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Abstract

This paper builds on Belk's notions of the extended, social, family and dialogic selves in an attempt to explore the transformation of the self during the phenomena which has been referred to popularly as the Arab Spring. From the perspective of respondents in Egypt and Libya, this paper provides a reading of how images of self are related to artifacts of consumption, rituals, and symbols and how consumer values are navigated through this difficult landscape. The paper uses a three phase – history, happening and hopes narrative to show that the self in a liminal period of flux is referent to history and hopes and proposes a notion of a *transitional self* that incorporates this observation of reference to past and future. In particular, findings suggest the importance of considering the sacred and profane of religiosity in dialogue with consumption in the Middle East, although findings also suggest that consumption, particularly of Western consumption can be transcendental during a liminal period of flux. The paper also argues that revelatory incidents such as the Arab Spring allow for consumer candidness and offer an unbounded opportunity to access the unconstrained thoughts of consumers and citizens before a wheel of re-revolution completes a rotation and the opportunity is lost.

Key words self; extended self; consumption practices; revolution; Middle East; consumer research; transitional self

1.0: Introduction

This paper offers a challenge to the underlying assumptions of much of the discourse surrounding consumption whose foundations seem to lie in conditions of societal stability. Instead, we seek to provide a reading of *images of self* and consumption practices in conditions of flux, or revolution. Consumption choices are often based on the utility of products, symbolic meanings, rituals, while artifacts are also important for creating and sustaining a sense of self and locating one's place in society (Wattanasuwan, 2005). Hence, images of self and consumption practices can be considered to be intrinsically related. The choice of a particular consumption object or objects can signify how we choose to present ourselves, how we ground ourselves in a community, and how we make a "positive contribution to our identities" (Belk, 1988: p.160). The inter-relationship between the self and the extended self is complex and carries a multiplicity of images of how people feel about themselves and how they are perceived by others (Arnould, et al., 2004). We ask here, what can be learned about the self by studying consumption practices in flux?

In periods of extraordinary change and indeed revolution, such changes to images of self can be dramatic and rapid. In order to make meaning and create a bounded place in which to locate oneself in society, citizens can revert to primary identities grounded in such factors as ethnicity, nationality, territory and religion (Castells, 1996). Established notions of self can be forced into transition in which that which is sacred and that which is profane may become blurred. In naive terms, the sacred refers to how the self views religious beliefs, places of worship, rites, duties or anything that are socially constructed and are valued as sacrosanct. In more post modern terms, ideas of what are considered sacred can be symbols, rituals and artifacts embedded within consumption practices. A conflict arises when profane symbols, rituals and artifacts are perceived to contaminate the sacred. It is this dichotomy/clash between the two that contributes to dialogue within the self.

In exploring ideas of the sacred and profane, Belk et al. (1989) discusses the importance of *revelatory incidents*, and indeed the focus of this paper is on one such revelatory incident, the so-called Arab Spring. The Arab Spring is a metaphor that has been used to depict the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa. The ‘spring’ season represents the start of the new season which heralds the new and the arrival of something better. But also hidden in the early media reports of the Arab Spring phenomena as it occurred were expressions of hope as to what a summer might bring, and it is this observation that inspired this investigation. We ask in this paper, to what extent consumer culture is interwoven within these hopes?

Consumption practices, as a means of projecting and extending the self (Belk, 1988) may be perceived as less important during a revolution, due for instance, to rapidly changing priorities such as keeping safe and sourcing basic consumer goods. However, many citizens immersed in the events of spring seemed to speak of their hopes for a better summer in terms of consumption. That which was sacred and that which was profane therefore seemed to be in flux and the sense of self of those experiencing spring, subject to significant challenge.

In this paper, rather than simply attempting an incremental contribution based on a traditional gap-spotting approach we also utilize a problematization strategy to create scientific usefulness (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011). In the consumer research literature, significant attention has been paid to concepts of the self (Rindfleish, 2005), extended self (e.g. Ahuvia, 2005; Belk, 1989, 2014a; Noble & Walker, 1997) and the links between the self and identity (e.g. Chernev et al., 2011; Shankar et al., 2009), but this work tends to focus on contemporary western societies. Literature has not to date addressed transitional societies such as the Middle East to any great extent (Huang & Balakrishnan, 2013). In a similar vein, the underlying causes that spark negotiations between the different selves (extended, domestic and social) have received scant attention. We therefore in this paper offer an incremental contribution to address these gaps in the literature. However, to date, there is

little research that explains how radical changes to community affect our conception of the self and the extended self. To address this weakness requires a challenge to the underlying assumptions of societal stability inherent in the current body of work examining the self.

Little is understood as to how images of self transform following a revolution and in particular, little insight is available about how the self is reconstructed through the lens of revolution and by the influx of new ideas, consumption opportunities – and indeed new constraints. It would seem of great value to understand how possessions and market driven artifacts help to change the sense of self and the extended self during a period of uncertainty.

Building on Belk's (1988) work, the purpose of this paper is to firstly explore the dialogic self during the Arab Spring. With these contributions in mind, our objectives for the paper are as follows:

1. To offer insight into how different aspects of transformations of the self (the dialogic self) were manifest during the early phase of the revolution in Egypt in Libya.
2. To provide a temporal and emergent reading of how images of self navigated through this extraordinary, revolutionary landscape.
3. We seek to expose the dialogic tension between what is sacred and what is profane and attempt to identify what consumption practices helped make meaning and reconfigure images of self.

Our hope is that in attempting these contributions, we provide insight into both the ongoing perturbations in the Middle East and to other societies in flux. We anticipate that our findings and insight into the Arab spring phenomenon will have interest in the broader social sciences.

Our paper is structured as follows. First in section 2, we set the scene of the Arab Spring with a brief look at the contextual background of Libya and Egypt. We then provide a review of the literature discussing images of self and tentatively suggest how the largely Western discussion of the self can be contextualized to the Middle-East. This section ends with a conceptual framework that allows us to bring together the elements in our three stated objectives. We then provide details of the methodological approach. Our penultimate section

(4) contains our theoretical contributions. In line with our conceptual framework, we provide our account in three sections corresponding to *history*, *happening* and *hopes*. We end our paper with our concluding comments.

2.0: Theoretical and contextual background

In this section we provide a background to the focal countries in our study, a review of the literature that underpins our discussion and conclude the chapter with our conceptual framework.

2.1: The Arab Spring, Libya and Egypt

The Middle East is an important space in the global economy which accounts for around 23% of the world's trade (El-Bassiouny, 2014) and it is the home of approximately 350 million consumers. The Middle East contains an unusually large demographic of young consumers (Mahajan, 2012) known as the 'shabab' (youth) generation which is perhaps more attuned with global consumption than older generations. In addition, the region's significance as an important consumer segment is underpinned by a rising urban middle class population whose consumption practices reflect both tradition (e.g. shopping from 'souks' or traditional markets) and modernity (e.g. shopping from modern malls).

Although the Arab Spring swept through much of the Middle East, the focus of the research reported in this paper is grounded in Egypt (Cairo) and Libya (Tripoli). The choice of these two regions relates to the contrasting political systems and quite different authoritarian former regimes. The Libyan revolution in 1969, led by Colonel Muammar Qaddafi, sought to create a *Jamahirayah* or *State of the Masses* through the elimination of a monarchy that were seen as puppets of the imperialist powers (Pargeter, 2012). The authoritarian regime that emerged post revolution was driven by the cult personality of

Qaddafi with an ostensibly socialist economic policy (Vandewalle, 2008). In contrast, Egypt with its rich classical history was characterized by an economically liberal, autocratic but socially stable regime since the 1952 overthrow of King Farouk. His removal was initiated by President Nasser who embarked upon a substantial social and political project (Osman, 2013) which arguably was combined with a continued relative economic decline, lack of political rights as well as social injustice. These were contributory factors in the revolution of 2011 which led to the downfall of President Mubarak and Libya's former president Muammar Qaddafi. Both revolutions were very different. Egypt achieved a political revolution by way of mass protests and demonstrations (Kienle, 2012), while Libya experienced armed conflict (Wehrey, 2013) and a political revolution. Under Qaddafi, the impact of tight authoritarian control guided by socialism contributed to a sustained planned economy instead of a market based one (Springer & Czinkota, 1999) and this restricted the flow of consumption due to a lack of variety of consumer choices and freedoms in the marketplace. In contrast to Libya, Egypt has had a more advanced consumption environment and this is demonstrated by an established consumer culture and a multiplicity of retail outlets (Abaza, 2005).

2.2: The self and the extended self

The self refers to a sense of who and what we are, and is indicated through peoples' actions (Kleine et al., 1993). Belk (1988) articulates the terms *self*, *sense of self*, and *identity* as synonyms for describing how a person subjectively recognizes who he or she is. Belk's conceptualization of the self is important because he rejects any homogenous definition that could apply to all individuals and cultures. He discusses the self as comprising of subjective assessments that change between people and over time. Furthermore, the self is not restricted to everyday activities and as Belk asserts; the self is also characterized as the *extended self* through consumption practices and affiliations with family and the social world. It is the way in which consumers wish to be seen that gives rise to an extended self and this extension

gives rise to a group (social) self. It is possible therefore to visualize the self as being linked to consumption through the extended self, and as such, a study of one side of this dynamic may lead to conclusions regarding the other. However, to understand this dynamic better, we need next to turn to notions of the domestic and social self.

In his seminal work, Mead (1928/1973) argues that the self is constructed through interaction with the symbolic resources within society. The self is therefore not a passive concept; rather it is subject to a dialectic and reflexive process of adaptation, determined by family and conventions within culture and society (Giddens, 1991). The domestic self is the way through which a sense of extended self is created within the family environment and the social self is the way in which the extended self is projected in the social arena (Belk, 1988). Ahuvia (2005) also notes how the combination of different perspectives of self gives rise to multiple selves and we draw here upon Belk's notion of a dialogic self to explore the notion of multiple selves. Belk (2014b: p.252) proposed that self conflict can be dealt with dialectically...

“Through negotiation or coalition, avoiding the conflict, for example by compartmentalizing and accepting that different selves will prevail on different occasions, or privileging a dominating self that suppresses the other selves.”

The self is therefore shaped by key episodes in one's life, relationships with family and also consumption practices (Giddens, 1991; Thompson, 1997). This research is interested in uncovering how the self transforms during a revolution and uncovers how hopes for the future are expressed in such a revolutionary period. A useful term that can be deployed to understand revolution is Noble and Walker's (1997: p. 32) notion of *liminal transitions*, evident when:

“A change in a significant life role marked by a transitional or liminal period during which (a) personal identities are suspended, producing significant psychological consequences, and (b) symbolic consumption may be used to facilitate the transition to the new role”.

In order to explore the transformations of the self during this turbulent period and to provide focus, the aspects of liminal consumption that this study is also interested in, alongside symbols, are values, artifacts and rituals. Values are concerned with matters such as honor, reputation (Uskul et al., 2010) and religious values (Cleveland et al., 2013; Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002). Artifacts are understood as the objects (e.g. clothes, mobile phones, beauty products) that help define a sense of self and assist in the formation of the extended self (Belk, 1988). Symbols refer to symbolic consumption whereby consumers choose, buy, and use products (e.g., possessions, products and brands) to assist the self in the creation, confirmation and communication of their identity (Belk et al., 1982). Whilst an abundance of research has investigated symbolic consumption (e.g. Ekinici et al., 2013; Schouten, 1991; Wattanasuwan, 2005), just how the extended self becomes coupled to, and decoupled from symbols in an extraordinary and potentially liminal situation, as in this case of the Arab Spring has been underexplored.

For Rook (1985), rituals are a type of expressive, symbolic activity made up of a multiplicity of behaviors which occur in a fixed, episodic sequence and are usually repeated over time. There has been significant work focusing on consumption rituals (e.g. Belk, 1990a; Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014). However, little attention has been paid to the implications of rituals on transformations of the self, the extended self and the social self within transitional societies.

Belk et al. (1989) discusses how sacralization processes may reveal shifts in which objects are considered sacred beyond those that might be most associated with religion. Midgley (1992) also discusses processes of marginalization between the self and the social and the grey areas that may processually exist between the sacred and the profane; understood as processes where the absolute and relative value of objects dialogically shift

over time. An observation of rituals is crucial to understanding the ebb and flow of sacredness and profanity.

In order to support Belk's (2013) assertion that most of the research on the self to date has been in a western context, and that cultural differences have been largely neglected, we next attempt to provide a reading of the self in the context of the Middle East. With this in mind, the domestic self is operational within the boundaries of the home, cultural traditions and also the rituals and symbols that characterize the domestic self. On the other hand, the social self is an outcome of the extended self and the domestic self and is therefore viewed as a separate construct.

2.3: Images of self and the Middle-East

For Moaddel (1992) the self is susceptible to forces of change in the macro environment such as popular protest movements and civil wars. Such forces impact at both personal and social levels as perceptions of life conditions adapt to ongoing change (Giddens, 1999). In an honor culture like the Middle East, an individual, the family and the social self are inextricably linked. An honor culture is considered to be one where there is an honorable and dishonorable way of doing things. For instance, each individual representing their wider family or tribal unit in whatever they do and wherever they go. Therefore, family reputation arises from the family and the individual self. The failures of the self can be felt to diminish family honor if for example, the self commits an act of shame such as engaging in anti-social consumption (e.g. consuming pork, alcohol or drugs) that contradicts religious values. In contrast, the successes of the self (e.g. securing a new job, starting a new family) can bring the family closer together and enhance the self (Uskul et al., 2010). The close knit collectivist community in many parts of the Middle-East determines that self worth is underpinned by achievements within society (Mojab & Abdo, 2004). Moreover, achievements in society are

demonstrated by possessions and in accordance with Fromm's (1978: p.60) notion of the "marketing character", the self is positioned within post modernity and expressed through commodities. Unlike in modernist times, postmodern consumption is no longer seen as a profane activity. Rather, consumption has become the means of self-realization, self-identification and responsible for self-actualisation (producing a sense of self). In the case of traditional societies (e.g. Egypt and Libya), the self is considered to be heavily influenced by tradition and history. On a macro-level, the social self in the Middle East is under heavy influence by states which can enforce religious values amongst citizens or the political notion of praising the hegemonic status of the state and its rulers (Orwellian style), particularly in the case of the more authoritarian regimes.

Where revolutionary change is evident, and in line with Fromm (1978), the self may transform into a liminal state of being and one in which individuals try to break free from macro-level constraints. Under authoritarian regimes, the choices that the self is able to make are embedded within macro-level constraints, meaning that there is limited room to maneuver and the powerful exert significant influence to conform to their notion of desired behavior. In Orwellian type former Soviet block era states (e.g. Hungary, Romania and the Czech Republic), the state controlled the majority of enterprises and operated a planned market economy, which limited the influx of foreign products. Therefore, citizens had to settle for local consumption options. However, after the collapse of Eastern European states, companies became autonomous with limited state interference. Subsequently, private enterprises emerged as state owned enterprises declined, consumers had the opportunity to exercise a global consumer culture, which they were unable to do previously and transitional countries became *market based economies* (Springer & Czinkota, 1999).

In closing this section we offer a notion of caution to exploring revolution as an epoch with definable beginnings and with an assured progression to spring. Argyrou (2013) has

offered an alternative view of revolutions and claimed that *re-revolutions* always returned to an earlier state of affairs and often installed governmental figures far worse from those that the revolution was meant to overturn, leading to continued constraints on the self. For those citizens, enmeshed in the Arab Spring, matters in these respects at the time of writing were still subject to significant foldings and unfoldings. If one accepts the premise of re-revolutions, then an early period of revolution may offer an unprecedented and potentially unrepeatability opportunity to gain an understanding of the self. The self here may be considered as the ideal world that one would possess (Belk, 1988). The ideal self may be imagined but cannot be experienced directly as it refers to a sense of extended self that is projected into the future – whereas, the actual self is viewed in the here and now. An early period of revolution may further offer a period of candidness to understand the self before the wheel of re-revolution completes a rotation.

Based on the literature reviewed above, we therefore propose the following conceptual framework which we use, in addition to our stated objectives, to structure our empirical findings.

INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

In Figure 1, the linkages between the self and identities in different time perspectives are relative to revolutionary events. The transformations of the self are relative to transformation of identities. Consumption practices in our framework show the five identified constructs (values, artifacts, symbols and rituals). At each stage (history, happening and hopes) there are differences in consumption practices..

3.0: Methodology

Data was collected during a state of unrest (March-April 2013). Egypt and Libya were considered at this time to be conflict environments (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). Therefore, whilst

Egyptian interviews were conducted locally and face-to-face, Libyan interviews were conducted via Skype. Snowball sampling helped overcome the difficulties of recruiting participants who were initially reticent about interviews. Prior to interviewing, a strong rapport was developed to reduce elements of fear and distrust (Moustakas, 1994).

The use of semi-structured convergent depth interviews (Rao & Perry, 2003) allowed for a historical narrative to be captured in which participants reflected on their past (history), present experiences (happening) and future expectations (hopes). After each round, key issues were identified and focused on in later rounds. Interviews were conducted amongst Egyptian and Libyan participants from Arab Universities in Cairo and Tripoli. From a list of ten universities in Egypt and five universities in Libya, only one Egyptian and one Libyan university gave acceptance. Further, snowball sampling enabled the identification of additional participants through recommendations. The final sample list incorporated twenty six participants from Cairo and sixteen from Tripoli. Students were all current postgraduate students and came from a range of age demographics and cultural backgrounds. Each respective interview lasted between forty-five minutes to one hour (see appendix 1 for full list of respondents). To maintain trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), transcripts were sent to participants for review. The qualitative data coding process was facilitated through the use of Nvivo 10. In line with using grounded theory methods, analytical memos were constructed and served as a trail of reflective thoughts (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 2014).

The first step of grounded theory coding methods entailed *initial*, or *open* coding, (synonymous terms that denote the first cycle of coding). Within initial coding, several sub coding methods were followed. These methods were *provisional coding*, *line-by-line coding*, *simultaneous coding*, *values coding*, *versus coding* and *in-vivo* coding (see Saldana, 2013). Provisional coding helped to prevent the risk of premature coding disclosure by highlighting possible linkages between open codes. Line-by-line coding involved highlighting sentences

or in some cases small paragraphs and assigning free codes. Charmaz (2006) noted that line-by-line coding advocates a more trustworthy analysis and lowers the risk of personal bias entering the coding process. Values coding guarded a sense of bracketing pre-conceived ideas and assigned *marketing* codes to the responses. Versus coding was used to juxtapose concepts (e.g. foreign consumption and local consumption). In-vivo coding was used to record codes verbatim and preserved participants' own spoken discourse.

4.0: Findings

We intend in our findings to provide a reading of images of self in the early stages of the phenomenon that has become known as the Arab Spring. We contend that the early stage of its unfolding afforded us a unique opportunity to access the candid thoughts of those people caught up in its wake. In this section, we attempt to provide a temporally nuanced account in which the present for the respondents is what we call *happening*, the past we refer to as *history*, and their future expectations (expressed at the time of interviews) as *hopes*. Our account therefore follows a pattern of *history*, *happening* and *hopes*. We cannot speak as yet of an *after* from the perspective of the respondents but can perhaps offer a sense of at the time of writing, of a re-revolution occurring and the window of candidness once again closing.

4.1: Historical images of self- *History*

An important catalyst for transformations of the self during the Arab Spring were political and religious thoughts because under previous regimes they were somewhat bottled up and socially conditioned. Although a strong historically grounded self existed in both Libya and Egypt before the beginning of the Arab Spring, it was hidden and constrained by a state that exerted power on consumption behavior and projected desirable values that if breached could lead to punishment. The following respondent's comment reflects the views of many others.

The previous system played a very important role in putting down the Egyptian identity and karama [dignity]. (13)

Dignity and *karama* seem to be examples of the social self in Egypt and similarly, such expression of a constrained social self seems evident in the accounts of both Egyptians and Libyans. An interesting generational split emerged from the accounts of Egyptian respondents. Older Egyptians who had lived through several political eras and who had seen several regimes come and go expressed a view that they were very proud to be Egyptians, but felt that the sense of *karama* differed in younger Egyptians.

Under the Nasser [Gamal Abdel Nasser, former Egyptian President] regime or Sadat [Anwar Sadat, former Egyptian President] [...] they [young consumers] only saw the reign of Mubarak [...] younger members of society did not really see the best part of Egypt. (14)

Hence, we can propose some generational difference in the social self. Equally, Libyan respondents made similar allusions to a constrained sense of self:

We might have had our identity curbed by the old regime [...] but we were still Libyan in our hearts and minds. (35)

We propose that these perceptions of a constrained self led to a historical lack of candidness on the part of respondents and this was apparent in many of their accounts. The following comment is typical:

Anyone you talked to in Libya could be with you or against you and that was the same thing abroad [...] you didn't freely just run your mouth about the regime because you did not know who you would come across. I think the fear was spread beyond Libya and to those living outside the country as well. We were really cautious with what we were saying with friends and to people inside the country as well. (39)

We note also throughout the transcripts, the constant dialectic interweaving between matters of religion and matters of consumption in the accounts of respondents. Here we see the beginnings of a significant tension and flux between what is sacred and what is profane. Belk (2014b) discusses the management of such tensions in any individual as a dialogic self, a

process through which different selves are compartmentalized and prioritized. The following narrative seems to illustrate such a dialogic self.

I have always enjoyed purchasing western fashions. Even for headscarf's, I buy branded ones like Burberry and Louis Vuitton. Foods both western such as burgers, fries, pasta dishes and so forth and Arabic dishes have always played a central role in my diet. I mean... I felt like I had the best of both worlds. (30)

This respondent seems to speak of a dialectic process fusing western symbols of consumerism with traditional consumption rituals. Indeed, notions of *West* and *Western symbols* are often fused with notions of consumerism in the accounts of respondents.

There is still an orientalist view even amongst Arabs towards themselves. We always look at the west as being the leader, so we are still holding onto that mentality. (34)

The relationship between Egypt and the west was discussed for instance by many respondents as grounded in the values of modernization, especially consumption. Historically, Egyptians seem to have used Western consumption objects and artifacts to project their sense of extended self and this extension was part of their domestic self. As participant 10 explained:

I mean before the revolution it was very obvious, we all wanted to look Americanized and wanted to look modernized and that's how our parents used to do it so we followed that kind of attitude. At home or outdoors – citizens used to converse with friends and family but with 'bil tabaruq' [looking away from] their origins. (10)

Respondents seem to have historically consumed Western artifacts as a means of escape of creating otherness in the extended self.

Even if you could find them like clothes for instance, the markets were contaminated with fake [...]. However, people still purchased them, one because they didn't have another choice and two because they wanted to show that they could have the desirable even if it was not what they desired. They also wanted to show that they had a certain level of materialism and lift their own sense of modernity. (27)

Consumption seemed fused with a desire for otherness in the reflections of some respondents. However, a dialectic force in the historic sense of self was religion. Religiosity was the most influential of values in both countries as it was important to the self and a constant process embedded within sacred personal, family and the social rituals, and thus was central to notions of self (Cleveland et al., 2013; Rice & Al-Mossawi, 2002). Religion was seen by some respondents as secularized under preceding regimes,

Under Mubarak [Hosni Mubarak- a former Egyptian president], I could teach my children what I wanted to teach them. Religion really was a choice and not a threat...

... and the respondent makes a clear link to his fears of the sacrifice of consumption and Westernism. He continues:

I wouldn't see anything on TV that I would think is bad for my kids. (10)

However,, others saw profanity in the link between religion and state.

Religion is something between you and your God [...] a government should not be run by any religion because religion is something completely separate to politics in my eyes. Christians, Jewish people, Muslims, everyone should [all] be entitled to live in their country. (24)

Our findings complement the view of Obeidi (2001) who found that religion and family are the most significant elements of Libyan identity. We note a similar sentiment in Egypt, except Egyptian society is more heterogeneous and contains other religious communities such as Christians and Jews. The maintenance of sacred values across both countries seemed historically grounded in tradition. Thus, religious values seemed key to reducing uncertainty, because citizens referred to their faith as a means of guidance in the marketplace. To a wider extent, the strong belief in fatalism (Sidani & Thornberry, 2009) and the state's view of desired behavior kept citizens compliant and pulled them back from calling for changes. These comments and other therefore allows to conceive a starting point against which to measure change as a result of the revolution.

4.2: Images of self as the revolution happened - *Happening*

We characterize the period of flux as the beginning of events that were *happening* from the perspective of our respondents.

Egypt can be imagined as a series of bumpy waves that are crashing back and forth at the moment. Hopefully things will stabilise but the picture is definitely so fuzzy and sometimes you feel frustrated. (13)

It is such *fuzziness* and *frustration* as indicators of environmental flux that we focus on in the remainder of Section 4. As the sense of revolution took hold, Libyan participants spoke of liberation and comments such as being like ‘*human beings with a new found sense of belonging*’ (37) were typical. Similarly with Egypt, the personal and the social self appeared for some, reinvented, and for others, rediscovered.

Egyptians in particular are very proud, especially since the Arab Spring, are very proud of what they have done. (19)

An apparent turning point was breaking out of the imposed boundaries and taking an alternative road leading to the desire for rapid change or revolution, and to extend a sense of self. We can therefore begin to explore the dialogic self in a sense of flux as contemporary to the respondents. We spoke in the preceding sections of a potential period of candidness in the early period of a revolution. Most of the accounts of our respondents in both countries contain support for this assertion. Where historical accounts speak of guardedness, as the revolution happened, respondents seemed inclined to shout their sense of a *transitional self*, a form of self we consider here to include a liminal period of transition (after Noble & Walker, 1997), where the self enters an uncertain period and begins to search for a new form of extended self. The transitional self is characterized by extreme compartmentalization of the sacred and profane by some, and a dialogue within others that attempts to blend history, with what is happening and with their hopes for the future. This freedom for some has been

achieved to the extent that people were able to ritually socialize with others unconcerned about who was watching or listening in to conversations.

...we are more patriotic than ever before as a result of what has happened [...] our identity has definitely become stronger. It means a lot more to be Libyan now, you can actually feel the atmosphere around you and grab Libyan pulses that scream we love to be Libyan. These pulses were there before [the revolution] but they were fake or pretending to please the old regime. (31)

An observation is therefore that the social self is being extended and reformed through new and deeper interactions. We argue that as much as the political environment brings about radical transformations, it has also generated emergent consumption rituals that are fuelled by the desire to encourage country development and create a new form of extended self in transition.

Almost 80-90% of what I and my family consume are foreign products [...] buying things does not excite me as much as it used [to] because there is so much suffering [...] but buying products, socialising in western and traditional restaurants helps us forget about our current worries. (15)

As the revolution took hold, the transformation of personal and collective identities in Egypt and Libya has allowed citizens to feel closer to each other and have a new desire to help the local cause. This transitional identity for many respondents was therefore part re-discovered, based on previously hidden images of self and citizens wanted more than anything to look and sound as Egyptian as possible. Equally, the self seemed new and liminal with significant compartmentalization between the traditional and Western notions of the sacred and profane. Some Egyptian respondents expressed a new found desire to reconnect with their history taken, a point which resonates with Belk's (1990b) observation that the extended self is also achieved by reconnecting with past memories, rituals, traditions and places of symbolic values (e.g. historical sites). Connecting with history is important for Egyptians in developing the domestic and social self as well as fostering a new identity. We see therefore here a reversal of *bil tabaruq* here. As one respondent told:

Me and all my friends were like I want to talk in Arabic. We need to reinforce that [with our children] I want to go to the “Qalaa” [castle] and show the kids or take them to the pyramids, I have never been to “Kahun” [Pyramids village] ...because you want your identity [implies back]. (10)

Historical sites are seen as important sacred community possessions and evoke a sense of nostalgia. In the past, these possessions existed but it is only after a revolution that they become of greater significance due to misplaced identities under previous regimes. As events unfolded, Egyptians and Libyans had the flexibility to protest and set up movements in a manner that was not possible under prior regimes. Since individuals had experienced limited freedom, their sense of self had entered uncharted territory (several respondents speak of fuzziness in the present tense) and with those unconstrained boundaries had come uncertainty (liminality), which had led to a change in what could be described as anti-social consumption practices but also buying artifacts that maintain a sense of security. However, we observe here some differences in these respects between Libya and Egypt. In Libya, due to historical sanctions and restriction on importation of Western goods, the revolution led to a sudden urge to consume, or as one Libyan respondent stated, *Libyan's have now gone consumer crazy* (30).

One of the greatest things I have noticed from the revolution however is that Libyan consumers are less utilitarian and are spending more lavishly on consumer goods than they used to. Maybe this is down to an increase in disposable incomes or down to the fact that they had been oppressed for decades and now want to show what they have been missing out on. (40)

It appears here that foreign, particularly Western goods have therefore become almost sacred in this early part of the revolution and a key part of the extended self in transition. This tension suggests that transitional selves in Libya are experimenting with Western consumption symbols as a way to ease the transition to a new role within a liminal period. As Noble and Walker (1997) noted, once the transition has been completed, the reliance on possessions (western consumption symbols in this case) may decrease. Therefore, the transitional self appears to contain more emphasis on consumption symbols (e.g. local

consumption) experienced during liminal periods than in postliminal periods. A danger with the liminal period progressing too quickly is that it can result in negative consequences for the social self. Our findings indicate that the sacrilization of consumption is seen as profane by other respondents who link such extension of the self to negative aspects of anti-social consumption.

They [consumers] are now trying to experience what they have never had and sometimes [...] you act before you think which is why some people have resorted to taking drugs, drinking alcohol. (29)

For others, the tensions between different transitional selves in dialogue was very evident as they tried to make sense of their transforming sense of self.

Before the revolution, women used to typically dress in traditional Libyan clothes, whereas now they dress like European women or they combine the two styles with each other like women in the Gulf. You see women in the UAE for example wearing the 'abaya' (traditional black dress) and beneath they will have t-shirts, dresses, shorts, skirts and so on). So they have the best of East and West. (36)

This comment shows the dilemma expressed by many respondents between the sacred and profane. On one hand there is a leniency toward new Western consumption ideals and on the other, a focus on maintaining religious values and traditions. The same respondent continues, showing the dilemma and the dialogue she is going through in transition.

They are trying to maintain their traditions whilst accepting western dress codes at the same time. There is no problem with this at all but the problems for me come when they wear a headscarf or veil with the hair almost hanging out. Now if she is trying to cover her hair for religious reasons, why is her hair dangling from one half of her head?

In contrast, the ambiguous legitimacy of the political and the citizen/consumers' role in society was already leading to an increase in extreme compartmentalization in the self. In Egypt, participants discussed fears that society was coalescing into sectarian groups, and new political and religious conflicts were emerging, each with distinct notions of the sacred and profane. Several participants pointed to the risk of certain groups becoming marginalized in

both focal countries if new political leaders fail to determine new boundaries for behavior; and deliver on citizens expectations.

A number of respondents expressed views that religious values in transition were important because citizens use their faith as a means of reducing uncertainty and a means of guidance in turbulent times. In the dialogic self, it is still apparent in all respondents that religion should be prioritized, but that its compartmentalization is relative in many cases to consumerism, and that the degree to which consumption is profane differs between respondents.

There is this fear of either the religion ruling or not ruling. [...] I believe when you live together you need rules for your life. (11)

I know a lot of people become exposed to western societies and often lapse into a swamp of western ideals and norms, which is fine. But when they forget where they came from and who their parents are, then that is what is worrying. (30)

Other causes of marginalization were apparent in the accounts of respondents. Some rural individuals such as those in tribal groups were discussed by respondents as more likely to display greater ethnocentrism and resist a transitional self, due to affiliations with the old ruling powers.

Libya is a massive canvas and has montage of different ethnicities [...] some of these sects of people actually reject the idea of globalisation and want to remain tribal or archaic in their values and keep to their own personal traditions [...] they live in their own bubble. [...] Under the old Qaddafi regime [...] they had a lot of comfort and [...] he used to treat them and give them lands and cash. This favoritism has declined after the revolution which is why many Bedouins despise the new government and reject developments and government reforms. (27)

The revolution may have initially brought some tribal groups closer together, for the purposes of resisting change. Indeed responses suggest that traditional values across a diverse Libyan demographic have remained unchanged for many in the present. As the revolution unfolded, respondents discussed fears that within larger cities such as Tripoli, a social rivalry is

emerging between tribal groups and citizens. However, even amongst tribal affiliates, there seemed to be a dichotomy between preserving traditional values and advocating western consumer behavior via the consumption of western products. This suggests that tribal clans going through a liminal period are showing a reversal of traditional roles by embodying a transitional self that seeks to emulate western consumption. In this liminality (i.e. the happening), tribal clans have distanced themselves from modernity and are engaging in postmodern activities to acquire a new sense of extended self that is in search of an ideal self in which religion is prioritized. The above respondent continues.

Ironically though some may reject globalization and western products, you will find people wearing Levi's jeans or driving American cars or drinking Coca Cola [...] the revolution has strengthened their own unique identities and brought them closer together. (27)

There appears to be a peculiarity, in that a desire for western goods is a more commonly shared sense of self than tribal, religious and political affiliation, but that marginalization, particularly in religious terms had led to an extreme sense of scarification in the consumption of western goods.

We identify in the accounts of respondents, a rather deeper insight into consumerism which extends beyond general observations of foreignness, Westernness and profanity. We have above discussed how historically, Egyptians linked their extended self to the conspicuous consumption of Western brands because they were perceived as symbols of wealth, prestige and quality (this finding is in agreement with Abaza, (2005)). However, as the revolution unfolded, respondents discussed a burgeoning epiphenomenon they called *ishtiri al masri* (buy the local Egyptian products). This suggests that in the transitional self, with a new sense of Egyptianness (*karama*), came a normative pressure to buy local products.

Even if I bought less quality products and gave them away, I bought local products to encourage the manufacturing of Egyptian products and the regeneration of the economy [...] for example encouraging flags, bags and

badges and anything that was Egyptian made [...] but now not until we have a proper president' [in reference to the MB]. (10)

This was in contrast to Libya where the quest for foreign products seemed absolute. The transitional self therefore had some distinct differences for Libyans than for Egyptians

People are even more inclined and hold even greater positive perceptions of US products for example, so they are favorable if anything. You have to remember now in Libya that before the revolution there weren't that many foreign products, like especially from European countries and the US. Now, after the revolution they are being flooded and exposed to these products and they have been very successful. [...] So I would say consumerism and the propensity for the consumption of western products has massively increased (27).

In Libya, the previous denial of access to Western goods has seemingly driven desire for Western goods in the transitional self.

What seems apparent in the accounts of both Libyans and Egyptians is that the consumption of Western brands is a significant source of otherness, and that such consumption still forms part of the extended self. In Libya, the initial burst of freedom had led to a clamor for Western products, previously denied to them. The conspicuous consumption of Western goods has evidently become part of the extended and social selves. Our findings suggest that the dialogic self (i.e. the extended, domestic and social) is instrumental in the making of the transitional self. Whilst in Egypt and Libya, for many the domestic self and social self have retreated to tradition (these traditions are for some being rediscovered, for other younger citizens, being newly discovered), foreign symbols have in the this liminal period remained or increased in their dialogic prioritization in these same people. What is interesting to note is the beginnings of *ishtiri al masri* in Egyptian consumers which may lead eventually lead to increased prioritization for home produce in the near future and for its consumption to be a stronger emphasis in the extended self in a post-liminal period. Within a period of transitional liminality, the extended self appears to have its own notions of what is sacred and what is profane. It is these two dichotomies that assist in

shaping the values of the domestic and the social self. In order to produce an ideal self, the transitional self is in constant transitional liminality and is expressed through rituals, symbols and artifacts. Hence, in the next section, hopes for the future are brought discussed.

4.3: And for the future -Hopes

It is interesting to note that many respondents had a clear sense of *epoch*, an epoch that began with the first acts of revolution, and which many respondents felt they were still in at the time of interview and would be for some time into the future, making it difficult to speak of a before, during and after the revolution.

We will go through a dark era which will not be less than 10-15 years before we will be able to go in the right direction. (3)

However, rich metaphors of hope were apparent in a significant majority of the accounts captured in this research.

If you imagine a fisherman catching fish, we were the fish and the bait for the fisherman for decades on end. Finally now, the net has broken free and we can swim for our future. (39)

In the accounts of respondents were a large number of such nuanced comments we therefore brought together under the code we called *hopes*. We propose that hopes (and fears) from the summer after the liminal spring are a driving motivation in our proposed notion of a *transitional self*. The following respondent indicates the key dialogic tensions between the sacred and profane in this set of expectations.

I do not want Libya to become a completely sharia ruled state but at the same time I do not want it to become too liberal either. We are not a western country and we never have been so we should try and maintain our morals and traditions and achieve some kind of balance between the way we behave and act in society and make sure that it reflects our history. (32)

The comments hint at a dialogic process yet to come in which the tension between consumerism and religiosity must find a balance.

I will just keep optimistic and I think that pendulum will slowly go back and hopefully move back to the middle. (13)

It seems apparent that foreign symbols and artifacts will remain significant elements of the extended self in both Libya and Egypt, as the flux continues.

I might be getting less of them [foreign products] but I won't stop. (6)

There is however, cause to suggest that with a *pendulum swing*, a stronger sense of national identity may emerge and a new sense of ethnocentrism (*bil tabaraq*) may gradually erode the xenocentric consumption patterns observed in the proceeding section.

I would like to see it [Egypt] remain in a state of liberalism but still in a certain sense of control against particularly the west, USA and Britain' [...] I would like it to just very much gain independence. (22)

Hopefully people will grow to realize that they are being a bit too libertarian or too middle class on this by shopping in places and prioritising foreign products over so many accessible local products. (26)

Our three part analysis, history happening and hopes has allowed us to project forwards and backwards from the contemporary state of flux within which respondents are speaking. This approach has allowed us to consider a dialogic self and we have tentatively proposed a concept of a *transitional self*, a self that is in flux and is liminal. That which is sacred and that which is profane in the transitional self are in conflict resulting in rituals, artifacts, values that are in a state constant reformation and re-evaluation. The transitional self we observe in our account here is one which has an initial need for Western symbols to create a sense of escape and otherness in transition, but that with a resurgence of national identity may be replaced by Egyptian symbols and artifacts. There seems much confidence in the potential of the self to grow stronger as the future unfolds.

[Egypt] has absorbed every single culture that has invaded it, traded with it, dealt with it in any sort of way and then it emerges into something new. This is probably one of the boiling points and then it's going to turn into something else that is still Egyptian. (8)

Equally, many respondents want to see their influence in consumerism expand beyond that of the national environment.

I want Egypt to be economically like Taiwan and these Asian countries, to have products and invade the whole world. (14)

A consistent theme throughout citizens hopes for the future is achieving a balance between what is considered sacred and what is profane. Whilst Egyptians are displaying ethnocentric tendencies and encourage the growth of local consumption symbols (e.g. restaurants, clothing brands and local souks/bazaars, Libyans are keen for foreign consumption to dominate in order to lift the local economy. The transitional selves in both cases want to maintain religious values and traditional rituals but keep them secular at the same time. The influence of the dialogic self is key in allowing the transitional self to continue to progress through a period of liminality. For instance, marginalization between political factions or civil conflicts may interrupt the pendulum and a sense of transitional self is distorted and replaced by a marginalized potentially polarized self based on absolute prioritization of tradition over modernity. Similarly, the excessive consumption of western consumption symbols is concerning for the domestic self, as families' worry that younger family members will abandon traditional values.

5.0: Conclusion

In this paper, we have attempted to offer a challenge to the underlying assumptions in much of the consumer research literature that have been derived from research conducted in relatively stable environmental (social, political, economic) conditions. We have instead examined two national environments that we have characterized as being in a state of flux or revolution. Our approach to studying such flux has been to provide a three phase, *history*, *happening* and *hopes* narrative and this has allowed us to further an understanding of change and future expectations in relation to history. We have proposed that of particular value in

studying conditions of revolution is the phenomenon of *consumer candidness*. Hofstede (2001) and later DeMooij (2013) speak of a paradox between the behavior that is *desirable* with reference to external norms; and the *desired* – the behavior desired by an individual if free of constraint. That which is detectable in the accounts of respondents are their desires relative to their previously constrained expressions. Research conducted in conditions where historical constraints on candidness were apparent leads us to offer caution as to the veracity of conclusions drawn in the pre-revolutionary period as relevant to the present and future, in our focal countries. We have taken here an opportunity to access the unbounded thoughts of consumers in Egypt and Libya, an opportunity that may end through a re-revolution and the period of candidness potentially ending. We highlight here the opportunity that may be available to study other societies in the early stages of revolution with a view to accessing candid thought. However, our research purpose in this paper was to examine images of self in a period of flux and we have focused our discussion to this end.

A central contribution in our paper to the discussion of self is to propose a notion of a *transitional self* in revolution. We have used this term to characterize the extended self in a liminal period of transition, grounded in the present flux, but which is referent to history and hopes. We offer a visual representation of the transitional self in Fig. 2 which is a development of our conceptual framework, (Fig.1) and perhaps allows us to visualize, winter, spring and summer from the perspective of our respondents.

INSERT FIG. 2 ABOUT HERE

Belk's concept of the dialogic self (as illustrated in Fig.1) has been helpful to unpick and contrapose the tensions in the transitional self. In the accounts of respondents, we detect significant and wildly fluctuating compartmentalization of different priorities within the transitional (dialogic) self, particularly in respect to what is sacred and what is profane. We find however that consumption is a significant, yet potentially under appreciated aspect of

revolution. Indeed notions of profane and sacred consumption seem simultaneously to drive marginalization and unity in our focal societies during this liminal period. We also identify therefore that consumption hopes can be an important driving mechanism of flux as well as being something that is constantly reformed as a result of the flux. Consideration of the transitional self (including previously well respected notions of the extended, domestic and social self) throughout the three phases (history, happening and hopes) is valuable because it illustrates how consumers use rituals, values, symbols, and artifacts to reflect their sense of self and make sense of their turbulent environment (as proposed in Fig. 1).

In their concluding comments, Belk et al, (1989), ask whether Western society can generate transcendental common values which are influenced by, but not in dialectic tension with religion (they refer to Harrington 1983 in this discussion). They propose that “like it or not, to our benefit or peril, consumption has become a transcendental vehicle for many” (p.32). Our findings here support the assertion of consumption being transcendental in a liminal period, and to an extent in the histories of respondents. However, unlike Western societies, we do not detect in the hopes of respondents, for religion to be transcended by consumption in a way that Belk and colleagues perhaps suggest. Hopes for the future contain strong notions of religiosity in the ideal (hoped for) self. Since our respondents have tended to be from a younger generation which makes up a very significant proportion of the population of the Middle East, we feel that religiosity is an important factor for further research focus going forward. Further research may consider the concepts discussed by Asgary and Walle (2002) of polarization and hybridization and how consumerism is in dialectic tension with religion. Since our sample is mostly from a younger population, if a broader sample from older, traditional and rural populations undergoing flux could be obtained, then further conclusions regarding polarization, extreme compartmentalization and

marginalization could be drawn. However, the very definition of this sample makes is accessing difficult and potentially dangerous during a period of revolution.

Rather than assuming the transcendence of consumption over religion, we propose that further research should study the dialectic interplay between consumption and religion in the Middle East. This underlying assumption of transcendence in the current body of work seems to define a weakness when attempting to extend existing Western based consumer research findings into more traditional, historical and religiously grounded societies such as the Middle East. Going forward, there seems much more to learn about sacredness/profanity and religion/consumption in the Middle East. The transcendence of consumption in a liminal period does however; seem apparent in both Libya and Egypt, with Western symbolic consumption (as a result of *bil tabaruq*) being a significant aspect of such transcendence for the young urban population that make up the significant proportion of our sample. We have therefore offered in this paper some initial bases on which to further an understanding of both the transitional self and of Middle East consumer behavior in the future. The comparison between Egypt and Libya has also been helpful in identifying that they are different phases of liminal transition, with potentially with Egypt's transition being more developed, substantiality we argue because of its historical situation, being more engaged with globalization in the memories of respondents. For instance, we have highlighted a distinction between Egyptian and Libyan consumers in the form of *ishitiri al masri* – an awakening and extension of the extended self that points to a movement away from Western Symbolism to local Egyptian production. In this sense we identify a potential transition in the social self (or *karama*) in Egypt that has important implications for markets and marketers. We propose that that an understanding of the transitional self in leading transitional Middle Eastern countries may inform future changes in lagging Middle Eastern countries. Understanding the transitional self may allow some understanding of how values may affect consumption, what

artifacts will be consumed in which symbolic way, and through which rituals. We have offered some insight into these four facets in Appendix 2. We offer our reading and the proposed notion of a transitional self as a contribution to the understanding of consumption in conditions of flux or revolution.

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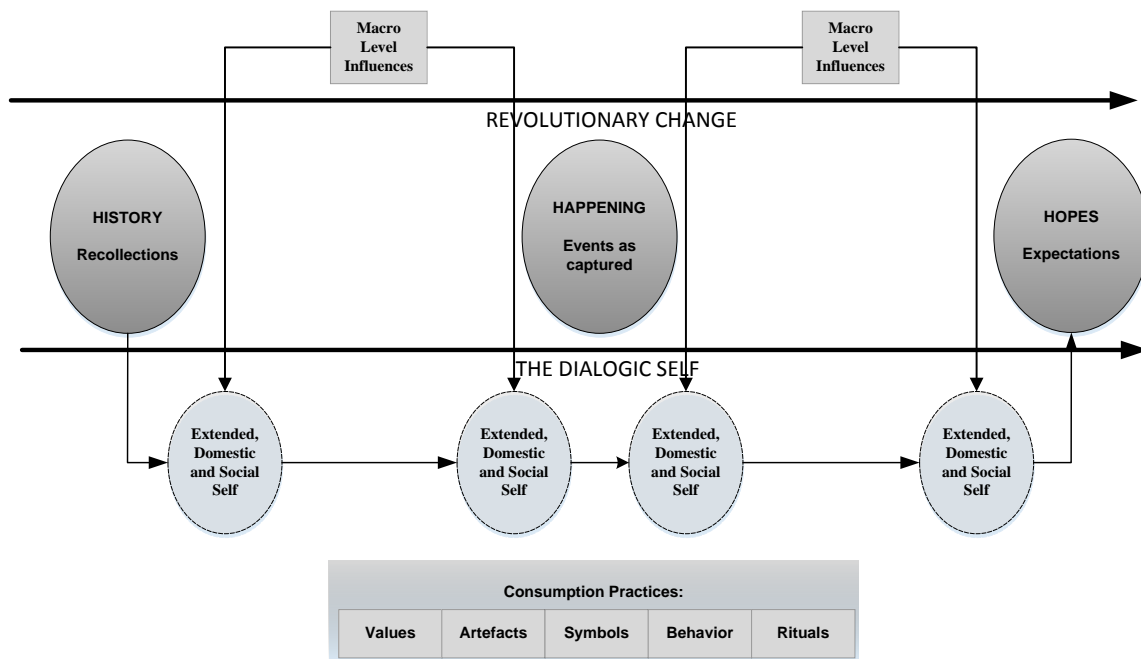


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework

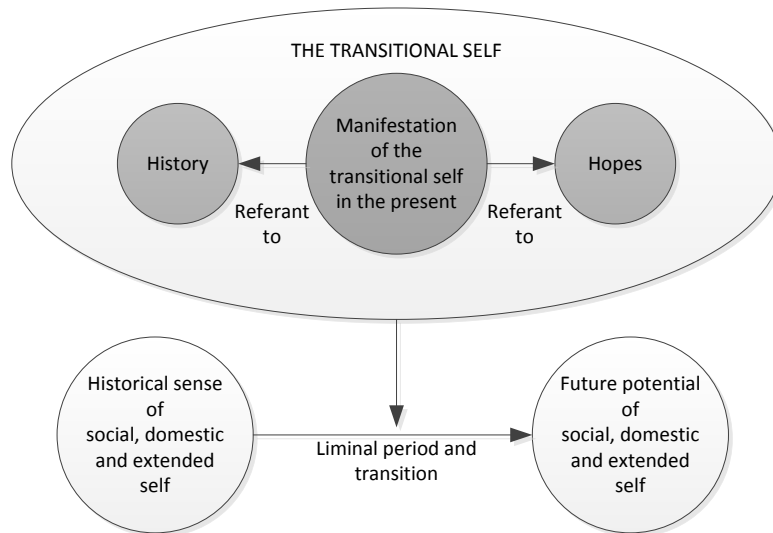


Fig. 2: Visualization of the transitional self

Appendix 1

Participant Number	Name	Age	Gender	Occupation	Nationality
1	Reem	23	Female	Masters student	Egyptian
2	Haytham	32	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
3	Samir	25	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
4	Hosni	34	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
5	Sara	30	Female	Masters student	Egyptian
6	Dima	32	Female	University staff	Egyptian
7	Rania	29	Female	University staff	Egyptian
8	Rana	29	Female	University staff	Egyptian
9	Faisal	27	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
10	Mayssam	38	Female	University staff	Egyptian
11	Younis	36	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
12	Marwa	24	Female	Masters student	Egyptian
13	Dr. Abdelrahman	56	Male	University staff	Egyptian
14	Dr. Heba	59	Female	University staff	Egyptian
15	Amr	26	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
16	Dr. Arwa	33	Female	University staff	Egyptian
17	Adel	24	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
18	Ziyad	24	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
19	Dr Nizar	34	Male	University staff	Egyptian
20	Layla	25	Female	Masters student	Egyptian
21	Nader	24	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
22	Mustafa	24	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
23	Ammar	25	Male	Masters student	Egyptian

24	Ali	24	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
25	Omar	25	Male	Masters student	Egyptian
26	Sally	23	Female	Masters student	Egyptian
27	Dr Mohammed	32	Male	University staff	Libyan
28	Mona	29	Female	Masters student	Libyan
29	Aisha	34	Female	Charity employee	Libyan
30	Aiman	28	Male	Company employee	Libyan
31	Hamza	35	Male	Company employee	Libyan
32	Aya	24	Female	Masters student	Libyan
33	Abdullah	24	Male	Masters student	Libyan
34	Shukry	23	Male	Masters student	Libyan
35	Lamis	26	Female	Masters student	Libyan
36	Nesreen	24	Female	Masters student	Libyan
37	Fatima	25	Female	Masters student	Libyan
38	Mahmoud	26	Male	Masters student	Libyan
39	Hassan	24	Male	Masters student	Libyan
40	Khaled	29	Male	Masters student	Libyan
41	Mohammed	23	Male	Masters student	Libyan
42	Hoda	24	Female	Masters student	Libyan

Appendix 1: List of participants

Type	Consumption	History	Happening	Hopes
Extended self	Values	Egypt and Libya: Short term orientated objectives and work ethic skewed to satisfy political autocracy.	Egyptians and Libyans challenged the status quo and religious beliefs rooted in fatalism. Freedom of expression has led to greater individualism of the self (demands for better salaries and more productive work ethic).	Egypt and Libya: Reluctance to adopt western values wholeheartedly. Religion should be a source but not the main source of rule for the country.
	Artifacts	Egypt: Designer branded clothing e.g. Ralph Lauren. Libya: Counterfeit branded clothing in bazaars and souks (local markets) e.g. Adidas, Tommy Hilfiger.	Egypt and Libya: Latest mobile phones: e.g. Samsung Galaxy, iPhone. Technologically savvy consumers utilized smart phones and the internet to promote revolutionary change. Consumers also preferred cheaper local branded clothes and counterfeit brands. Libya: Locals and rebel fighters used technology and GPS signals to provide NATO coordinates of Qaddafi strongholds.	Egypt: A further retreat to traditional consumption outlets expected (e.g. Khan El Khalli- large Bazaar market in Cairo) Further mobilization of mass protests is forecasted as citizens look to strike further change. Libya: Anticipations of an influx of foreign consumption options supported by hegemonic perceptions of the west.
	Symbols	Egypt: Dining out at western chains e.g. McDonalds, Hardees, Chilli's, Rubi Q's and Papa John's Pizza. Younger consumers well attuned with foreign products e.g. Starbucks, Hardeee's, Nike. Libya: Dining out at local chains e.g. As Saraya Alhamra and Azzahra. Consumers well attuned with foreign products but mostly counterfeit brands. Women used to dress in traditional Libyan clothes known as 'Abayas' (long dressed clothing).	Egypt: Dining out at local chains e.g. Mo'Men, Wesaya, Cook Door and Gad. Consumers look for the most reputable Egyptian brands e.g. Halwani, Faragalla and most reputable Foreign brands e.g. Coca cola, Calvin Klein, Mercedes. Libya: New foreign chains provided branded clothes brands e.g. Marks and Spencer, Zara, Mango, Debenhams. Consumers have flocked to new retail stores e.g. Cinnabon, Marks & Spencer, Next, Aldo to try the latest western fashions. Women are combining the headscarf 'Hijab' and wearing western branded clothing e.g. Zara, Mango.	Egypt: Citizens hope to continue to build the new found identity by dining out at local chains and visiting local cultural sights with family. Libya: Citizens hope to capitalize on the new wave of foreign consumption by dining out at western chains e.g. Burger Fuel, Johnny Rockets, Uncle Kentaki (copycat of KFC).
Dome stic self	Rituals	Egypt and Libya: Bargaining with local traders e.g. in Khan El Khalili (Cairo's biggest bazaar market) and Souq Al Mushir and Souk Al-Attara (Libya) was common. Egypt and Libya: Shopping in groups and using recommendations from relatives and friends.	Egypt: Bargaining declined as local traders went to protest or had suffered a huge drop in sales. Family gatherings arranged during daytime hours. Consumption is a chore rather than an enjoyable Libya: Bazaars and local markets as a means of maintaining traditional rituals.	Egypt: Citizens expect bargaining in traditional markets (e.g. souks) to decline further as tourism numbers drop. Libya: Wishes for religion to be sacralised away from the state. Similar consumption opportunities to western countries desired.
	Values	Egypt: Very 'Egyptianised', close family ties and collectivist traditions. Honor and reputation very important. Libya: Close family ties and collectivist traditions.	Egypt and Libya: honor and reputation, privacy and religious values upheld during revolution. Extended family combined to assist and protect each other. Collective unity at home and preservation of religious	Egypt: Citizens hope to avoid Avoid religious propaganda on TV and in places of worship e.g. Mosques by opposition groups in order to relinquish traditional values. Libya: Citizens expect progressive conflicts between family

	Honor and reputation very important.	and traditional values.	members over younger members leaning too much towards western lifestyles.
Artifacts	Egypt: Large weekly shopping from malls and supermarkets e.g. Carrefour. Libya: Local mini markets foreign supermarkets e.g. 'Monoprix' (Tunisian retail chain) and 'Al Saraya' (local Libyan retail chain).	Egypt and Libya: Family confined to the home and took turns to protect the home and community from criminals and looters. Retail shopping from close by vendors.	Egypt: Citizens hope to embrace the new identity by visiting touristic sites: 'Qalaa' (castle) and 'Kahun' (Pyramids village in Egypt). Libya: Citizens are hopeful that families will come closer together and take part in trips to touristic sites. E.g. Roman cities of Sabratha, Leptis Magna and Greek ruins in Cyrene.
Symbols	Egypt: Frequent visits to bazaars and souks and shopping malls. Libya: Frequent visits to bazaars, souks and to the sea side during weekends.	Egypt: Family and extended family gatherings prompted inquiry into Egyptian culture. Sampling everything that symbolizes 'Egyptianism' together e.g. 'Ta'miyya (local street food), kushari, shawarma (local kebab), shisha (traditional water pipe with flavored tobacco), cinema, local theatre. Libya: Family and extended family gatherings prompted Libyans to explore their own identity further. Sampling an abundance of foreignness underpinned by the desire to experience the desirable (e.g. by buying brands such as Armani, Zara, M & S, H & M).	Egypt: Citizens want to return to consuming local brands (e.g. Juhayna, Faragalla, EgyptAir, Etisalat Misr, Mobinil). Libya: Citizens hope to witness more foreign brands (e.g. Monoprix supermarket-as seen in Tunisia, other brands- e.g. BMW, Sony, Samsung, Diesel, D & G, Armani, United colors of Benetton, Ulker).
Rituals	Egypt and Libya: honor, reputation and family loyalty is very important. E.g. the head of the household (usually father figure) will not eat food until his family is with him. Family usually dine in front of the TV. Observation of Ramadan and religious festivals.	Egypt: Honor and reputation very important as families were worried about others being exposed in public through political activism. Food donations and food banks distributing food to the public. Consumers have become ethically conscious towards the poor. Libya: Family members worried about losing their identity as some members became rebel fighters against the regime. Citizens can now hold cultural events and music concerts during Eid celebrations. Egypt and Libya: Ritual prayers for those involved in the revolution and mourning of killed family members.	Egypt: Citizens expect honor and reputation to remain important but anticipate that it will be hindered by 'social surprises' (i.e. marginalization in society). Citizens are also weary that some younger citizens will break away from traditional norms and become culturally isolated due to pressures of westernization. Libya: Senior family members are concerned that younger members may abandon Libyan traditions. E.g. eating out with friends instead of at home with the family.
Values	Egypt and Libya: Pressured to preserve regime hegemony and censor personal thoughts. Egypt: Previous regimes used to put down 'karama' (dignity) e.g. Egyptian embassies used to insult people and could be easily bribed. Libya: Caution taken when speaking amongst friends and family.	Egypt and Libya: United in call for changes. Embassies have shown greater tolerance and respect to locals because of new found collective unity. Egypt: Citizens took to the streets to protest for change. Tahrir square as a monument and place of protest and social activities (e.g. camping and food banks). Libya: Shopping in large groups. Listening to local/western music (previously forbidden). Ability to	Egypt: Polarized feelings depending on political and/or religious views. Citizens hope to be able to express themselves more freely and disseminate social values to others. Libya: Citizens hope that new found freedoms will continue. Citizens are also cautious that consumption may become segregated between cosmopolitan consumers in Tripoli and rural Bedouin (tribal consumers) due to matters of power

Social self

		drive any car-under Qaddafi certain cars were reserved E.g. BMW's were for him and his family, Mercedes for foreign dignitaries and Audi's for ministers.	and legitimacy.
Artifacts	<p>Egypt: Eating and socializing at local cafes. Consumers enjoyed local Egyptian dishes e.g. Ful medammes (fava beans), Kushari (pasta dish).</p> <p>Libya: Male consumers socializing at local cafes. Women occupied with domestic duties. Younger females visit friends' houses. Consumers enjoyed local Libyan dishes e.g. 'Shorba Arabiya' (Arabic soup) and 'Bazin' (dough with meat/vegetables).</p>	<p>Egypt and Libya: Banners, flags, emblems, merchandise</p> <p>Egypt: Increase in Koshari street vendors and convenient food for protestors.</p> <p>Libya: Increase in family gatherings. Explosion in foreign consumption. Introduction of female only cafes and ability for women to go out independently in public and combine traditional and western outfits.</p>	<p>Egypt: Egyptians hope to continue to socialize in large numbers by sampling local dishes as part of rediscovering their identity. A decline in the consumption of foreign brands is expected. Due to depleting incomes, citizens expect to prefer cheaper Egyptian alternatives from bazaars and souks (local markets).</p> <p>Libya: Citizens expect to see a rise in mobile gadgets and stores and an increase in cafes/restaurants for socializing.</p>
Symbols	<p>Egypt: Nobel prize winners idolized as symbols of Egyptianism. E.g. 'Naguib Mahfouz' (writer), 'Mohamed El Baradei' (lawyer/former vice president), 'Ahmed Zewhail' (scientist). Gatherings in local cafes/restaurants. Egyptians enjoyed foreign/local chains e.g. 'Spinney's', 'Saudi' and 'Carrefour'.</p> <p>Libya: Social identity built around preserving Qaddafi's 'green book' values. Lack of formal marketplaces (e.g. malls and stores) restricted consumption to bazaars/ souks.</p>	<p>Egypt: Graffiti, social media, artistic impressions. Neighborhood food vendors provided necessities. Local carriers promoting 'Ishtiri al Masri' (buy local Egyptian brands) e.g. 'Rashidi El Mizan and 'Juhayna'. Boycotting of Muslim Brotherhood supermarkets. E.g. 'Zad'. Gatherings at home due to insecurity.</p> <p>Libya: Green Square in Tripoli as a monument and protest site. Gatherings at home due to armed conflict. Shift from cultural relativism to cultural universalism indicated by influx of foreign products. Consumers keen to sample the unknown.</p>	<p>.Egypt: Citizens hope to capitalize on local chains (e.g. Marriott gardens, caf promenade, coffeehouses shisha cafes, fast food chains (E.g. Gad).</p> <p>Libya: Citizens hope to explore cultural sites and previously restricted areas of Libya (e.g. 'Jabal Al Gharbi District' (North West Libya), 'Jebel Nafusa' (North West Libya, home to a large Berber population).</p>
Rituals	Egypt and Libya: Observation of Ramadan and religious festivals.	Egypt and Libya: Ritual prayers for those involved in the revolution and mourning of killed family members. Egypt: Food donations and food banks distributing food to the public and also the poor.	Egypt and Libya: celebration of a revolution and anticipation of future chaos and uncertainty. Libya: Ability to hold cultural events and music concerts during Eid celebrations.

Appendix 2: Different aspect of the transitional self