-turn disproportionately contributed to a state of chaos, thus, emboldened disorderly persons to commit violence at higher rates than previous periods since the government doesn't have the means necessary to enforce the due process imposed in the new constitution (Jarmoni, 2014).

The uptick of violence is not only confined to Ultras through riot events, rather it is a widespread national phenomenon that is manifesting in a series of dysfunctions within the Moroccan society. Dr Jarmouni claims that violence documented cases reached around five hundred thousand cases in 2014 (2014).

### ***Drugs:***

The CIA states in its world factbook about Morocco:

“the world's largest producer and exporter of cannabis; total production for 2015-2016 growing season estimated to be 700 metric tons; shipments of hashish mostly directed to Western Europe; transit point for cocaine from South America destined for Western Europe; significant consumer of cannabis” (CIA, 2019)

Drugs also have been taking a large presence in the Moroccan society according to Awzoz (2016). It was estimated that Moroccans internal drug consumption reached 1.5 billion Moroccan Dirhams in 2012, and Hallucinogenic drugs are reported to be commonly used by all demographics. 50% of youth between sixteen and eighteen smokes Hashish, while 8% are cocaine users, and 66% of users acquire their substance in a smooth manner (Awzoz, 2016).

Youth high on drugs and weaponized with light weapons are a common scene in the

Moroccan football stadiums according to Khaled (2016); a claim that both Ultra groups and the police share almost after every rioting incident occurrence.

***Marginalization and unemployment:***

The youth in Morocco, just like the overall Moroccan public, are suffering from the marginalization and exclusion in development policy. Recreation also prove to be difficult for over 50% of the population's youth (AlAshraf, 2015). According to AlAshraf, experts have proved a link between marginalization, unemployment, and radical behavior. The absence of future prospect and opportunity to the Moroccan youth along with ever increasing prices and life demands generates disappointment that is translating later to violence.

***Ultra-wars:***

Graffiti, riots, rivalries, and territories, Ultras in Morocco adopt gangs like approach as a style of life. Though most Ultras claimed of being peaceful collective, they do have many similarities to gangs. The territorial war takes the form of graffiti prints, Ultra groups carry out raids at other Ultras territories and print graffiti as a form of hostility. Across Morocco, there are plenty of hostilities and alliances between Ultra groups (Appendix c).

Ultras group	Rivalries
Al Raja Ultras	Royal Army Ultras Al Wedad Ultras Marrakech Ultras Tanja Ultras Kenitra Ultras Meknes Ultras Ultras Hociema
Al Wedad Ultras	Royal Army Ultras Al Raja Ultras Marrakech Ultras Tanja Ultras Kenitra Ultras
Royal Army Ultras Rabat	Al Raja Ultras AL Wedad Ultras

	Fatal Tigers Ultras Meknes Ultras Ultras Matadores Tinja Ultras
Marrakech Ultras	AL Raja Ultras AL Wedad Ultras Royal Army Ultras El Jadida Ultras Agadir Ultras

Source: (Boubrdn, 2013)(discourse analysis,2019)

The events following the Casablanca Classico between Al Raja and AL Wedad Ultras, the clashes that resulted in destruction of public and private properties in the city (Lmoussaoui Tv, 2018). Instances of that nature are well documented on YouTube between all Ultras rivalries across Morocco.

According to the discourse analysis, an optimal security procedure is to prevent the mixing of different Ultras while being admitted to fields. Ultras pointed out that most riots between Ultra groups starts before entering the stadiums and while waiting on the line for admission.

## Conclusion

This discourse analysis found that the Moroccan public sentiment towards the government on the corruption issue was 100% negative. The entirety of commentators' body viewed the government as extremely corrupt. Most repeated keywords were treason, corrupt, marginalization, and mafia. There seem to be an extreme distrust in the whole political class. The public regards the political class as a mafia set out to drain the country's resources and transfer the wealth into their own pockets. The public did not make much distinction between elected governmental personnel and career governmental personnel, and from that failure of distinction we can understand how the rioting Ultras has been viewed as marginalized groups often.

The discourses analysis also concluded that the public perception of the Ultras is negative: 75% of the public viewed the Ultras as a destructive group of young men, while 30% of Ultras pages commenters viewed Ultras behavior as destructive and felt that Ultras should be held accountable to their actions. 70% of the Ultras pages commenters viewed the Ultras as freedom fighters and praised their behavior since it represented fighting the corrupt system for basic freedoms. Nine commenters pointed out that security personnel behavior at the playfield either aggravated already existing tensions between Ultras or provoked the Ultras to riot or attack the security forces.

The Most hated faction of the Ultras are all factions of AL Raja Ultras. Green Boys, Curva Sud, and Eagles are viewed as the most emotional and uncivil factions of all Ultras, followed by Royal Army Ultras of Rabat. Although being complicit with a number of riots the most admired Ultra faction is Winners Ultras.

### ***AL Raja Ultras perspective:***

Through the research and the discourse analysis, AL Raja Ultras dominated the news cycle.

Al Raja fans reached international fame for being one of the most impressive Ultras through elaborate shows, extreme organization, and meaningful lyrics that occupied the Arab news cycle, stadiums, and streets. Through their activism, they won the hearts of millions and provided a platform for the public by voicing grievances through their amazing articulate songs. Yet this amazing group of young Moroccans has its share of disturbing events and negative media coverage. AL Raja Ultras has been the main reason behind the Ultras ban and has been complicit of a large multitude of rioting events, as a matter of fact, AL Raja Ultras has the largest hostility list of all Moroccan Ultras and is the largest numbers wise.

Their participation in rioting events has been affecting the public perception of these groups, that has been shifting from positive to negative rapidly. The discourse analysis tried to extract the AL Raja fans' perspective of the recent rioting events to assess if the overall group is taking any steps to deal with the problem. Yet, after examining the three official pages of the three factions, all three pages failed to address the issue, rather all three pages portrayed the Ultras as marginalized and targeted by the regulating bodies.

Al Raja fans and Ultras viewed sanctions on the club as an unjust retaliation that serves the function of punishing an unrelated entity for the actions of few fans. Relating the fans to the club and holding the club responsible for the actions of individuals that the club can't control was described as absurd. Also, in Ultra pages, plenty of conspiracy theories have been floating around ranging from rival Ultras working in cooperation with regulation bodies to destruct Al Raja, to governmental conspiracy targeting Al Raja Ultras to eventually destroy the Ultras and curb their political influence. Hence, sanctions were viewed negatively by the Ultras collective, and been denounced by the entirety of the collective. Ultras Facebook pages called upon the clubs to increase prices for sanctioned matches, and launched ticket buying campaign to support

the club financially through sanctions. AL Raja Ultras collective proved to the Moroccan Football College that sanctions will never affect the team, nor it will be able to combat the rioting phenomenon, and that it needs to roll out better policy to achieve results.

The Ultras studied as a collective had the tendency to dismiss rioting events and steer away from having such discussions on their forums. There were few posts decent enough for data mining on YouTube. YouTube provided a better forum for discussion since the views were not exclusively fans or members of the Ultras culture, hence, the discussions raised from all different members of society made it interesting as raw data. Ordinary commenters pointed out the contributions paid by the Ultras culture of the rioting events, while Ultras either denied the association between rioting individuals and Ultras culture. Self-professed Al Raja Ultras ignored the scenes of rioting and dismissed it as an issue. They rather focused their energy on spreading propaganda of a conspiracy being implemented against them. The denial is strikingly high amongst forum participants from the Ultras. The denial attitude is constantly replicated at Ultras exclusive forums, where there's plenty of conformation to theories that do not seem realistic. Ultras seems to all be convinced that some external forces are trying to breakdown their team and their collective.

Ultras posts glorify the struggle of the Ultras and address them as freedom fighters against a tyrannical government that is trying to take away their freedom of expression and speech by entrapping them in situations that is known to be hazardous. On the Ultras pages, plenty of blaming goes around, hence, the blame doesn't seem to reach the common denominator of all the rioting events AL Raja Ultras has been complicit in, the comment sections of these groups overwhelmingly supported the blaming campaign and dismissed commentators that pointed out the group's behavior as problematic, either by not engaging with commenters or by overloading

the commenters with replies filled with hate and disgrace. The group think and social pressure seems to be operational when it comes to the Ultras.

The perceived marginalization comes from a place where the need of validation is more important than looking inwards and changing behavior. The Royal Football College is acting from a place of limiting harm to public property and to individuals. Yet, the Ultras are viewing it as a coordinated campaign by a group of governmental bodies to oppress the Ultras as a response to “ Fe Bladi Dalamouni”, and the Ultras involvement in other movements geared to incite change in the current state of affairs. This misunderstanding, and the lack of communication between both parties, is forming a problem with a foreseeable destructive consequence to both groups.

***Ramifications:***

Regulating bodies mandate is to work with the public and for the public on establishing mechanisms to protect the public from harm and increase safety across board. Hence, the Moroccan regulating bodies are not embodying this approach. Instead, the Moroccan bodies are using a top down, hierarchal system and expecting the public to follow through fear of consequences. From that perspective we can understand where the Ultras are getting their sense of marginalization from, and how the struggle to freedom ideology is formed. With no place on the table and no understanding of their perspective, hostilities between security forces and Ultras are bound to exist with no foreseeable solution but to include the Ultras in the dialogue of how to prevent rioting events from happening.

Imposing solutions through regulations on groups without understanding their perspective is not an optimal approach to solving any problem. Obviously, the sanctioning system implemented by the Royal Football College is not solving the issue of hooliganism, rather it is aggravating it.

This aggravating and constant marginalization of large groups of young men has the potential of incentivizing those young men for more radical approaches in what they perceive is their struggle.

Social exclusion and rejection proven to cause extreme behavior such as radical actions that could involve terrorism as a mean to deliver political messages. Further, marginalizing the Ultras as a collective has the potential of transforming such groups into terroristic groups. According to (Lobato, Moya, Moyano, & Trujillo, 2018), social alienation and the opportunity to gain considerable significance such as becoming a hero or a martyr could trigger a quest for significance for groups and individuals. The research concludes that social and political alienation are factors in progress in regards of the Ultras identity and participation, paired with high youth unemployment and overall marginalization, make Morocco a fertile ground for various quests of significance. The quest of significance is a theoretical framework that obtained an outstanding empirical evidence for validity. It hypnotizes an intersecting multivariate process in forming what is perceived by individuals as quests of significance (Lobato, Moya, Moyano, & Trujillo, 2018).

Loss of significance derived from concentrated campaign to delegitimize group's struggle and marginalize perspectives could prove consequential to the entirety of state in regards of safety, that could create a butterfly effect resulting in hindering the recent transformation to somewhat democratic form of governance. Also, demonized groups of people are easy targets for recruitment to radical organizations. Hence, if Ultras refrain from participating in radicalized activities, Ultras member base has the possibly of being susceptible to radical messages.

Potential combat with radicalized Ultras is a scary thought, considering their organization, hierarchal systems, and anonymous membership approach, a conflict with such groups will

certainly deliver devastating consequences to both combating parties. Hence, reaching any sort of agreement between the security forces and the Ultras should be a priority. The Moroccan regulating bodies should work on establishing channels of communications with the Ultras, not only for solution discussion, but for concrete planning to eliminate irregularities paired with Ultras game attendance, pre-, during, and post-games.

Morocco is already having an issue with radicalization that could only become bigger if the regulating bodies and law enforcement did not change their current operational mechanism to become more inclusive of affected populations. The top down mechanism of protecting the population from itself is only operational in places where democracy is not the ruling system. The consequences of not adapting inclusive approaches could prove destructive and catastrophic to a country that recently adopted a democratic approach of governance.

One possible solution could be involving the Ultras in managing the security of fields in cooperation with security forces. Yet, this solution is only possible if Ultras, security forces represented by the Ministry of Interior Affairs, and the Royal Football College reached somewhat of an agreement to suspend hostilities and agree to find common grounds for working together. This approach has the potential of decreasing violence in stands as well as the streets of Moroccan cities. The inclusive approach could also reduce spending on fields security and repairs, freeing a portion of their budget to approach other imminent issues such as combating radicalization.

Public participation could also reduce rioting events making Football fields safer. Safety can form an inclusive environment where more diverse fans have access to playfields, and thus, increasing revenue for teams and tax revenue for the government. There is plenty of potential from including the Ultras in the decision-making process and plenty of benefits from employing

the Ultras potential in organizing and managing safety in fields. Aside from combating radicalization.

The Ultras are both political activists and violent fans that have concrete beliefs of being marginalized and are willing to die before abandoning their cause. Therefore, it is up to the regulating bodies to study and establish a solution to ease the problematic phenomenon.

This issue is extremely complex for any researcher that is not Moroccan, directly involved and attached to the disputed parties to make any suggestion to the Moroccan government of how to proceed in dealing with the current situation. Such problem needs a specialized team of researchers and conflict transformation specialists familiar with the Moroccan context to make any incremental positive changes to reduce and eliminate the violence.

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## Appendices

### Appendix (A)

Discourse analysis data collection and extraction methodology

Discourse Analysis (sentiment towards government)							
Post	comments	% value		Linguistic value		Keyword Selection	researcher's comments
		Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos		
Why do you hate the government	I don't hate the government	0%	100%	5	0	Don't	The subject insinuating a certain degree of love to the government.
	The government is corrupt	100%	0	5	0	corrupt	The subject implying that the government is corrupt.
results		50%	50%	2.5	2.5	Corrupt	Research recent government corruption scandals

Discourse Analysis (sentiment towards government)							
Post	comments	% value		Linguistic value		Keyword Selection	researcher's comments
		Neg	Pos	Neg	Pos		
Why do you hate the government	Why would I hate the government, country couldn't be better	0%	100%	5	0	Couldn't be any better	The subject insinuating a certain degree of love to the government.
	The government is corrupt	100%	0	5	0	corrupt	The subject implying that the government is corrupt.
results		50%	50%	2.5	2.5	Corrupt	Research recent government corruption scandals

**Appendix (B)**

## discourse analysis post selection and Rationale

Page	Post	# comments	Rationale
Facebook صوت الشعب	This page was selected for the following reasons: -This page represents an opposition party to the current ruling party. Choosing an opposition discussion platform in an inclusive approach geared towards capitulating the largest amount of voices possible. -after investigating almost 400 follower's Facebook profiles, the conclusion was that most commentators are well educated based on professed education in their Facebook profiles and linguistic expressive variables use.		
	علاش كانكر هو حزب العدالة والتنمية Link: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cha3bpress/posts/2300300803627887">https://www.facebook.com/cha3bpress/posts/2300300803627887</a> Translation: Why do you hate the Justice and Development party	42	-This post was selected to extract the public's perception of the ruling party and creating a baseline for further research the issues raised by the Moroccan public. -This post is Biased against the current Moroccan ruling party. Yet after examining the comment section, the bias served as an incentive for the commentators to voice their opinions more freely and discuss plenty of issues that lead the researcher to formulate the issues discourse and activism section in its current form.
YouTube	You tube was selected to be included in the discourse analysis for the following reasons: - its large user base around the world. -the anonymity it provides for commenters where they are able to express their opinions of the Ultras without the fear of being tracked down or terrorized. -videos are more expressive than written media, and it allows the viewers to formulate their own opinions of the matter discussed " the researcher has take into consideration the angle in which the videos were recorded and the coverage time of participants , as well as the title bias ,and the Bias against the perpetrators to which the comments are expected to be against"		
	1.1 خطير.. شرارة الشغب تشتعل بعد كلاسيكو الرجاء والجيش-مشاهد مروعة Link: ( <a href="#">alyoum 24, 2019</a> ) (alyoum 24, 2019) Translation: Dangerous .. Riot erupts after Classico Al Raja and Royal Army - horrific sights.	50	-This video was selected to extract the overall averaged opinion towards rioting, and the sentiment towards police forces performing riot-control measures. -the researcher is well aware of the bias against rioters in this video and will take into account the possible generalizing defamation of the entirety of the Ultra group. -the researcher is aware of the description Bias and the effect of commenter expectations and the psychological process of forming the comments.
	1.2 أسباب شغب مباراة التتويج 2017/06/12 Link: )Belkihel, 2017( Translation: The reasons for the riot match the coronation 12/06/2017.	Total 360 Relevant 73	-this video offers a unique perspective of the Ultras ability to manipulate and force the security forces into clashing with the Ultras. -this video was used in the Lit-Review as a vehicle to extract the Ultras strategy in changing the public opinion. -this video will either validate hypothesized analysis of the Ultras

			<p>strategy or refute it through the comment section.</p> <p>-the researcher will take into consideration the lenses in which the security forces are being portrayed in therefore no comments regarding oppression will be accounted for or analyzed by the researcher.</p>
	<p>1.3 بحضور "باتمان" .. مناوشات عسكرية في "دونور"</p> <p>Link: (Kifache Tv, 2017) In the presence of "Batman". Royal Army Ultras skirmishes in Donor</p>	93	<p>-this video was included in the research analysis, but was not intended to be included in the discourse analysis, But after reading the comment section this post was added for the following reasons:</p> <p>-commenters on this post seem to be heavily Biased against Al Raja fans (in this case the victims) and in support of the royal army Ultras.</p> <p>-Many commenters self-identified as Al Wedad Ultras (Rivals of Al Raja).</p> <p>- Al Raja Ultras chanting in solidarity with their attackers (Royal Army Ultras) against their protectors in this case (security forces).</p> <p>- the dichotomy of this video seems of interest for the comment section to be analyzed.</p>
<p>Facebook البرتوش</p>	<p>- based on the reviews, reviews over this Facebook page contrast between anti-Islamic and subjective reporting and integrity.</p> <p>- the researcher concluded that, this Facebook page could be used as representative of the Moroccan society, and the Moroccan political discourse.</p> <p>-after investigating the comments section on few posts of this page, the researcher concluded that this page has the potential of delivering divergent opinions on different matter and it could be beneficial to form a sample of conflicted opinions regarding social issues. therefore, could be provide a sufficient insight to the mechanism in which the Moroccan online discourse operates.</p>		
	<p>رفض جماهير حسنية اكادير للتشيد الوطني وتصفير ورفع الاعلام الامازيغية في ملعب أدرار اليوم</p> <p>Link: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/albartouch/videos/2212901848959776/">https://www.facebook.com/albartouch/videos/2212901848959776/</a></p> <p>translation: Hassania Agadir fans rejected the national anthem and screamed and raised the Amazigh media in Adrar Stadium today.</p>	52	<p>This post was selected for the following reasons:</p> <p>-It taps into an emotional and divisive issue in Morocco.</p> <p>-It has the potential of delivering an insight to the opinions formulated over peaceful protesting.</p> <p>-It includes Ultras peacefully protesting, isolated from violence and conflicts.</p> <p>-It supplements an overall susceptibility to democracy indicator.</p>
<p>Facebook Ultra- Green boys</p>	<p>This Facebook page was selected for the following reasons:</p> <p>-this is the official page of the second most famous and most controversial ultra-group in Morocco.</p> <p>-acquiring the Green Boys perspective towards rioting events.</p> <p>-acquiring hypotheses adopted by the Ultra group in explaining rioting events.</p> <p>-acquiring ultras perspective over sanctions from the government on their club of allegiance.</p>		
	<p>فسلام على كل شهيد سار على درب محاربة الطغيان وسلام على من شارف على أعواد المشانق ليعدم فنظر للسماء بيت شكواه الله ونطق الشهادة وأسلم روحه وسلام على أطفال تيمموا ونساء ترملوا وسلام على كل أم تكلى تتحسس الآن سريز ابنها الفارغ المرتبب إلى الأبد. قبلة على ارتعاشه يدكم ورحمة كائنة وحق سيكون</p> <p>Link:</p>	47	<p>This post was selected for the following reasons:</p> <p>-This post was published on 02-26-2019 after the rioting events took place in Rabat analyzed in 1.1 post of the discourse analysis.</p>

	<p>(دولة الرجاء العظمى, 2018). Ultras/photos/?tab=album&amp;album_id=2048959965173788 Translation: a salute to every martyr walked on the path of fighting oppression, and a salute to everyone walking the path of execution, whom looked up to the sky and told god about his suffering then gave his life. and a salute to children whom became orphans and women whom became widows, and a salute to every mother bereaved feeling the empty bed of her son forever. A kiss on your shaky hands.</p>		<p>-It is charged with linguistic values that symbolizes martyrdom and struggle against oppression. -It is charged with linguistic values reflect sacrifice, and sadness. - this post may provide valuable insight into the ultras perspective of the following issues: Hypotheses adopted by the Ultra group in explaining rioting events. perspective towards rioting events perspective over sanctions from the government on the club</p>
<p>Facebook دولة الرجاء العظمى</p>	<p>This Facebook page was selected for the following reasons: -this is the official page of the most famous and most controversial ultra-group in Morocco. -acquiring the Green Boys perspective towards rioting events. -acquiring hypotheses adopted by the Ultra group in explaining rioting events. -acquiring ultras perspective over sanctions from the government on their club of allegiance</p>		
	<p>عد القرار القاضي في حق الرجاء وجمهوره، بإجراء مقابلتين بدون جمهور، الشيء الذي يخالف القوانين الجديدة للجامعة والتي تنص على الحكم بمقابلة واحدة كحد أقصى من العقوبات ، إضافة وعليه نهيب لجمهور الرجاء عامة المساهمة في حملة شراء تذاكر المقابلات القادمة و بشكل ستكده من خسائر مالية، وهذا ما كبير لتعويض الفريق في من أجل تشجيع وتحفيز اللاعبين للحفاظ على روح التحدي ومواصلة المنافسة على البطولة، ومن هذا المنبر نطلب رفع ثمن التذكرة إلى 40 درهم في المقابلات المقبلة ، كما نقترح بيع تذاكر مقابلة الجمعة بثمن رمزي . إصرارنا في الدفع بالفريق إلى الأمام و الإخلاص له، أقوى من مكائد المتربصين ، حرية الألتراس هي قضية جميع الجماهير المغربية متحدين من أجل كرامة المشجع، لهذا وجب على الجميع الحيطة والحذر من أي استهداف محتمل في قادم الأيام إلى حكم الغرامات المالية المبالغ فيها والتي لم تكتف فيها الجهات المعنية للأزمة المالية التي يمر منها الفريق ، ملامح الاستهداف بدأت في مقابلة الرجاء بالرباط الأسبوع الماضي حين تم السماح لخروج جمهور الفريقين في دفعة واحدة ومن نفس المنطقة، فلولا الألفاظ الإلهية لكان سيناريو مراكش سيقدم قبلا في الرباط. (Boubrdn, 2013) After the harsh decision on Al Raja and its fans, to play two matches without an audience, a sanction that violates the new laws of the college, which institutes a maximum of one match of the penalties. We plea Al Raja Fans contribute to the campaign and buy tickets for the upcoming match and to compensate the team in what is lost. We will ask you to raise the price of the ticket to AED 40 in future interviews, and we propose selling tickets for Friday's match at a symbolic price. Our insistence on pushing the team forward and loyalty to it, stronger than the intrigues of the traitors, freedom of patronage is the cause of all the Moroccan masses united for the dignity of the Ultras, so everyone should be wary of any possible targeting in the coming days to the rule of excessive financial fines which did not bother</p>	<p>42</p>	<p>This post was selected for the following reasons: -this post was issued after the sanctions was posted on AL Raja following the fan riots. -this post is advocating for members of the Ultras to buy match tickets to support the club financially and Make up for the losses caused by the rioting event. - this post carries a conspiracy theory, therefore, the comment section could either confirm the theory or refute, the analysis will look at the confirmation rate, as well as, internal debate between members in regard to rioting.</p>

	Where the parties concerned to the financial crisis experienced by the team. the features of the targeting began in the match Raja vs Royal Army Rabat last week. when the departure of both fans of the two teams together from the same area fell swoop. without the divine intervention was the scenario of Marrakech will be repeated later in Rabat.		
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**Appendix (C)**

## Ultras rivalries

Ultras group	Rivalries
Al Raja Ultras	Royal Army Ultras Al Wedad Ultras Marrakech Ultras Tanja Ultras Kenitra Ultras Meknes Ultras Ultras Hociema
Al Wedad Ultras	Royal Army Ultras Al Raja Ultras Marrakech Ultras Tanja Ultras Kenitra Ultras
Royal Army Ultras Rabat	Al Raja Ultras AL Wedad Ultras Fatal Tigers Ultras Meknes Ultras Ultras Matadores Tinja Ultras
Marrakech Ultras	AL Raja Ultras AL Wedad Ultras Royal Army Ultras El Jadida Ultras Agadir Ultras

Source (Boubrdn, 2013)(discourse analysis,2019)