

Jack

Insurgent Fandom

An Ethnography of Crowds and Unruly Sounds

Insurgent Fandom offers a behind-the-scenes look at a transnational subculture known to few--ultra. As the most dedicated soccer fans, ultras support their team through collective singing, jumping, flag-waving, and lighting marine flares. While some characterize ultras as hooligans, author Max Jack argues that ultras' performative style of support is in part a protest informed by the ultras' constant friction with the state, the mainstream media, and the commercial priorities of sports' governing bodies. Because of this conflict with authority, fandom for ultras takes on a collective social life in which the game on the field often becomes a secondary concern. With political implications extending past the realm of sports, ultras have even become key actors in some of the most significant mass protests of the 21st century-including those in Cairo (2011), Istanbul (2013), and Kiev (2013). Insurgent Fandom embraces this politic of dissent at the heart of crowd action and casts a light on stadia as a breeding ground for alternative social and political possibilities.

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Kundenservice Fachmedien Otto Schmidt

Neumannstraße 10, 40235 Düsseldorf | kundenservice@fachmedien.de | 0800 000-1637 (Inland)

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