

Analyzing Video Evidence from Maspero: Bloody Confrontations following the Coptic Protest of October 9, 2011

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Foreword – by AWR Editor-in-Chief Cornelis Hulsman:

With the events at Maspero resulting in at least twenty-seven deaths and hundreds of injured we are witnessing a terrible devolution of relations between Coptic Christians and the army, the de facto government of Egypt. Accusations are hurled left and right, some accusing Coptic Christians and others accusing the army. AWR remains committed to dialogue between Muslims and Christians and for this it is important to know the truth.

A careful search for truth must distinguish between facts and interpretation. The events of Maspero are a disaster in which soldiers used raw violence against Copts and Copts are seen beating individual unarmed soldiers. As for interpretation, German commentator and eyewitness Thomas Stephan concluded that he witnessed a lot of hate. Hate obviously exists among an unknown number of people which serves to escalate into extreme violence.

Hatred and violence risk driving Muslims and Christians further apart; it is a downward spiral which must be stopped. It is with this background in mind that we must seek to analyze these events as carefully as possible. The truth must be known, and only based on truth can solutions be found. AWR has therefore asked researcher Jayson Casper to collect videos online and analyze them. He has located thirty-seven pertinent videos online, but readers are invited to send us video clips or photos to augment a better understanding of what happened this night at Maspero, one of the darkest nights in Muslim-Christian relations in modern times. It is hoped this report will confront efforts on both sides to selectively use certain videos to demonstrate a particular interpretation.

When the fights at Maspero developed, AWR researchers Jayson Casper and Lamīs Yahyá were at the scene of the demonstrations ([click here](#) for their report) while I was at a meeting in Al-Ma'ādī, Cairo. It was soon clear to all in Al-Ma'ādī that the demonstration had gotten out of hand. As I moved through Al-Ma'ādī that night, it seemed everyone was fixated on the news, people watching State TV, taxi drivers tuned to the radio. Such a tragedy is nearly unprecedented in Egyptian modern history. May peace be restored to Egypt, enabling people to work together to the common goal of rebuilding Egypt following the revolution.

Additional thanks are offered to Yūsef Habīb, Amīn Makram 'Ubayd, 'Amr al-Masrī, and Diana Maher Ghālī, who assisted Jayson Casper in the presentation of this report. All told, over sixty hours of work went into the production of this text.

Introduction

On October 9, 2011 at least twenty-seven people were killed and over three hundred injured, following a largely Coptic demonstration culminating at the Egyptian Radio and TV Building at Maspero, in downtown Cairo. Clashes began at roughly 6:30pm and lasted long into the night, involving the military police, central security riot squads, demonstrators, ordinary citizens, and perhaps paid thugs.

Four main explanations have since emerged:

One Party Blaming the Other:

1. Coptic demonstrators were frustrated at recent perceived slights from the military council against their community, and at least a segment of them attacked the armed forces with stones,

Molotov cocktails, and gunfire. They may also have attempted to storm and occupy the Maspero building.

2. The military council has come under increasing criticism for its handling of the democratic transition, and may even be undermining it seeking to stay in power. As such they attacked the peaceful demonstration and used State TV to blame and demonize the Copts, playing a sectarian card in order to unite the majority population behind them.

No Blame Offered for Premeditated Violence:

3. Both military police and Coptic demonstrators were caught off guard when an unknown third party infiltrated the protest and fired on both soldiers and protestors alike. This may have been from an internal enemy, such as the remnants of the former regime or radical groups seeking to drive a wedge between the army and the people (or perhaps Christians), or external, from any number of nations wishing chaos to prevail in Egypt.
4. A series of misunderstandings and mistakes complicated and aggravated an already tense situation, in which no one is guilty of premeditated aggression but in which all parties succumbed to the use of violence and demonization.

The following report will analyze video evidence to describe what took place on the night of October 9, relying on video evidence uploaded to the internet, largely on YouTube. A few limitations must be noted:

1. While videos have been sorted into a general timeframe, it is not possible to establish a complete sequence of events.
2. It is not possible to guarantee the integrity of these videos. Where editing or manipulation may be involved it will be noted appropriately.
3. The collection of videos followed an extensive search process, but one which cannot be described as exhaustive. Important videos may have been overlooked, and accusations exist that some videos have been removed from YouTube. This is the testimony of Hānī Labīb, managing director of the Center for Intercultural Dialogue and Translation, commenting on a television program on which he was a guest. The broadcast was originally on YouTube, but is now missing.

It is also the testimony of AWR executive secretary Diana Maher Ghālī, conveying the sentiment of Vivian Majdī, fiancé of Michael Mus'ad, who was killed in the protest. Majdī told Ghālī she is in possession of videos uploaded to YouTube which have now been removed. To note, I attended two press conferences hosted by groups critical of the military council version of events, one of which included Vivian Majdī. Their videos presented did not differ significantly from the ones to follow, nor did they speak of videos being removed. If additional videos can be obtained later an update will be provided, and if readers are in possession of additional evidence they are welcome to submit it for review.

This report will not consider the evidence of written testimony, though it acknowledges its essential value. Witnesses on either side provide partial perspective, may color their testimony, or outright

fabricate accounts. A full investigation must include all such evidence, weighing carefully all perspectives. Yet this report focuses only on video, which together convey images independent of explanation.

The analysis will seek to present the reader with what is visible in the videos, avoiding speculation or implications. Additional background material will be provided as necessary. It is not imagined that any of the four scenarios listed above will be confirmed through this process, but these overarching narratives will inform what follows. Links will be provided for all videos, and the reader is invited to explore the evidence on his or her own. Videos will be titled according to their original posting, and sorted into the following categories:

- The Initial March from Shubrā
- The Beginnings of Violence
- Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) Driving along the Cornish
- Scenes of General Chaos
- Media Coverage
- Corpses Gathered in Hospitals or Elsewhere
- Compiled Footage

As noted above, the issue of chronology is important, and impacts especially categories three and four. This report, based on video evidence alone, leaves exact determination of instigation in these categories open for further research.

The Initial March from Shubrā

Video One: [Philopater will Lead a March the Likes of which Egypt has Never Seen, which will Conclude Inside Maspero](#) (Five minutes)

Fr. Philopater is a priest of the Coptic Orthodox Church, a member of the Maspero Youth Union, and one of the principle organizers of the demonstration. During this video he is speaking publically in church and inviting attendees to join the march the next day. Shubrā is a suburb of Cairo with a disproportionately high percentage of Christians. ‘Maspero’ is the name given to the Radio and Television Building in Cairo, which has for decades been under heavy security to prevent non-state entities from entering by force and broadcasting unofficial messages.

- 0:10 We love the armed forces and we love the army, since they are from us
- 1:15 Copts will never surrender their rights
- 1:30 Honor us with your presence tomorrow at Shubrā Circle at 3pm, for a march the likes of which Egypt has never seen
- 1:50 We will conclude our march inside Maspero
- 2:15 We will not be able to take our rights except with the moderate Muslims of Egypt
- 3:15 They say you are a minority; no, we are the majority – not as Christians, but as true Copts and moderate Muslims, against the forces of backwardness who are foreigners here in Egypt and the minority

Video Two: [The Gathering of Protestors in Shubrā Circle, Demonstrating they have No Weapons and Not Even a Glass of Water](#) (Three minutes)

This video provides a panoramic view of the protestors from their gathering point in Shubrā. Hundreds of people, including many women, are seen standing, milling about, simply waiting for the march to begin. No weapons are visible, though several people carry wooden crosses. To be noted, generally in demonstrations the chant leaders are chosen by the organizing party, and therefore their calls are sanctioned. While spontaneous chants often develop as well, anyone who deviates from the general sentiment of the crowd is shouted down.

- 0:50 Small chant of 'Illegitimate' begins among some protestors
- 1:22 Camera zooms on a group of protestors wearing white, with a slogan written in red saying 'Prepared for Martyrdom'. The phrase used for 'prepared' is commonly found on hearses during funeral processions
- 2:00 The group in white marches off in a line, apparently signaling the start of the march
- 2:35 A chant begins calling for the downfall of the field marshal, military council head Gen. Tantāwī

Video Three: [The Coptic March at Shubrā Circle](#) (Thirteen minutes)

Despite the title locating this video at Shubrā, it is actually a compilation of several scenes from along the march route, including two interviews. All scenes appear to be free of weapons, with many women and children present.

- 1:00 Chanting against the military council, at one point calling 'Dictator, dictator'
- 2:07 Scene switches, opening with Fr. Philopater, Fr. Mityās, and a monk walking together amidst the people
- 2:25 Scene switches again, the march is joined by two vehicles, among the chants are 'The People Want the Fall of the Field Marshal'
- 3:27 Scene switches to an interview with Fr. Mityās, listing Coptic complaints and how they suffer attacks no one is brought to justice over, but that even sometimes, like with the Aswan governor, we are incited against; it makes us feel like this isn't Egypt
- 6:00 Fr. Mityās describes demonstrations as an available and legitimate means of protest for all to express their opinions
- 6:34 Scene switches as the march continues under a bridge, much darker in this scene
- 7:40 Protestor speaking earlier in the day describing participants (Copts without Restrictions, Free Copts)
- 8:30 We are called a minority or a foreign entity, no we are the original inhabitants of the land¹
- 9:00 If we are not heard today after this march, we will have to study all possible, legitimate means to achieve our rights
- 9:20 Our demands: a committee to study the event of Marīnāb Church, arrest of all criminals in the proceedings, immediate rebuilding of the church, resignation of the Aswan governor (we will protest every day for this, and even sit-in, since he has transgressed our holy places and our possessions)
- 12:25 Scene switches to two more general scenes of protest and marching

¹ [Click here](#) for the report of Lamīs Yahyá, researcher for Arab West Report, on Marīnāb. In it she describes how some Muslims there called Copts 'foreigners', and some Copts called Muslims 'Arabs', each one denying the Egyptianness of the other.

(Note: Along the way, the protest march was attacked at an underpass by civilians throwing stones and glass. Footage is included in video thirty-seven, at minute 0:09.)

Video Four: [The Reason Behind the Event of October 9 at Maspéro](#) (Two minutes)

This video features the main priests and the monk among the organizers of the march, and includes incendiary comments from the monk. His identity is unknown to AWR at this time.

0:15 Protestor chanting 'We are the owners of this land'

0:30 What are the demands of the march? Monk answers: For the governor to give his resignation (and other demands listed above). If he doesn't, he knows what will happen. If he doesn't respond in 48 hours he will die a heinous death

Cornelis Hulsman: this clip was broadcasted on Egyptian TV during the demonstrations. I have seen this during my meeting in a restaurant in Al-Ma'ādī. The monk is using street language that is very inciting. Broadcasting such a clip on State TV was equally inciting.

Video Five: [The Size of the March before the Clashes Clearly Showing No Weapons, as the Army had Said](#) (Ten Minutes)

In this video the march has been underway for some time, and it is darker outside. The scene is captured by a camera filming from above on an onramp to a bridge. It appears to be right next to the Hilton Hotel leading into the Nile Cornish a few hundred meters from Maspéro. If correct, this video leads directly into the clashes to be described below. Many women and children are present. Some of those clothed in white are at the front, which is very sparse at the opening.

1:38 A lone man is seen with a plank of wood using it as a walking stick

1:50 Another person seems to have a similar plank of wood, and nearby is another with a stick

2:25 Another person appears to be carrying a plank of wood, walking along the wall by himself

3:04 Another person is walking with a stick

3:50 Chant of 'Kyrie Eleison' (Lord have mercy) begins, an oft repeated hymn in church

4:20 Another person is visible to the left of the screen using a walking stick

4:45 Chant of 'Raise your Head High, You're a Copt' begins

4:50 Two people waive objects above their heads during the chanting

5:25 A pickup truck drives down the procession with people aboard chanting the Lord's Prayer

6:00 The procession begins to get much denser, showing the extent of the size of demonstration

6:45 The chant of 'Illegitimate' begins

Analysis: The march was very large, included women and children, and appeared to be peaceful at every stage along its path. Protestors were very frustrated with the current situation, and many chants were against the military council. The vast majority was certainly without weapons, though many carried crosses; though unclear it does seem that a few in the procession had planks or sticks which could be used violently.

The Beginnings of Violence

Video Six: [The Coptic Protest in front of Maspéro](#) (Five minutes)

This is the best video I could find which seems to locate the outbreak of violence. There are several hundred protestors standing outside the Maspero building, and the camera is elevated and seemingly in front of the building. The Nile Cornish road is open with traffic flowing slowly, but consistently. There are police assembled on the other side of the road. Bambuser, which the service hosting this video, provides a live feed directly from event to internet, and stores it thereafter.

- 0:22 Following a speaker, the crowd cheers as if a normal moment in a demonstration
- 1:00 Camera angle widens to show traffic progressing along the Cornish
- 1:15 The attention of protestors is turned to the north, and they begin clapping excitedly
- 2:05 Chant leaders tells crowd to 'welcome', but the rest of the audio is inaudible
- 2:25 Chants of 'Million-man, million-man' begin among protestors²
- 2:38 It appears some protestors move into the Cornish towards the police
- 2:45 Attention of protestors turns to the south, and it appears the march from Shubrā has arrived
- 2:55 It appears another group, carrying a banner, arrives from the north
- 3:05 A van is able to drive very slowly toward the south, showing one lane of the Cornish still open
- 3:15 All protestors are turned to the west, facing the river, with raised hands chanting
- 3:22 It appears the police stationed across the street move forward into the demonstration, causing those in front of them to pull back slightly
- 3:35 The Cornish is cleared completely, showing that at first protestors filled one lane
- 3:55 Another contingent of police emerge from the east, apparently from near the Maspero building
- 4:05 The scene is filled with black clad riot police, which move in tandem to the south
- 4:18 The sound of gunfire begins, and all fall further back to the east, down a side street, as the police pursue
- 4:45 Camera flashes back to the Cornish, which has traffic flowing through
- 5:19 There appears to be another gathering, though unclear, to the south in the corner of the screen

Video Seven: [The Army Beginning to Open Fire in Maspero](#) (Two minutes)

This video is taken from inside the gathered crowd at Maspero. It is less clear than the first, but provides another angle on events.

- 0:15 Traffic is flowing on the Cornish
- 0:20 Some people apparently move toward the police across the Cornish
- 0:40 It appears that helmeted riot police stand at attention near the protestors as if making a cordon
- 1:07 Camera circles behind to show the Maspero building
- 1:19 Cries go out from the protestors with the sounds of gunfire in the background

Video Eight: [Fr. Philopater, a Few Minutes before the Clashes at Maspero](#) (Three minutes)

This video shows the approach of the march from Shubrā, now meeting up with the main protestors. They come from the south, and meet a cordon of police officers which block their way. Small altercations break out, but the video ends before anything conclusive is determined.

- 0:05 A pickup truck is with the approaching protestors, perhaps the same one as earlier
- 0:10 Some protestors are moving back away from the direction of the march

² This chant emerged during the protests of the revolution, which witnessed massive gatherings in Tahrir Square. It has been repeated since, even in demonstrations significantly less than one million strong.

- 0:15 Fr. Philopater appears, waving people forward toward the direction of Maspero, someone yells, 'Don't move back, go forward'
- 0:35 The road opens up, to show a gap between assembled protestors at the front lines and others falling back a bit
- 0:38 Two cars move against the demonstrators, showing Cornish traffic is still nominally flowing
- 0:55 Side view of Fr. Philopater, still motioning protestors onward
- 1:10 Sounds of gunfire, direction indeterminable
- 1:44 Picture of man wearing purple with a plank of wood, near him is a dissembled banner from which it possibly could have come
- 2:00 Demonstrators find the path blocked by military police wearing helmets and with riot shields
- 2:11 Man wearing a white shirt kicks at police shields
- 2:14 Altercation between demonstrators and police, police swing batons at protestors
- 2:26 Protestor wearing black throwing something in the direction of the police, behind him one wearing purple does the same

Video Nine: Maspero 9 October 2011, Part One (Eleven minutes)

This video is assembled and edited, but shows a remarkable narrative from within the events beginning with the demonstration at Maspero, showing many of the above scenes (and those afterwards with APCs and general chaos) from a street-level, as-it-was-happening angle.

- 0:48 View of the protest at the Maspero building, with a closer angle to the front lines at the Cornish near the military police; crowd is engaged, chanting, 'Raise your head high, you are an Egyptian'
- 1:00 A raised plank of wood is seen moving forward in the crowd, towards the police, but the camera turns before any outcome, if there was one
- 1:17 Video shows the protestors have moved into one lane of traffic on the Cornish, but not crossed to the opposite lane; APCs parked, but few soldiers immediately visible
- 1:22 First sound of gunfire, location unknown, then scene changes
- 1:25 A bit darker, but traffic still flowing, so this scene must be not long after earlier one ended; several police seen beating a protestor on the ground in the median of the Cornish
- 1:30 Cameraman runs away toward the south, perspective now appears to be from the side of the march; much gunfire heard
- 2:20 Chants of 'Peaceful, peaceful' emerge from protestors – same location as video from earlier, but from a different angle?
- 2:30 Protestors lying down in the road in a line, do not appear injured but rather making a passive protest, perhaps
- 3:10 Military riot policeman charging at demonstrator swinging baton violently at him
- 3:26 Protestor swings a whip – perhaps his belt – over his head in a threatening manner towards police, then withdraws
- 3:54 APC appears in motion, plows into the back of an army jeep, pushing people at front of jeep backwards
- 4:20 Scene in which people stand on APC and throw huge stones down on soldier inside, while others swing at him from outside with clubs, a cross; one of those on top is wearing the white martyr's robe seen at the beginning of the Shubrā march
- 4:42 Great care needed here: It appears one in the crowd attacking a passing APC is wearing army fatigues and their standard red cap; he raises his baton nearer to people than the vehicle, but scene switches; he does not appear under duress nor are people attacking him, at 4:50 appears again standing around in middle of scene, and moving at 4:56

- 4:49 APC drives toward Maspero, appears to 'jump' in the street
- 5:00 As chaos continues, people are seen lying on the street, obviously injured but unsure of nature, though one case seems connected to the APC which just drove past
- 5:30 Large crowd beating on stalled APC with iron circular clubs – resembling those broken off the wall of the Foreign Ministry fence which I saw from when the sit-in was dispersed a few days earlier
- 5:45 Second APC speeds alongside it, plowing over many; crushed bodies seen in its wake
- 6:40 Police chase crowd of people down the Cornish to the south, some appear to jump into the Nile
- 6:50 Police retreat, people throw rocks at them, policeman throws back a cross
- 8:50 Priest conveying a soldier to safety as people surround and try to continue to beat him
- 9:43 Someone strikes at the priest and soldier from behind, not sure who he hits, but priest goes to the ground covering the soldier, crowd surrounds them there without attacking

Analysis: The protest gathering at Maspero appeared to be peaceful, but then something caused an apparent advance toward the military. It may well have been the arrival of the Shubrā demonstration march, but this is not certain. In any case, from the angle of Maspero it does not appear that the demonstrators attacked the police, rather, perhaps responding to provocation or nerves, the police charged into the protest and dismissed it forcefully. From the other direction, it appears the police had no intention to allow the demonstration from Maspero to join the already stationed protest, and cordoned it off. There is evidence of some protestors responding violently, though most people are standing around innocently.

Fr. Philopater is a controversial figure. He speaks clearly that his presence as a priest does not represent church endorsement, yet his status as a priest helps give religious legitimacy to many Coptic participants. His claim to end the procession 'inside Maspero' could have only been exaggerated language used for effect, though it is easy to understand its reception as a threat. Later on, as he encouraged the crowd to advance in front of the police cordon, he may have been seeking only to assert the will of the protest to join together. There is no video evidence he encouraged violence in this effort.

Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) Driving along the Cornish

Video Ten: [Maspero](#) (Two minutes)

This video is taken directly from the television coverage of al-Arabiya. It shows APCs driving through the crowds, apparently seeking to disperse the protest.

- 0:10 APC driving along a mostly open road, with people throwing objects at it from the side
- 0:20 The speed of the APC can be gauged at a wider angle, and suddenly it turns 180 degrees, over the dividing median when people are standing; it does not appear anyone is struck
- 0:35 The APC is obviously swerving through the people, including riot police which evade its path; again, objects appear to be tossed at the vehicle
- 0:55 Video switches to riot police striking at protestors hiding behind parked cars

Video Eleven: [CNN BBC RT: Christians Copts Genocide by Muslim Egyptian Army, Run over them with Army Tanks](#) (One minute)

No timeline is necessary for this video, as it is a loop depicting a scene in which an APC plows through a crowd of people standing unaware, shown earlier. A group of protestors have mounted an APC stalled

on the median, and are striking at it with sticks. Those standing around on the road doing nothing are hit by an APC at high speed, running over at least two.

Video Twelve: [Most Dangerous Video showing Running Over Copts with Jeeps and APCs, and Killing with Army Bullets](#) (Three minutes)

This video is taken from within the crowds as APCs and Army Jeeps were driving through. It demonstrates the chaos of the scene as well as the aggressive behavior of people there.

- 0:17 As the cameraman walks through the crowds, some begin chanting 'Peaceful, peaceful'
- 0:45 An empty stationary military transport bus is being struck by people with different objects
- 0:55 Shots of gunfire are heard
- 1:00 The first APC rolls through, only a few feet from the cameraman, a second follows behind; speed of vehicles does not seem overly fast
- 1:15 A third APC drives across the same stretch of road along the Cornish
- 2:00 People seen vandalizing a parked army jeep; mix of those holding crosses or signs from the demonstration with those clearly holding clubs, sticks
- 2:10 Another APC drives through, as people strike at it with clubs and sticks as it goes by
- 2:25 Army jeep pushing another jeep forward through the crowds, second jeep veers toward the people and nearly runs someone over before stopping short
- 2:30 People, with both clubs and crosses, run towards the stopped vehicle rapidly as video ends abruptly

Analysis: Different pictures are presented in each video, and unfortunately chronology cannot be determined. It appears the APCs were conducting an organized mission to drive through the protestors in order to disperse them. It also is clear these APCs were met with aggression, though video suggests the drivers also meted out aggression of their own. Certainly the chaos of the scene was overwhelming and it is impossible from this footage to determine, on the one hand, if there was a policy of running over protestors, or on the other hand, if those crushed resulted accidentally from drivers who lost their nerve. Evidence can be marshaled from these videos to support either conclusion.

Scenes of General Chaos

Video Thirteen: [The Christians began Attacking the Army, I wish We Focus and See who Steals the APCs and Drives Over the Copts](#) (Three minutes)

Video taken from the State TV feed. It may represent the continuation of scenes described above where the march from Shubrā arrived at Maspero and was met by a cordon of riot police, as the pickup truck appears to be the same. The screen displays the headline, 'Coptic protestors throw stones at the army and police assigned to protect the Maspero building'.

- 0:10 Protestors and the pickup truck advance slowly, pushing back the police cordon; clashes are not obvious, neither are the crowds very large, most are simply lingering in the area
- 0:55 The police cordon has reestablished itself and is not being met with consistent aggression
- 1:10 One person seems to run at the cordon and attack a policeman, it ends quickly as he retreats
- 1:33 Scene jumps forward in time, APCs drive on the Nile side of the Cornish but away from any proximity to protestors

- 2:15 Army police are seen moving away from the area to the north, towards Maspero, as the camera shifts south protestors are seen attacking unmanned army jeeps
- 2:30 An APC drives along the Cornish between protestors where the attack on the vehicles is ongoing
- 2:53 Opening footage is replayed again

Video Fourteen: [Soldiers Strike the Protestors and Break Cars to Cast Blame on the Protestors](#) (Three minutes)

This video continues the scene from video twelve in the APC section, and provides another angle from the ending scene of video ten, in which police are striking at protestors shielding themselves behind parked cars. The video is very dark and unclear, but again depicts well the chaos of the event.

- 0:05 An APC drives down the road as protestors swing clubs at it
- 0:15 Another APC advances, slowly enough for a person to run out of its way
- 0:33 A contingent of riot police charge toward those gathered in the street
- 0:40 The cameraman moves behind a parked car up against a wall, and a policeman follows striking at him and others with his baton
- 1:00 Scene of a car with its back windshield smashed out, no one witnessed doing so; women's voices heard nearby
- 1:15 Policeman gathered between the cars and the walls, not clear what they are doing
- 1:40 Voice of one standing by chanting 'Kyrie Eleison'
- 1:50 Video goes dark, but sounds heard of smashing in the vicinity of the cars
- 2:25 Gathering of police around the cars, not clear what they are doing but they do not appear under duress

Video Fifteen: [Vehicle Carrying Thugs in front of Maspero](#) (One minute)

Video taken from the television feed of al-Arabiya. At the 0:10 second mark the footage shows a pickup truck pull behind an army transport vehicle. Many of those standing around are carrying obvious planks of wood. Those in the truck also seem so armed, but one of the people appears to be carrying a cross. If thugs, they represent a segment among lower classes who engage in mercenary violence, often for political purposes. This phenomenon is well known in Egypt, and accusations exist under Mubarak the state made common use of what in Arabic is termed '*baltajiyah*'.

Video Sixteen: [Killing of a Christian during the Events of Maspero](#) (One minute)

This video is filmed from among the protestors during sounds of gunfire. The purported death is not on video, and while the footage is apparently real, the screams at the time of death may have been sliced into earlier footage. It is unclear, but if real suggests the death of a protestor while warning shots, claimed to be blanks, were being fired into the air. If spliced, then the death is still presumably real but the timing and cause is uncertain.

- 0:10 Familiar chant of 'Peaceful, peaceful' as in earlier videos, some motioning protestors forward
- 0:20 Sound of gunfire in the distance
- 0:38 Filming gets chaotic and focuses toward the ground
- 0:41 If spliced, it occurs here
- 0:42 Woman screaming and presumably shot body filmed lying on the pavement

Video Seventeen: [Army APCs Break through the Maspero Sit-in, Terrifying Scenes of the Dead](#) (Four minutes)

This video is filmed from within the general chaos, including graphic pictures of slain protestors.

- 0:05 APC mounts median to change directions, as another one continued down the stretch of road; protestors largely on the sidewalks
- 0:11 Military transport bus, empty, drives into the median and stops unprompted, driver not pictured; several people seen with wooden planks, clubs
- 0:30 Pickup truck parked stationary in the street, with several people sitting inside motionless, several holding crosses; was this is vehicle which came in the march?
- 0:43 Body seen on the ground, then carried by protestors in a blanket; person appears to have been shot in the head
- 1:12 As people scurry about, a priest is pictured with his back to the camera
- 1:30 Many people run away from the general scene towards the south, reason unknown
- 1:39 Scene switches as the video shows footage from another angle; running away continues as an APC drives slowly down the street; cars are seen undamaged parked alongside road, some people carry wooden planks
- 2:15 Someone is heard screaming from the ground, people gather around as an APC drives quickly back in the other direction, sending people rushing to the sidewalk
- 2:50 Scene switches again, a priest is seen briefly, from across the street a cheer goes up as it seems people have stormed an APC
- 3:18 A person walking enters the video, he has a very bloody face; remain scenes are of people milling around

Video Eighteen: [Events of Maspero, Scenes not Shown Before](#) (Two minutes)

Video footage here was taken from the German TV feed, filming from their elevated offices at Maspero.

- 0:04 Camera view is from a high position, looking down on a crowd of gathered demonstrators
- 0:10 A couple people strike the military bus with objects, a man tries to push them away
- 0:22 Elevated footage of four fires, presumably set to area vehicles
- 0:25 Altercation between people and riot police, swinging clubs at them, one person swinging a cross
- 0:33 An APC driving road with protestors on the sides, swerving to avoid something lying in the road
- 0:38 People surround an open top army vehicle which had crashed into the military bus; the soldier is crouching down inside to hide while people swing clubs at its sides; one person climbs on top and hurls a large stone down upon him as another swats at him with a cross from down below
- 1:03 Footage of an army vehicle on fire as people linger around it
- 1:15 Two soldiers jump down from a stalled army vehicle and take off running as people chase; one stumbles and is surrounded by people beating him with sticks
- 1:28 Another scene of burning vehicles, with a soldier surrounded and accosted by those around

Full transcript of the German commentary:

Thomas Stephan is the commentator. Translation provided by Cornelis Hulsman, editor-in-chief of Arab West Report (original German is provided in the footnote³).

“The images are from in front of our studio, an escalating demonstration. Demonstrators are armed with sticks and who carry crosses. Coptic Christians protested and are hitting a bus because this probably carried military police. They protect the state television and the Ministry of Information. There are horrible scenes. The military seem helpless in the face of this aggression. Soldiers become victims and are crushed. Their fate: unknown. Military are trying to divide the masses with vehicles. Useless! An open (army) car drives into a burning bus. What is happening here is horrible. Soldiers are falling. No mercy. A man takes a stone and... [on the footage one sees him throwing a stone at the soldier who was alone and was trying to hide. Someone else tries to beat him with a cross]. Soldiers find no ways to stop the mob. Those who fall into the hands of the mob are screwed. An APC gets stuck in the crowd. Hateful rejoicing is heard. What is the origin of this outbreak of violence? Is it a response of Copts placed in a second rank status about which they complain so often? Is it from the hate of the military that had just tried to end a Coptic demonstration? The APC is set afire. Soldiers get close [to the burning APC]; the locked up soldier get hope. They run for their lives and are caught, beaten, and trampled upon. Allegedly three soldiers were killed this night, at least 30 were wounded. Smoke and teargas is in the air. Only slowly the military are able to drive the mob away. Cairo is burning this night. Many thought after the revolution that it would improve. But the images of this night, immediately in front of our studio, make people hesitate. There was much hate!”

Comment from Hulsman: The German TV crew has seen a lot of hate and must have much more footage. The commentary is their interpretation of what they have seen. It is obvious from this footage that the mob was full of anger and hate and used violence against individual defenseless soldiers. Their conclusion that ‘Cairo is burning this night,’ should not be taken literally. It was quiet in Al-Ma‘ādī and other parts of Cairo but at the scene of the clashes it was burning and people, Christians as well as Muslims, were deeply hurt.

Video Nineteen: [Egyptian Ministry of Health: 24 Dead in Clashes between Copts and the Armed Forces and Police](#) (Two minutes)

³ Bilder direkt vor unserem Studio, eine Demonstration die eskaliert. Demonstranten, die mit Stöcken bewaffnet sind und Kreuze tragen. Koptische Christen haben protestiert schlagen auf ein Bus ein, womöglich weil dieser Militärpolizisten transportiert hatten. Diese bewachen unermittelbar daneben das staatliche Fernsehen und das Informationsministerium. Es spielen sich schreckliche Szenen ab. Das Militär machtlos Angesichte der Aggression. Die Soldaten werden zu Opfern und werden verprügelt. Ihr Schicksal : ungewiss. Das Militär versucht mit ihren Fahrzeugen die Menge zu zerstreuen. Zwecklos! Ein offener Wagen fährt in den brennenden Bus, was sich nun abspielt ist grausam. Die Soldaten in einer Falle. Keine Gnade. Ein Mann nimmt ein Stein und... [wirft ihn und man sieht wie jemand mit einem Kreuz schlägt]. Die Soldaten finden keinen Mittel um den Mob zu stoppen. Schlimm ergeht es denen, die in den Händen des Mobs geraten. Ein Panzer fährt sich fest. Hässlicher Jubel brandet auf. Was ist Ursache für diesen Gewaltausbruch? Ist das eine Reaktion auf die Zurücksetzung die Kopten in diesem Land immer wieder beklagen? Ist es der Hass auf das Militär, das erst vor Kurzem eine Kopten-Demonstration auflöste. Der Panzer wird in Brand gesteckt. Als Soldaten vorrücken, schöpfen die Eingeschlossenen Hoffnung. Sie rennen um ihr Leben und werden gefangen, Geschlagen, getreten. Angeblich werden drei Soldaten in dieser Nacht getötet, mindestens 30 werden verletzt. Rauch, Tränengas steigt auf. Erst langsam schafft es das Militär den Mob zu vertreiben. In Kairo brennt es in dieser Nacht. Nach der Revolution hatten viele hier zu Lande eigentlich gedacht, es gehe nach vorne. Die Bilder dieser Nacht, direkt vor unserem Studio, würden die Menschen zweifeln lassen. Da war sehr viel Hass!

This video is directly from the al-Arabiya website as a news story, it shows several scenes of chaos that unfolded.

- 0:15 A priest attempts to lead a soldier to safety away from angered crowds
- 0:30 An elevated camera angle, perhaps of the Shubrā demonstration approach to Maspero
- 0:58 Scene of a vehicle burning on the median of the Cornish
- 1:30 Soldier jumps down from a vehicle to be met by an angry mob striking at him
- 1:40 Announcer states Muslims entered into the clashes so as to support the army, warns of the possibility of sectarian sedition in the country

Video Twenty: [Maspero 9 October 2011, Part Two](#) (Ten minutes)

This video continues the series from video nine, focusing on the aftermath of violence when people were still milling around in the streets though the situation had calmed considerably.

- 0:30 Gunshot heard as people react terrified, seemingly different sound than earlier warning shots; camera switches to show person lying on ground, perhaps shot, unsure if in sequence
- 1:10 Calmer scenes, video taken of a man supported by two others, whose foot appears to be broken
- 1:23 Crowd of people charging down a street under a bridge, as soldiers run away from them
- 1:45 Another person staggering down the path, hopping, as his foot is bloodied
- 2:00 Crowd of people marching with raised crosses, chanting the Nicene Creed
- 2:43 Tear gas fired from police at a distance
- 3:00 People, some of whom identify as Muslims, call the army 'infidels', one is holding a gas mask, shaking it as if he found it or seized it, saying they fired at us and even attacked a priest
- 4:00 Crowds chanting, 'The people want the downfall of the field marshal,' and, 'Muslim, Christian, one hand,' and, 'Fall, fall, military government'
- 5:00 Group of people pull an injured or dead colleague in a blanket down the street
- 5:16 Najīb Jabrā'īl, prominent Coptic activist and lawyer, is videoed holding a strip of bullets, as people around him show the army shot him, and show a bloody leg – he appears otherwise ok
- 5:45 Another body is carried down the street in a blanket
- 6:15 A motorbike drives an injured or dead person down the street, whose leg is very bloody from an apparent gunshot wound
- 6:26 Video shifts to inside the Coptic Hospital, where many bodies were taken; similar or same as videos to be shown and commented on below; emotive music begins to play in background

Video Twenty-One: [An Egyptian Soldier Brags about Killing a Maspero Protestor with a Bullet](#) (One minute)

As an army transport bus filled with soldiers departs the Maspero area after calm is restored, they are cheered by a crowd of onlookers. One of the soldiers puts his head out and speaks to the crowd at 0:21. Much of what he says is not understandable, but among his words are, 'He took a bullet in his chest'. The man appears to be bragging, and an onlooker shakes his hand and calls out, 'You're a man!' The crowd claps enthusiastically.

Video Twenty-Two: [Priests Declare the Army to be Infidels and Incite toward Killing Soldiers](#) (One minute)

This video takes the reaction of priests after calm has been restored. They have strong words for what took place, declaring at 0:08, 'This army is not Egyptian.' At 0:15 another priest speaks, 'We are demanding our rights, are these our rights? They are infidels. They are not Egyptians at all. They don't have any religion.' At 0:31 the scene shifts to demonstrators calling for the fall of the field marshal.

Analysis: These are very disturbing scenes. It is clear that violence escalated very rapidly. It may be that thugs entered the scene and led violence, but while there is little to absolve the majority Christian protestors of responsibility, there is little to directly identify them with blame them, either. What is clear is that many present were attacking soldiers as they found them. It is also clear many seem to be standing around, while smaller numbers commit violence.

The footage apparently depicting a priest seeking to help an injured soldier is given fuller treatment in video nine above, Yet the response of the priests at the end is lamentable, if understandable in the heat of the moment. The call of the soldier from the bus may be damning; though he does not say he shot personally, nor who was shot, the implication appears to be an admission of responsibility that he killed a demonstrator. This also could come from the heat of the moment or from self-defense, but it must be understood in light of the official statement afterwards that soldiers were unarmed. Those surrounding the bus are unlikely to have been Copts, and may have been either hired thugs or Muslim residents from nearby areas. If the latter, they came either to defend the army (as explained below), or as curious witnesses to the events unfolding.

Media Coverage

Video Twenty-Three: [Live Testimony from Injured Soldiers in Maspero](#) (Two minutes)

Early on during the events of Maspero, State TV aired an interview with injured soldiers. It appears that the audio testimony does not match the lips of those speaking, but it is unclear if this is only from a delay in transmission. The news banner reads, 'Scenes revealing the injured among the armed forces who have been transferred to the medical care room in Maspero.'

- 0:01 Soldier sitting on hospital bed, coughing
- 0:20 A man in civilian clothes is pictured lying down on bed, pants sprinkled with what appears to be blood
- 0:22 He says Christians threw stones gathered from the Maspero building and fired bullets at the soldiers, he went to help an officer and took a tissue and money from his pocket, when a Christian twisted his arm and took the money
- 0:50 First soldier says his colleague died right next to him, Christians hit them with stones and live gunfire, even though they were there to protect them, they were standing there talking to the Christians and then they attacked us off guard, Christians are 'sons of dogs'

Video Twenty-Four: [Revealing the Truth about the Copts on October 9](#) (Three minutes)

Another State TV feed from the same room showing injured soldiers, this video is a fuller treatment that begins slightly before the previous. It has similar issues with matching audio to soldier's lips. It appears there are three soldiers in hospital beds. The news banner reads, 'One martyr and twenty injured after Coptic protestors open fire on them at Maspero.'

- 0:10 Two soldiers videoed sitting quietly on the ground, they wave the camera away and cover their faces
- 0:22 As the camera moves, there appears to be a soldier lying in a bed to the left of the soldier described above who was sprinkled in blood
- 0:23 Camera pans to the left of the soldiers lying on hospital beds, showing a room full of soldiers and doctors
- 0:31 Some are attending to a soldier sitting in a wheelchair and treating his leg
- 0:50 This soldier is carried to the hospital bed, is treated by doctors, and sits up coughing to match the beginning of video twenty-three above
- 1:27 Video cuts and shifts to the soldier sprinkled in blood, same interview as above
- 2:05 Camera moves to the left to the soldier in a bed next to the one sprinkled in blood, same interview as above

Video Twenty-Five: [Meeting the Injured Soldiers from the Armed Forces in front of Maspero, Watch what they say about Copts, and a word from Gen. Hamdī Badīn](#) (Three minutes)

This video feed is from al-Hayat TV, a private station, apparently from within the same medical room at the Maspero building. The scene is much calmer as are the statements from injured soldiers, who do not appear to be the same ones speaking earlier.

- 0:19 Interview with soldier lying on hospital bed with a patch under his left eye; states they were standing at the Maspero building when the other march arrived, which attacked them with rocks, glass, Molotovs, and live ammunition, I tried to help my friend and took him to the 6th floor, but he died
- 0:55 Interview with another soldier lying in a hospital bed; there were about six hundred people at Maspero, crossing over the street when the march arrived, they joined together and attacked us with rocks and glass, and we had no orders to interact with them, a few soldiers died and we're in the hospital, but praise God
- 1:45 Interview with another soldier, with a patch stretching from between his eyes, over his nose, and onto his cheek; says they were standing at Maspero but had orders to withdraw, drove the APCs in circles around the area, but people attacked us with gas and we couldn't breathe and my eyes started to tear, we got down and then they surrounded us and beat us
- 2:28 Interview with another soldier on a hospital bed; says they were there protecting the demonstrators but then they came with Molotovs in a truck and began attacking us with machine guns, and I was shot in the back
- 2:45 Gen. Hamdī Badīn visits the injured soldiers, says what happened was an effort of someone to divide our one nation into Muslim and Christian, or this place and that place, to make us weaker, what each of you have suffered should be considered a medal on your chest

Video Twenty-Six: [Violent Clashes between Security Forces and Coptic Protestors](#) (Ten minutes)

This video is taken directly from State TV as the events unfolded. It is an eerie broadcast with long periods of silence. The news banner states, 'Breaking: Protesting Copts in front of the Maspero Building Block the Cornish Road.'

- 0:10 Traces the origin of events to the troubles of the church in Marīnāb
- 0:20 Announcer states there were warning shots from the military police to evacuate the demonstration which developed into acts of rioting

- 0:50 Says the protestors blocked the Cornish Road completely
- 1:15 States the protest began peacefully with chants and slogans for their demands but developed quickly into clashes between the demonstrator and the armed forces
- 1:40 Introduces 'Imād Jād, a Coptic researcher from the Ahrām Center for Strategic Studies
- 1:50 Gad states what happened is a crime of which Gen. Tantāwī and the military council is responsible, for I have seen how the APCs were driving through the crowds and running them over; the demonstrators were not armed, but were run over and shot with live ammunition, whoever did this should be tried and held accountable as a crime against humanity
- 2:40 In response the announcer says that events developed into clashes and throwing stones and Molotovs after beginning peacefully, Jād replies it developed so because of the army!
- 3:12 A whisper is heard, but it is inaudible
- 3:30 A voice whispers 'Cut, cut'
- 3:40 Announcer acknowledges Jād's anger but cuts him off from continuing, thanking him for his comments
- 3:50 Recaps events in which Coptic demands over Marīnāb concerning a guesthouse which is alleged to be the Church of St. George, and for a unified law for building houses of worship descended into clashes with the burning of military vehicles
- 4:50 Period of silence from the announcer
- 5:08 Begins recapping events again, saying some Copts threw stones at the army and police who were guarding the Maspero Building, the escalation began when they blocked the Cornish Road completely
- 6:55 Another period of silence
- 7:15 Announces that several fire trucks have arrived to put out the fires
- 7:35 Time is shown on screen as 6:55pm, and the news banner changes to 'Coptic protestors in front of the Maspero Building throw stones at the army and police assigned to guard it'
- 8:00 Silence continues until the introduction of 'Alī Jum'ah, a villager from Marīnāb and eyewitness to the events there
- 8:25 Jum'ah is not there, so announcer repeats the basic news story
- 9:00 Jum'ah gets reconnected, is asked his opinion about what is taking place, and whether or not Marīnāb warrants all this escalation
- 9:20 Jum'ah answers that Marīnāb Muslims and Christians are currently living in complete peace and security, we are negotiating things and there is nothing to warrant what is taking place here
- 9:50 Announcer asks his reaction to what he sees on the screen of throwing rocks at the army and burning vehicles, he answers we live in peace but the video ends before he finishes speaking

Video Twenty-Seven: [Storming the January 25 TV Channel and Cutting their Broadcast of Covering the Demonstrations](#) (One minute)

This video is taken from the live feed of the January 25 TV station with offices in the Maspero area. It opens with a woman screaming and several voices in the background. It was stated the army entered to search for demonstrators hiding in the offices. As it turns out, [they were](#), but were not found. The video on screen is from an elevated position down onto the empty Cornish, with cars driving through at night. It also says the transmission is 'live'. The banner states, 'Gen. Sāmih Sayf al-Yazl, security expert', presumably the guest at the time the offices were entered.

- 0:15 Someone says, 'There is no one here'
- 0:25 Woman whimpers terrified and continues amidst background chatter

1:05 Silence, until a voice (the woman's?) says that's enough everyone, the silence then continues until the end

Video Twenty-Eight: [The Moment the Headquarters of al-Hurra TV Station were Stormed](#) (Fifteen minutes)

Again, video feed is taken directly from the station's broadcast, transmitted from the Maspero area. In a similar set-up, the army entered searching for demonstrators. Before the entry al-Hurra had two screens, one of which was a live transmission of events, the other providing the feed from State TV. The announcer maintains his nerve impressively. The news banner reads, 'Breaking News: Cairo clashes: Injuries suffered in violent confrontations between Coptic demonstrators and security forces.'

0:17 Live video from al-Hurra cameras switches to generic feed from Cairo streets
0:18 News banner adjusted to read, 'State TV: Tens injured in confrontations between Coptic demonstrators and security forces'
0:20 Announcer states individuals from the army have entered the studio
0:33 Announcer tells people in studio (presumably army), we are on air, and, I'm Egyptian!
0:43 Announcer raises his voice as tension rises in the studio
0:53 Video feed switches to al-Hurra's live broadcast only
1:00 Video switches to announcer who states the soldiers are in the studio, raising their weapons, searching for demonstrators
1:20 Tries to calm the situation down and tells the soldiers to search the studio as they wish
2:55 Announcer spent time trying to regain composure and update viewers on proceedings; news banner changes, 'Individuals from the Egyptian army storm the al-Hurra studio'
3:23 Announcer continues the conversation with the previous telephone guest
3:40 Video feed switches to that of State TV, time shown on bottom as 7:57pm as news scroll begins
4:42 News banner adds the following, '...searching for demonstrators'
6:27 News banner now reads, 'Coptic protestors set fire to Egyptian army vehicles'
6:40 News banner announces, 'State TV announces the death of a soldier from the army in confrontations with the Copts'
7:05 News banner reads, 'Tens injured and military vehicles burned in Coptic confrontations with Egyptian security
7:20 News banner reads, 'Coptic demonstrators in violent confrontations with security forces in front of State TV building'
7:54 Two live feeds restored to the broadcast, al-Hurra's feed of an onramp with individuals milling about as traffic passes by above
8:12 News banner reads, 'Heavy gunfire in Coptic demonstrator confrontations with Egyptian security forces
14:14 Phone conversation continues as the news banner recycles the above headlines, then the announcer apologizes saying for security reasons we have to stop, I don't know if we're on air or not
14:20 News banner reads, 'Individuals from the Egyptian army storm the al-Hurra studio'
14:40 Screen goes blank as announcers repeats, we're on the air?
14:48 Transmission cuts off as the program logo comes on screen, and video ends

Video Twenty-Nine: [Egyptian Television Inciting Egyptians against the Copts](#) (Three minutes)

Announcer Rasha Majdī has come under fire for her description of events on State TV. This broadcast is from the independent channel OnTV, owned by Coptic businessman Najīb Sawīris, which was transmitting the State TV feed.

- 0:06 News banner reads, 'Breaking: Coptic protestors throw stones and Molotovs at soldiers from above the October bridge, and burn ...' (rest illegible)
- 0:15 Praises the Egyptian army for its past accomplishments, and how the people stood with it, stating we should be celebrating this spirit from the days following October 6 (a national holiday commemorating the war which liberated Sinai)
- 0:25 States the events of Maspero show that everything has changed; what is happening to Egypt? In whose interest is this?
- 0:55 Announces that as of this moment there are at least three martyrs and twenty injured, all of which are from the army's soldiers – not from the hand of Israel, or of an enemy, but of a group from the children of this country
- 1:15 This army stood by the revolution, and protected the revolution, refusing to fire on any Egyptian, it is now being fired upon
- 1:32 Any group from Egyptian society, no matter what their demands or however legitimate, to build a building or not build a building, does it deserve to burn the nation in its entirety?
- 2:25 May Egypt fear God, may your area fear God, we have endured a lot
- 2:37 There appears to be a cut in the video, switching to what appears to be Rasha Majdī now reading the official news briefing, but perhaps it is not a splice, as the video maintains continuity
- 2:38 Three soldiers killed and thirty injured as Coptic demonstrators gathered in front of the Maspero building fire upon them; eyewitnesses confirm that hundreds of Coptic demonstrators, who blocked the Cornish Road, threw stones and Molotovs on the army and police who were assigned to guard the Maspero building; the army and police are attempting to secure the area and disperse the protestors, mounting iron barriers in front of Maspero and locking all the doors to prevent it from being stormed
- 3:21 Video switches to a talk show on OnTV in which a guest, George Ishaq of the Kifāyah movement, accuses Rasha Majdī of inciting viewers against the Copts, especially when she said, 'May Egypt fear God'

Video Thirty: [Surprising Video, for the First Time the State TV Announcer who was Accused of Inciting Against the Copts States on Air the Comedy in Television as Muna al-Shazalī Makes Clear](#) (Fourteen minutes)

Muna al-Shazalī is a talk show host on the channel Dream2. In this episode she hosts a number of prominent Egyptian personalities and conducts a phone interview with Rasha Majdī.

- 0:37 Majdī states the announcer is the last stage in the operation of news production, there are a number of people who pass on the news, whether written or otherwise, before it reaches me
- 1:12 I want to confess that what happened was a mistake of the media, it is necessary that if I present one side, I must also present the other, and this did not happen
- 1:40 In my coverage I said 'group of people', not 'group of Copts'
- 2:00 That which was written below about the Copts was prepared by the editor, by a certain responsible one
- 2:20 In response to clarification, Majdī states no one who works in television can take a single step or print any news on the screen without authorization (implied, from the state)

- 2:40 Yes, there were mistakes, but they were not the mistakes of the editors or the announcers, they were the mistakes of those who manage the matter underneath it all
- 3:00 We are not newly trained announcers, we know that if you present one side you must present the other
- 4:53 After restatement from al-Shazalī, Majdī clarifies that the responsible person is in the media production, not the state
- 5:50 If I go, the problem will remain, it rests with those responsible for media production who leave us lost in our work
- 6:10 Did you know that this responsible person stated that he is innocent from what was announced? Fine, then state who wrote that news!
- 6:30 I received the news from MENA (Middle East News Agency, the office news agency of Egypt)
- 7:10 In answer to a question asking Majdī to demonstrate her innocence from inciting the people, she states, the only thing that I stated in my own words that has been taken as incitement is ‘May Egypt fear God, where are the wise men of Egypt’, but I maintain this statement and it is my right to do so
- 8:30 In response to words from Emad Gad appreciating what Majdī said, she replies I only stated ‘a group of Egyptians’ since I had no information on what was happening or who was hitting who, I sit in the studio, I have no guests, and I don’t know what happened, when I saw that news was contradictory, I stated ‘a group of people’, when I spoke of the three martyrs from the army, this was the only news that came to me from MENA, and I read it, there was no incitement from me
- 12:40 After conversation between studio guests, Majdī returns and states she and a number of her colleagues are very frustrated with those who leave the announcer to be responsible for what is stated on the news, don’t blame me when you leave me lost and then say you are the reason for what happened
- 13:50 Al-Shazalī concludes the phone conversation by stating it is Majdī’s right to bring a lawsuit against the person who provided her with the news

Video Thirty-One: [Middle East News Agency Denies what the Announcer Rasha Majdī Said](#) (Eight minutes)

In this video Ali Hassan, deputy editor-in-chief of MENA, is asked by telephone by a talk show host about the comments of Rasha Majdī, in which she laid blame for her broadcast at the feet of his news agency.

- 3:00 Announcer asks ‘Alī Hassan, about the news banner which stated Coptic protestors set fire to military vehicles and also fired upon the soldiers
- 3:23 Hassan answers, MENA did not publish this news, nor does it know anything about it, and Rasha Majdī should bring the evidence she has to prove what she said; furthermore, Majdī is known for a poor reputation from the revolution when she announced there were no demonstrators in Tahrir on January 28

Video Thirty-Two: [Families from Septia Support the Army Against Armed Coptic Demonstrators](#) (Two minutes)

Video footage is from al-Arabia channel, at 1:00 the announcer states that families from Septia have come to support the army, and that the army is present among many civilians. The announcer states ‘this is told to me’, but this is presented in place of charges leveled against State TV claiming it asked ‘honorable citizens’ to go to the street to support the army. I was unable to find video evidence of this

though it was reported in many outlets. CIDT managing director Hānī Labīb stated he watched State TV that evening and heard it announced.

Video Thirty-Three: [The Program? Bāsīm Yūsif: Maspero ... Ground of Hypocrisy, Part One](#) (Eleven minutes)

Bāsīm Yūsif is a comedic news producer along the lines of John Stewart in the United States on the Daily Show. In this episode he assembles video footage from the media coverage of the event. Of importance here is the footage at 8:45 from State TV in which the announcer makes a correction: 'Viewers, as a correction to the news we presented recently, one soldier from the armed forces has died a martyr, and not three soldiers, with twenty injured after Coptic protestors fired upon them at the Maspero building'.

Analysis: Taking the statements of the injured soldiers at face value, they provide powerful testimony that Copts were involved in striking the armed forces. It should be noted, though, that none of the soldiers presenting testimony have visible injuries. Regardless of the credibility of their testimony, however, presentation of this footage on State TV could only have had an incendiary effect on events, effectively mobilizing sentiment against the Coptic demonstrators, if not Copts in general – 'Copts are sons of dogs'. It appears certain that citizens did go to Maspero, though video cannot confirm why.

As for the presentation of Rasha Majdī, in light of her confession afterwards she appears to be innocent of incitement against the Copts. Where it appears she is reading the news, accusation is leveled against the Coptic demonstrators that they killed three soldiers. Her own commentary before this, however, is much more judicious, though still full of shock at what is taking place. Yet she makes clear the official news comes from official sources.

Yet the testimony of 'Alī Hassan raises more questions. 'Amr al-Masrī, a journalist in MENA, confirms Hassan's words, stating that while MENA received word directly from the military council that three soldiers had died, it published no information about Coptic demonstrators being the ones who killed them. If indeed Majdī was reading, then, who gave her that statement?

This makes the later correction all the more confusing. It could be as time passes that corrections are made to increase the number of dead. Yet how is it possible for official news to be mistaken in that two officially martyred soldiers are now alive?

It is impossible to say from video evidence if the entry of the army into the studios of January 25 TV and al-Hurra had any impact on the content of broadcasting. In fact, it has been demonstrated there were protestors hiding out at least in the January 25 offices, justifying the soldiers' entrance and search. Yet it can be noted that the live video broadcast did change during their presence, and that the news banner underneath became more clear in labeling 'Coptic demonstrators' behind the confrontations in a manner consistent with State TV. To note: January 25 TV is understood to be an initiative supported by Islamists, and al-Hurra is understood to be an initiative supported by the United States government.

Corpses Gathered in Hospitals or Elsewhere

Video Thirty-Four: [Martyrs of Maspero 2](#) (Three minutes)

Video footage is from inside the Coptic Hospital, where many injured and dead were taken. The halls are crowded with people with a steady murmur in the air.

- 0:10 Person sitting on side of hallway with an obvious but not life threatening head wound
- 0:20 Dead body lying on floor; it appears his throat has been cut and has bruises to his head
- 0:37 To his left is another body which appears to be alive, with someone attending him
- 0:47 A cover is removed from a bloody corpse with horrific head wounds
- 1:08 A pool of blood is shown on the floor
- 1:20 Another corpse is shown lying on the ground with a head wound
- 1:50 Video switches to another hallway, where another corpse is lying on the floor
- 2:20 Camera returns to the corpse of 0:47, from this angle it appears he could have been run over by an APC

Video Thirty-Five: [Special for al-Shuruk: Corpses at the Entrance to the January 25 Building at Maspero](#) (Three minutes)

Video footage is from inside a hallway of the building housing at the aforementioned January 25 TV studio, which was stormed by military personnel.

- 0:03 Two dead bodies are lying side by side, the one to the right appears to have wounds in his shoulder and head
- 0:36 A man standing against the wall has blood dripping from his head, but appears ok
- 0:52 Another corpse is shown with a heavy wound to his head
- 1:15 Moving up a short flight of steps, a man is lying on the ground writhing with a pool of blood under his leg
- 1:30 A man crouches over a body on the floor who appears to be alive; pools of blood are all around
- 1:44 Video switches to another angle, showing three dead bodies lying in a hallway

Analysis: None necessary. These people were killed brutally.

Compiled Footage

The final three videos assemble footage from throughout the day, as compiled by their author. Important events therein not highlighted earlier will be identified by minute.

Video Thirty-Six: [The Egyptian Army Runs Over the Copts with APCs in front of Maspero](#) (One minute)

- 0:01 An APC speeding through traffic, swerving, but slowing as it approached a person directly so as not to run him over
- 0:17 People surrounding a soldier, beating him, as a priest tries to intervene and bring him to safety (clearer footage of that shown in video nine earlier)
- 0:56 A military vehicle is shown burning, perched up on top of a road divider

Video Thirty-Seven: [Shubrā – Maspero March, October 9, 2011, Graphic](#) (Eleven minutes)

- 0:09 Footage from the march from Shubrā under the bridge when attacked from above, some protestors throw stones back at them, many take cover under the bridge, no weapons or clubs are evident
- 3:55 Pieces of a man's skull are held in a cloth up to the camera, people say he was crushed by a 'tank' (APC, presumably)

- 4:21 Crying women and children from inside the Coptic Hospital
- 4:38 Dead bodies on the floor, one is covered with a picture of Jesus, another – Michael Mus'ad – has his hand clasped by his fiancé, Vivian Majdī
- 5:15 A man identifies himself as Ibrahīm 'Azūz, states that when they arrived at Maspero the army fired into the first row of people, a little later the APCs went swerving through the people on the street, driving over some, it's horrible, it's the army, the army that is supposed to protect us, they kill us like animals
- 6:00 Distraught men are shouting and weeping
- 6:50 A man identifies himself as from 'Izbat al-Nakhl,⁴ and as the brother of Mina inside who they killed, who killed him? Mohamed Tantāwī, the field marshal, the Lord will take revenge on him, and not just him, all of them
- 7:28 Scenes from the funeral at the Coptic Orthodox Cathedral in 'Abbāsīyah, Cairo

Video Thirty-Nine: [Most Important Heated Scenes from the Events of Maspero – Panorama](#) (Nine minutes)

- 0:40 Close up view of the pickup truck proceeding from the Shubrā march, it has loudspeakers and a priest riding upon it, with several other passengers
- 3:33 A man stumbles in view of the camera, bearing a head wound of some sort, someone calls for water and pours it on his head
- 6:20 Dead bodies strewn on the pavement
- 6:55 Another view of the skull in the cloth, presented by a priest, the boy carrying it identifies himself as Sāmih Jirjis, his brother, perhaps age 12; priest says Fr. Philopater and Fr. Mityās have also been subjected to beatings, and were attacked; a car later pulls up and the priest gets in and they drive away

Final Analysis

The central and most important question to be determined from events of Maspero is this: Who shot and killed the victims? Unfortunately, on this point the video evidence is silent. No footage has been located to show either that protestors fired on the armed forces, or that military personnel fired on protestors. The causes of their death, from the standpoint of video, cannot be determined.

This does not mean that either side is innocent of the charge. Many testimonies exist stating the army opened fire, and the 'confession' of the soldier on the bus (in video 21) must be investigated.

From the other direction, the military council maintains the death of an unstated number of their men, as testified to by the soldiers on State TV. Their refusal to release names is announced as due to the threat of loss of morale among troops and increased tension within the nation. However legitimate these concerns, they do not aid the cause of investigation.

The presence of a third party cannot be dismissed on video evidence, neither can accusations of sniper activity, which would presumably be off camera. For further determination more footage is needed,

⁴ Ezbet al-Nakhl is a poor quarter of Cairo housing many poor migrants from Upper Egypt, including Copts. For the Copts among them, feelings of being treated as second class citizens may well be compounded with frustrations concerning overall poverty and underdevelopment.

either from amateur video, television networks such as German TV, or the closed captioned cameras at Maspero itself. These latter cameras have recently come to light through the human rights lawyer Amir Salem, who [obtained their footage](#) from the January 25 revolution.

Though video evidence is not able to absolve protestors absolutely, available footage demonstrates the vast majority of protestors were peaceful and unarmed (videos 2, 3, 5, 6). They were attacked previously in their march, yet failed to respond with any of the arms they are accused of possessing. Yet it must be noted that individuals within the march are witnessed carrying instruments which could be used as clubs (video 5), which are evidently not the crosses carried by many demonstrators.

Evidence is also slim which establishes protestors as the initiators of violence in general. Yet it is also clear that some demonstrators behaved in a provoking manner with the military police, striking at them and throwing stones at their lines (video 8). Once events unraveled, however, there are many scenes of protestors violently assaulting military personnel (videos 9, 18, 19). While it may plausibly be argued that violence was escalated as thugs entered the scene – cautiously established by video 15 – within the chaos there are images of protestors with crosses striking at the military, as well as a man wearing a martyr's robe who tosses a large stone on a helpless soldier (video 9). Ultimately, however, video is unable to determine who among the rioters in question was a demonstrator or a thug, a Muslim or a Christian.

Considering the military role in violence, video cautiously establishes that a cordon was established to prevent the march from Shubrā from meeting up with the protest at Maspero (videos 7, 8, 13), which was then dispersed forcefully (videos 6, 7, 9). The manner this was done appears consistent with previous military efforts to disperse protests, sit-in or otherwise, and does not betray any predisposition for lethal violence.

Even the use of APCs to disperse lingering protestors does not necessarily betray such predisposition. Video does not establish well why the rioting ensued following the dispersal of protest. Equally plausible – in terms of video – are that frustrated protestors lashed out at the army, the military initiated sustained violence for its own purposes, or that a third party played one side against the other. Yet within this chaos there is footage both of APCs which carefully maneuver through the crowds so as not to strike protestors (videos 14, 18) as well as footage that depicts intention to kill (videos 9, 11). While it is plausible to imagine some had orders to inflict casualties, it is also plausible to imagine casualties resulting from individual soldiers, either panicked or enraged at events.

Yet other evidence raises questions which the military council must provide answers for, besides that of the soldier's statement from the bus. Why did a driver move an empty military bus into the middle of the road, and then leave it there (video 17)? Why were so many military vehicles present which were left unattended, and thereafter set ablaze (video 13)? What was the soldier doing in the midst of the crowd, milling about unaccosted (video 9)?

Similarly, there are questions for the leadership of the Coptic protests to answer. How is it that demonstrators and their leaders were unaware of those in their midst with clubs (video 5)? Having been attacked under the bridge in the procession from Shubrā (video 37), why was there not adequate caution about possible violence at Maspero? What were the intentions of Fr. Philopater in waving the procession towards the police cordon (video 8)? Why were some protestors dressed as martyrs, and who encouraged them to do so (video 2)?

Perhaps the greatest questions need to be posed to state media. In the episode at Maspero, did they act as a mouthpiece for the military council, independently, or at the behest of a third party? Was the footage of interviewed soldiers legitimate? Even if so, how was such inciting coverage allowed to be broadcast unedited (videos 23-25)? Why was a call issued for citizens to defend the army? Who wrote the news brief Rasha Majdī read on air (video 29)? Who issued the correction only one soldier was killed (video 33)? Why were the announced dead soldiers declared ‘martyrs’ (video 24, 29, 30)?

In conclusion, most of these questions posed are unable to be answered conclusively through video. Perhaps the analysis of eyewitness testimony and further investigations will contribute insight, though this is beyond the scope of this report. It is of concern that current investigations are conducted under military jurisdiction, bypassing the civil judiciary or an independently established commission.

For now, this effort is simply to collect existing evidence located on video, and present it openly for all who wish to investigate further. It is hoped to prevent all sides from selective interpretation of events in ignorance, willful or otherwise, of a counter-narrative to their favored account. Ultimately, it is hoped that the truth of events will come to light – partially through this analysis – so that justice and reconciliation may be pursued from a firm foundation.

The events at Maspero received a sectarian coloring, deservedly or otherwise. Christians in Egypt received alleged confirmation that the army is against them, or at least willing to exploit them, in deference to a larger Muslim constituency. Muslims in Egypt received alleged confirmation that Copts are disloyal, seek privileges beyond their due, and are potentially armed. If unchecked, these colorings threaten to undo Egypt at its seams. Muslims and Christians must be keen to forge good relations to confront these allegations.

To repeat, ultimate responsibility and culpability in the events of Maspero are not established through video evidence. The above colorings, therefore, must be studied in light of available evidence, but not assumed via predispositions where evidence is lacking. Evidence points to infractions from all sides; all are guilty, to one degree or another.

Yet this report must conclude with the most important question unanswered: Who shot the victims? Until this truth is established, all suspicions remain open. Unfortunately, this allows all colorings to linger. For the sake of Egypt, national unity, and basic justice, an answer must be found.

Jayson Casper also blogs regularly at [A Sense of Belonging](#). Follow him on Twitter at [@jnjasper](#).