

INSTITUTE
ARTICALS

10 MAY
2021



المعهد المصري للدراسات
EGYPTIAN INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES

Egypt: 'football fights' to the beat of patriotic songs

Usama Haggag



WWW.EIPSS-EG.ORG

[f Eipss.EG](https://www.facebook.com/Eipss.EG) [t Eis_EG](https://www.instagram.com/Eis_EG)

TURKEY- ISTANBUL

Bahçelievler, Yenibosna Mh 29 Ekim Cad. No: 7 A2 Blok 3. Plaza D: 64
Tel/Fax: +90 212 227 2262 E-Mail: info@eis-eg.org

Egypt: 'football fights' to the beat of patriotic songs

Usama Haggag

When art declines, morals of society are the most affected aspects within a certain nation, and vice versa. But the influence of art is much stronger on simple citizens that view the artist as a role model that should be emulated. That is why many believe that art, especially songs, should truly express the average people in the street.

During the 18 days that the revolutionaries spent in Tahrir Square before the removal of Hosni Mubarak in 2011, the broadcasting platform that the revolutionaries had set up there was like a broadcasting station that directly airs patriotic songs to its audience based on their own choice, where they decide whether to accept or reject a certain song according to its content and the singer that performs it.

In Tahrir Square, many artists affiliated with the Mubarak regime fell down, along with those that supported the survival of the regime against the popular attempts of change and revolution, despite the fact that some had previously had influential patriotic songs. Such singers were rejected by revolutionaries and even expelled from the Tahrir Square at the hands of their own fans, as happened with the singer Tamer Hosni who was not allowed to enter the square until he apologized and admitted that he was forced to the statements he had made against the revolutionaries (accusing them of being a group of saboteurs).

The January Revolution has revealed facts to Egyptians and made the Egyptian people accept nothing but clarity, truth and honesty in artistic works, and that what the singer or artist declares must be consistent with what he presents in his artistic or lyrical works. For this reason, people enjoyed listening to patriotic songs performed by singers such as Mohamed Mounir, Ali Al-Haggag and Eman El-Bahr Darwish, but later rejected them completely because of their views and positions in favor of the ruling regime.

In Tahrir Square, the criterion for the revolutionaries' acceptance of the patriotic song depended on the singer's relationship with the authorities. In addition to political awareness of the requirements of the stage, there was awareness of the regime's exploitation of songs during the Mubarak era, where rates of purposeful patriotic and social songs declined; and most patriotic songs were linked

to momentary events and mock fights with fake enemies created by the regime to preoccupy people and divert their focus away from politics.

Therefore, the patriotic song during the Mubarak era was linked to only victories in sports, especially football, as the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) used to broadcast the song of "[El-Masryeen Ahomma](#)" (Here are the Egyptians), performed by Yasmine El-Khayyam, written by Salah Jaheen, a great Egyptian poet, and composed by Musician Gamal Salama, immediately after any victory achieved by any Egyptian football team in African and international forums, despite the fact that the poet Salah Jaheen has written this song to express his love for Egypt, not to mark a certain sporting event as it was later exploited by the Mubarak regime and used to celebrate the goals scored in football games played by the Egyptian national team. The song is titled, "El-Masryeen Ahomma" (Here are the Egyptians), saying:

Here are the Egyptians

They're at the forefront of nations

They're civilized and believers

Here are the Egyptians

They're full of vitality, determination and energy

They're always ahead, generation after generation

Egyptians ..

My heart is with you, Egyptians, wherever you are

You are my heart's joys, worries, and grievances

As long as we are related to each other,

And we do what pleases our Lord,

Goodness will increase.

May 10, 2021

Long live Egypt in pride and victory

With the flag and the national anthem fluttering over it

Characteristics of the Egyptian throughout history,

In any place and at any time, are the same.

His color is brownish, and his laughter fills you with joy

I can distinguish him from among a million people

He does his duty, even if it costs him his life

He is not satisfied with humiliation or abasement

Here are the Egyptians

In light of normalization and peace with the Zionist enemy, it was necessary for the successive Egyptian governments to create new enemies or rivals to beat the drums and launch patriotic songs against. The Egyptian Radio and Television Union then started to broadcast such patriotic songs in coincidence with achievement of football victories in regional or international football competitions, to "resist football rivals, rather than the Zionist enemy"!

The phrase: "Walla W'Amaloha Elregalah" ("By God, the guys have done it", i.e. the mission) that refers to a military mission carried out by Egyptian commandos in the port of Eilat during the War of Attrition with Israel, has become the title of a song to mark any football victory during the Mubarak era. During that commando mission, the team members used to chant "W'Amaloha Elregalah" (The guys have done it) referring to fulfilling the mission, where one who was unable to participate due to a fever infection was repeating, "I wish I were with them". The Egyptian people memorize by heart and never forget these phrases from the movie, "[The Road to Eilat](#)" which narrated the story of the commando mission that is considered one of the greatest and successful operations of the Egyptian navy against the Israeli enemy during the war of attrition. But during the Mubarak era, these patriotic enthusiastic statements turned into a song performed by the singer Hamada Hilal, entitled "[Walla W'Amaloha Elregalah](#)" (By God, the guys have done it), where it was broadcast in 2006 when Egypt

May 10, 2021

won the African Nations Championship that was held in Egypt in the presence of President Hosni Mubarak and thousands of football fans. After that, it was repeatedly aired following victories of the Egyptian national team in various football matches:

By God, the guys have done it

They raised the name of our country high

They had steadfast positions

Congratulations to Egypt and to our children

When Egypt won the Africa Cup of Nations 2008, Hamada Hilal again sang a song entitled: "[Mabrouk Aleina](#)" (Congratulations to us), starting:

Egypt .. Egypt .. Egypt

Congratulations to all of us .. Congratulations to all of us

We hold joy in our hands as we return to the homeland

Congratulations to all of us .. Congratulations to all of us...

We tried ... and managed to reach our desired goal...

At the inauguration of the 2009 FIFA U-20 World Cup, hosted by Egypt from 24 September to 16 October, Amr Mostafa sang his song "[Habeit'ha; Di Baladi Elli Ana Etmaneitha](#)" (I loved it, this is my country that I have always wished for), starting:

I loved it.. this is my country that I have always wished for

I have grown up and realized its value

My country has no alternative

I talk about it day and night

May 10, 2021

I narrate its story .. my country, where I grew up

My country, which was generous with me and contained me

I care for my country and I'm determined to develop it

The blatant example of using the patriotic song to fight "fights in the form of football matches" is the match between Egypt and Algeria within the framework of FIFA World Cup - Qualifiers. In this "major and decisive battle", the Egyptian regime mobilized all its media and artistic "weapons" and patriotic songs, where some later called it sarcastically the "Omdurman Battle", as the game was played in Omdurman, Sudan, in 2009, and ended with Algeria's victory and qualification for 2010 FIFA World Cup after defeating the Egyptian team. At the time, the singer Mohamed Hamaki sang a song titled: "[Om El Donia Wala Ay Kalam](#)" (Undoubtedly, it (Egypt) is the mother (origin) of the world):

Undoubtedly, it (Egypt) is the mother of the world.

All lyrics have failed to describe the virtues of Egypt, my love.

My beloved Egypt is on one side and the whole world is on the other.

Egypt is the mother of the world, with no parallel,

She (Egypt) is deep in my pupils, and even closer,

Where Naguib (Mahfouz), (Ahmed) Zewail, Umm Kulthum and Halim grew up,

And Dalida, Baligh (Hamdi) and (Mahmoud) Al-Khatib, and other great personalities,

Its people that I belong to is genuine, and they are the people that brought up those great figures,

I am always proud of the people of Egypt everywhere,

I feel reassured that they support and protect me,

Egypt is the country of Omar Sharif, Adel Imam, and Hassan Shehata,

There is never anything better than that.

May 10, 2021

I love Egypt and will fiercely attack those that may attempt to assault it,

And everyone who may think otherwise is completely gone.

It was necessary to increase the peoples' doses of "football fights", and to highlight the new enemies. So, Hisham Abbas sang a song titled "[Ah Ya Ghalia](#)" (O, You're dear to me), starting:

Anyone who attempts to offend this country, or does not appreciate it,

He certainly does not know or read its history.

Then he should ask the ex,

What Egypt did for him?

Its sacrifices cannot be underestimated now.

Egypt is my mother, my brother and my cousin.

This means that Egypt is more expensive for me than all other countries of the world.

You are dear to me.

You are dear to me.

Thus, the great meanings of the patriotic song were changed and declined to extremely low levels amid the meaningless 'football fights' that consider sister Arab countries as enemies that must be fiercely attacked, compared to the deep and high level patriotic meanings during the days of the poet Fouad Haddad who wrote the song "[El Ardh Bi Titkalim Arabi](#)" (The Earth speaks Arabic) that was performed by the great musician and singer Sayed Mekkawi, starting:

Land speaks Arabic from 'Hitteen' [related to Saladin and liberation of Jerusalem];

In response to the call of Jerusalem in Palestine;

Land speaks Arabic...

May 10, 2021

This was the state and reality of the patriotic song before the January 2011 revolution. The regime used to organize annual celebrations and festivals to commemorate the October 1973 victory, where certain male and female singers were chosen to contribute with patriotic songs praising Hosni Mubarak as, “the commander who carried out the first air strike in the October War” , such as in the operetta “[Awel Dharba Gawiyya .. Fatahet Babel Horriyya](#)” (The First Airstrike That Opened The Gate of Freedom).

This reality pushed the revolutionaries in Tahrir Square during the January revolution to resort to listening to and chanting old patriotic songs that preceded the Mubarak era, especially those patriotic songs that were popular during the July 1952 revolution. Even when new songs were produced to express the January Revolution, some of them resembled the lyrics and music of the fifties.

