

# **Extending the self in a revolutionary epoch: Understanding transitions of the self through the Arab Spring in Egypt and Libya**

Ahmed Al-Abdin, Dianne Dean and John D. Nicholson

## **Abstract**

This paper reports on accounts in Egypt and Libya that are embroiled in a period of extraordinary change known as the Arab Spring in which the personal and social self are found to undergo significant transformations. In a period of flux the self is subject to a multiplicity of tensions. Consumption choices are frequently related to the utility of products, symbolic meanings and rituals, while artifacts are also important for achieving and maintaining a sense of self and locating one's place in society. The paper is a rare attempt to account for transformations during a revolutionary period and in particular, explores how the self is reconstructed by the influx of new ideas and consumption opportunities. This paper builds on Belk's notions of the extended and dialogic selves in an attempt to explore the transformation of society over the course of the Arab Spring. We show how consumers use consumption practices to reflect their sense of self and make sense of their turbulent environment. In addition, we offer insight into how the sacred and the profane are relevant to navigating a sense of self and extended self in a period of flux.

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

## **1.0: Introduction**

This paper offers challenge to the underlying assumptions of much of the discourse surrounding consumption whose foundations seem to us 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 are 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 extended self, the domestic self and the social 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). Thus, these three types of self are considered in this paper. In a postmodern sense, the self is a fluid concept and is susceptible to change based on a consumer's environment, consumption practices and sense of being. We ask here, what can be learned by studying consumption practices in flux and consider images of self as dialogic.

In periods of extraordinary change 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; Midgley, 1990). 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 is socially construed as having sacrosanct value. In more post modern terms, ideas of what are considered sacred can be symbols, rituals and artifacts embedded within consumption practices. Dialectically, the profane can relate to anything mundane or that of which is considered ordinary and is practiced on an everyday basis (Belk et al., 1989) - such as driving a car, buying a daily coffee and going to work. Thus, (symbols, rituals and artifacts of) the profane is concerned with routine activity. A conflict arises when (the symbols, rituals and artifacts of) the profane are perceived to contaminate the sacred. It is this dichotomy/clash between the two that contributes to transformations of the self. In exploring further ideas of the sacred and profane, Belk et al. (1989) discussed 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. The Arab Spring seems broadly to have been built on the hope of "freedom, dignity and social justice" (Bayat, 2013: p.591). 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 non-formulaic approach based on a problematization strategy to create scientific usefulness (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013; Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011; Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011). In the consumer research literature, significant attention has been paid concepts of the self (e.g. McCracken, 1986; Rindfleisch, 2005), extended self (e.g. Ahuvia, 2005; Belk, 1989a, 2014; Noble and Walker, 1997; Tian and Belk, 2005) and the links between the self and identity (e.g. Chernev et al., 2011; Hogg and Michell, 1996; Shankar et al., 2009; Westjohn et al., 2012) but this work has tended to focus on contemporary western societies. Literature has not to date addressed transitional societies such as the Middle East to any great extent. 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. 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 have contemporary interest in the broader social sciences – we hope to make what Shelby Hunt Shelby Hunt (1994:15) has referred to as a “nonmarketing” contribution alongside a contribution within the discipline. 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 final section (4) contains our

theoretical contribution. 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, accounts for around 23% of the world's trade (El-Bassiouny, 2014) and is the home of approximately 350 million consumers. Fifty-three percent of the region's population are aged twenty-five or younger which makes for a growing youth demographic who have lived through times of unrest, change and the opening up of the markets to the global economy. In comparison to other emerging markets such as India (48% of the population is under twenty-five years old) and China (34%), the Middle East contains an unusually large demographic of young consumers (Mahajan, 2012). The 'shabab' (youth) generation in particular is more attuned with global consumption than older generations and as such, they express a desire to consume foreign products and services. In addition, the region's significance as an important consumer segment is underpinned by a rising urban population. Only Yemen has a more rural population than India and only five Arab countries have more rural divides than China (The World Bank, 2014). The increase in urbanisation and the leap from traditional to modern trade is contributing to the rise of the middle class, whose consumption practices reflect both tradition (e.g. shopping from 'souks' or traditional markets) and modernity (e.g. shopping from modern malls). Despite the importance and growth of the Middle East as a global consumer segment, theoretical understanding of the region is still in its infancy (Huang and Balakrishnan, 2013). In fact, Middle-East business scholarship remains significantly under-represented and contributes to less than one percent of all articles published in top ranked management and marketing journals between 1990-2010 (Balakrishnan, 2013; Robertson et al., 2001). According to a systematic review of Arab and business research in the Middle East conducted by Kalliny and Benamamoun (2014), during the period 1990-2010, Egypt had only 21 studies published in peer reviewed journals including the *Journal of Business Research*. Out of these studies, only 4 articles focused on the Middle East. The difficulty of access to data, restrictions on freedom of research, political barriers, economic and political sanctions (e.g. Libya pre Arab Spring) as well as wars (e.g. Iraq) have resulted in closed environments. A further explanation for the lack of research in this region is the unstable political environment which had resulted in the fleeing of academics from Middle Eastern countries.

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 (Pageter, 2012). The authoritarian regime that emerged post revolution was driven by the cult personality of Qaddafi with an erratic, semi-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 social and political project that was to change Egypt forever (Osman, 2013). However, the social stability was combined with a continued 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 and 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, 2001; 2005).

In order to further the research objectives, the research reported in this paper is based on qualitative empirical interviews in which the researchers sought to capture the experiences of young citizens during this revolutionary epoch and gain an understanding of how it affected participants' notions of self and their consumption practices.

## **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) articulated 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 rejected 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 asserted, 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 group (social) self. As a transformation occurs, boundaries are challenged and extended leading to greater uncertainty but also to greater individual choice reflected in the transformational objects of self expression and consumer choices made by individuals. We can therefore 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.

Based on Belk's (1988) notions of the self and the extended self, we define the domestic self as the ways through a sense of self is created within the family environment. We further note the importance of the social self as the way in which

the self is projected in the social arena. The social self can also include the domestic self (family) and both concepts overlap. Ahuvia (2005) notes how the combination of different selves gives rise to multiple selves. 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 cultural differences have been largely neglected, we purposely distinguish between the domestic and the social self in a non-western context and attempt to unravel the interplay between the different types of self (extended self, domestic self and social self). 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**

Much of the work exploring images of self has been conducted in Western societies. We next therefore attempt to provide some grounding of this literature in the geo-cultural context of our study.

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). The domestic and the social self are highly connected (Markus and Kitayama, 1991) and 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. In an Arab society for instance, each individual represents 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 and Abdu, 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. Giddens (1991) contends that such societies cannot be fully modern because tradition still dominates (e.g. the honor culture in the Middle East). On a macro-level, marketed ideas by the state propagate consumer realities and identities. Such ideas include the dissemination of religious values amongst citizens or the political notion of praising the hegemonic status of the state, particularly in the case of authoritarian regimes. On a micro-level, if notions of the self are determined and controlled by the state 'Orwellian style', then consumers

are not emancipated in terms of free choice and therefore, rely on the anchor of tradition.

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 is free of constraint. Where revolutionary change is evident, and in line with Fromm's (1978) view, the self is transformed into an independent state of being and one that tries 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 or exercise any other consumer culture apart from the one sanctioned by powerful others – to demonstrate desirable behavior. In Orwellian type former Soviet block era states (e.g. Hungary, Romania and Czech), the state controlled the majority of enterprises and operated a planned market economy, limiting the influx of foreign products in the process. 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 and Czinkota, 1999).

Whilst holding onto sovereignty, authoritarian regimes contradicted revolutionary interference and restricted the self from expressing anything other than desirable norms. By accumulating power within a boundary, regimes may reduce the likelihood of mass protest and demonstrations from taking place. However, Argyrou (2013) 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 and the social. For these 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 a unprecedented and potentially unrepeated opportunity to gain an understanding of the ideal self ~~unconstrained self~~. The ideal self may be considered as the ideal world that one would possess (Belk, 1988) or what we call *hopes*. It is closely linked to one's visions and aspirations of who they want to be (e.g. own a luxury car). The ideal self may be imagined (as the desirable) but cannot be experienced directly as it refers to a sense of extended self that takes place in the future. Whereas, the actual self (or the *happening*) is viewed in the here and now. An early period of revolution may further offer a period of candidness to understand the desired self before the wheel of re-revolution completes its rotation. To further consider change in the images of self we need to further consider a notion of a dialogic self.

### **2.3: Revolution, transformations and the dialogic self?**

We next attempt to show how we challenge the assumptions of stasis underpinning the discussions of self.

The last ten years has marked a significant effort to create a reading of consumer culture (e.g. Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Belk et al., 2013; Cova & Cova, 2001; Holt, 2002; Thompson et al., 2013; Westjohn et al., 2012) and implicit in this literature is the emergence of new notions of self (Ger and Belk, 1996).

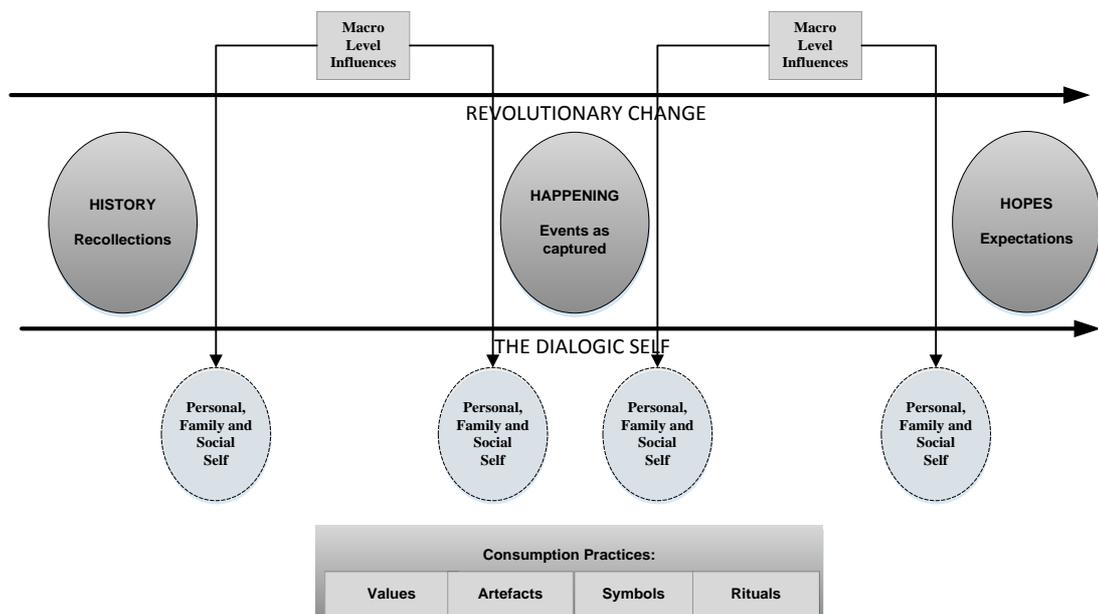
Transformations of the self have been considered in the context of movements such as globalization (Cleveland et al., 2013; Featherstone, 2006; Jafari and Goulding, 2013). The self is dynamic and constantly under negotiation and at various points in time, may either be influenced by political, religious and cultural perturbations, or may be in rebellion against historical norms. We draw here upon Belk's notion of a dialogic self. Belk (2014:252) proposes that such 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 (Escalas and Bettman, 2000; 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. In order to explore the transformations of the self during this turbulent period and to provide focus, the aspects of consumption that this study is interested in are the values, artifacts, symbols and rituals of the self. In the context of our study, values are concerned with honor, reputation (Uskul et al., 2010), individualism vs. collectivism (only one dimension used in order to provide a focus of cultural values) (Hofstede, 2001; 2005) and religious values (Cleveland et al., 2013; Rice and 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; Brookes and Kelly, 2009). 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). An abundance of research has investigated symbolic consumption (e.g. Ekinci et al., 2013; Schouten, 1991; Wattanasuwan, 2005) but has not addressed changes in how the extended self becomes coupled to, and decoupled from symbols in an extraordinary situation, as in this case of the Arab Spring.

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 are various types of rituals ranging from religious, martial, gift giving, eating, holiday, romantic, athletic and household rituals. There has been significant work focusing on consumption rituals (e.g. Belk, 1990; Chitakunye and Maclaran, 2014; Gainer, 1995; Tetreault and Kleine, 1990; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1991). 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. (1989b) 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 shift over time. An observation of rituals is crucial to understanding the ebb and flow of sacredness and profanity.

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.



**Fig. 1: Conceptual framework**

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. These differences are illustrated in Table 2.

### 3.0: Methodology

In order to build an understanding of the self in a revolutionary epoch, the study adopted a qualitative design to understand transformations of the self, extended self and the social. Data was collected during a state of unrest (March-April 2013). Qualitative inquiry allowed for a historical narrative to be captured in which participants reflected on their past (happening), present experiences (happening) and future (hopes) expectations. Convergent depth interviews were used to gain an understanding of the transformations of the self, an area which Tessler and Jamal (2006) disputed as a ‘missing dimension’ in the Middle East discourse, because in the past, political sensitivity and restrictions on freedom of expression meant that most studies were quantitative in nature (Clark, 2006; Romano, 2006). Convergent depth interviews are an appropriate interviewing technique for under researched areas (Rao and Perry, 2003). This form of interviewing allowed for key interview themes to emerge in a series of interview rounds (Jepsen and Rodwell, 2008). After each round, key issues were identified and focused on in later rounds. For example, participants noted a dialectic between the sacred and profane. The sacred being the extent to

which citizens cling to tradition and the profane being foreign consumption symbols and artifacts. Some key issues did not emerge until these later rounds or until the whole round of interviews had been exhausted. An inductive approach was followed alongside a grounded theory perspective (Charmaz, 2006). Interviews were conducted amongst Egyptian and Libyan consumers 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. Libyan interviews were conducted via Skype due to security concerns which prevented direct travel to the country.

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

**Table 2: Sampling list of participants**

Grounded theory methods (Goulding, 2005) and were deployed in the fieldwork reported in this paper. Further, snowball sampling enabled the identification of additional participants through recommendations and this approach enhanced the level of trust between the researcher and the participants. Egypt and Libya were considered to be in a state of unrest and as such, ‘conflict environments’ (Cohen and Arieli, 2011) where the interests of the researcher may conflict with those of another side or faction. Snowball sampling helped overcome the difficulties of recruiting participants who were initially reticent about interviews. Prior to interviewing, a strong rapport had to be developed to eliminate elements of fear and distrust (after Moustakas, 1994). As Clark (2005) noted, participants in the Middle East are wary of providing open responses due to fear of political repercussions. 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 each.

#### Data Analysis

Interview recordings were transferred to specialist transcription software. To maintain trustworthiness (Guba and Lincoln, 1994), transcripts were sent to participants for review. The qualitative data coding process was facilitated through the use of Nvivo 10. Qualitative data software packages have become increasingly popular over the last few decades and are argued to add rigor to the quality of qualitative research (Morse and Richards, 2002). In line with using grounded theory methods, analytical memos were constructed and served as a trail of reflective thoughts. To preserve anonymity, participants were referred to as numbers in brackets e.g. (1).

The first step of ground theory coding methods entailed ‘initial’, or ‘open’ coding, (synonymous terms that denote the first cycle of coding). In order to identify first-order codes such as *constraints*, *social conditioning* and *patriotism* in reference to identity changes since the revolution, the language used by informants was focused on. 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 (Saldana, 2013). Provisional coding helped to prevent the risk of premature coding disclosure by highlighting possible linkages between open codes (e.g. the link between freedom of expression and the consumption of local and foreign products). Line-by-line coding involved highlighting sentences or in some cases small paragraphs and assigning free codes. Charmaz (2008) noted that line-by-line coding advocates a more trustworthy analysis and lowers the risk of personal bias entering the coding process.

In some cases, codes, phrases and passages were all attributed to the same code/s (e.g. honor and reputation, individualism vs. collectivism, traditional rituals and social gatherings were all assigned to the domestic self). Therefore, this can be summarised as simultaneous coding. 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) and allowed for a comparison of two opposite codes. In vivo coding was used to record codes verbatim and preserved participants' own spoken discourse (e.g. tangara, karama-dignity). Coding sub methods were used simultaneously in the first phase and in no particular order. For example, line-by-line coding and versus coding were deployed at the same time to ask questions about what the participants were saying in a particular sentence or paragraph, why they said what they did, and the nuances behind what was said. Quotes were maintained as verbatim. Coding sub methods within initial coding were an iterative process. Memos allowed for the clarification of coded themes throughout the three coding phases. During phase two, some codes were withdrawn because they did not fit into the sub-categorization of concepts or within the analytical memos (e.g. codes relating to education systems, social welfare and the impact of social media on the revolutions. Free codes were reorganized into sub categories and some were merged with other codes because of conceptual similarities. The sub categorization of conceptual themes entailed the use of focused coding which provided the most frequent codes and linkages between codes. Focused coding is also known as 'axial coding' (Glaser, 1998). The third phase involved theoretical coding (also known as 'selective' or conceptual coding) whereby categorical codes went through exhaustive synthesis (Saldana, 2013). Memos catered for the foundations of conceptual development.

#### **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 a unique opportunity to access the candid thoughts of those people caught up in it. 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 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***

Personal and collective identities (Shankar et al., 2009) are important in addressing transformations of the self because in contradicting state norms and compromising social structures via revolution, the self can be lifted beyond just an everyday social entity (Holt, 2002). 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 was 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 comments 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 dialogic 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)*

...but indeed, this perception seemed shared by younger respondents. .

*The true understanding of happiness, loyalty and identity of Egyptians degraded between my father's generation and our generation. I am not sure if it even exists amongst the new generation. (11)*

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:

*Everyone had to look out for themselves. 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 between what is sacred and what is profane. Asgary and Walle (2002) discuss a dialectic process of polarization and hybridization in the presence of global pressures, and such tensions are evident here.

Belk (2014) 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 and the unfolding of a hybridization process:

*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 hybridization process fusing western notions of consumerism with traditional culture. Indeed, notions of *West* and Westernism and 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 used western consumption objects and artifacts to project their sense of extended self, and this extension was part of the family or 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.

*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 and Al-Mossawi, 2002). Religion was seen by some respondents as enabled by 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)

Whilst for some, the old regime held religion as most sacred, 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 (noted by Zoubir, 2000). The maintenance of sacred values across both countries seemed historically grounded in traditions. 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 and Thornberry, 2009) and the state's view of desired behavior kept citizens compliant and pulled them back from calling for changes (desirable) in the past.

Due to the demographic of our respondents, many accounts also highlight the former isolation of the educated elites that had been distanced through economic reforms, unemployment and living arrangements from the urban poor. Before the revolution took hold, Egypt had been in a period of economic decline during which many educated Egyptians moved to the US and Canada (Osman, 2013) and indeed to the more prosperous Gulf States. Those who had remained through choice or necessity focused on creating a self that was both international and secular. Looking *Americanized* had been grounded in the view that Egyptians needed modernity and took part in foreign consumption and in doing so, distance themselves from the *oppression* expressed as existing under the old Mubarak regime.

#### **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 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. Many 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*. The notion of a transitional self is consistent with the findings of Noble and Walker (1997: p. 32) who spoke of liminal transitions defined as:

*“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.”*

Events such as revolutionary epochs are considered liminal transitions. Based on Noble and Walker’s work, the transitional self enters an uncertain liminal period and begins to search for a new or extended self. The liminal period is very much dependent upon how the individual, domestic and social selves cope in periods of revolutionary change. However, our findings suggest that the transitional self was able to navigate through a changing revolutionary landscape by understanding that the revolution has contributed to bringing greater freedom of expression. This has been achieved to the extent that people were able to 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 also generated emergent consumption rituals that are fuelled by the desire to encourage country development and create a revolutionary form of an extended self in transition.

*With a greater social experience comes the desire to go out shopping and spend more time outdoors [with family and friends]. (32)*

*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 had 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 was new based on expressions of the desired over the desirable and an increasingly hybridized self 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 (1990) observation that the extended self is also achieved by reconnecting with past memories, rituals, traditions and places of symbolic values (e.g. historical sites). A sense of past is essential to a sense of self. Therefore, the self extends to past experiences, present experiences and future hopes. 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 participant 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 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, 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 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) should decrease. Therefore, the transitional self is likely to place 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 sacralization of consumption was 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, where as 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. 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? (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 herself is going through in transition.

*So I think there is a contradiction here between trying to be perceived as following your religion and wearing nontraditional clothing. (36)*

In contrast, the ambiguous legitimacy of the political and the citizen/consumers' role in society was already leading to an increase in polarization. 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 polarization occurring in both 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 apparent in all respondents that religion is prioritized, but that its compartmentalization is relative to consumerism and 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 polarization 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 Gaddafi 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 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. The transitional self in this case (although contradicting tradition by consuming western products) is keen to counteract the flux by consuming and to help achieve the ideal self. 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

polarization, 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 (2001; 2005; 2006). 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. The following comment is indicative in this respect of the liminality surrounding the transitional self.

*I am a little biased towards the national products, the Egyptian products when they are of the same quality [as the foreign products] because I believe that purchasing something Egyptian would push the economy and drive the people living in Egypt more than products of western or foreign origin for example. (2)*

*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 had seemingly driven desire for Western goods in the transitional self.

What seems apparent in the accounts of both Libyans and Egyptians is that 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 clamber for Western products, previously denied to them. The conspicuous consumption of Western goods has evidently become part of the extended and social selves. What is interesting to note is the beginnings of ethnocentrism in Egyptian consumers which may lead eventually as the revolution transitions through further

liminal periods. The degree of connectedness between the past (history), present (happening) and the future (hopes) matters in order to better understand how a transitional self is shaped. 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, the domestic self and social self have retreated to tradition and are keen to reassert their identity, the domestic self and social self in Libya is keen to embrace foreignness. Thus, there is a dialectic with regards to the notion of transitional self. Within a period of transitional liminality, the extended self has 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 forward.

### 4.3: Hopes 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 broke free and we can swim for our future. (39)*

In the accounts of respondents were a large number of nuanced comments we therefore brought together under the code we called *hopes*. We propose that hopes (and fears) from the summer after the spring are a driving motivation in our proposed notion of a *transitional self*. The following respondents indicate 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)*

*If you are talking about certain rules of maybe alcohol or something like this. This is something I believe in and I would be happy if a ban is implemented but I cannot force it. [...]...so you have lots of people who drive people under the name of religion and make them afraid that if those other bad liberals come into place, then religion will be*

*lost. You also have liberals who claim that religion is bad for politics and I disagree on both. (11)*

The comments hint at a hybridization 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)*

*We fully support local products, to support my countries economy, to see the growth of my country and see more competition internationally. If they [Egyptian companies] envisage the propensity of our consumerism then they are more likely to do better in the Egyptian market. (17)*

*Hopefully people will grow to realise 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 tentatively propose a concept of a *transitional self*, a self that is in flux in which that which is sacred and that which is profane are in conflict and in which, rituals, artifacts, values are in a state constant reformation and reevaluation. 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, polarizations between political factions or civil conflicts distort the pendulum of liminality and so a sense of transitional self is distorted. 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: Concluding discussion**

We first below present a table which shows the examples we have found in our accounts of each aspect of the self in each our identified time periods and in respect of values, artifacts, symbols and rituals.

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).
	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	<p>Egypt: Very ‘Egyptianised’, close family ties and collectivist traditions. Honor and reputation very important.</p> <p>Libya: Close family ties and collectivist traditions. Honor and reputation very important.</p>	<p>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 and traditional values.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Libya: Citizens expect progressive conflicts between family members over younger members leaning too much towards western lifestyles.</p>
Artifacts	<p>Egypt: Large weekly shopping from malls and supermarkets e.g. Carrefour.</p> <p>Libya: Local mini markets foreign supermarkets e.g. ‘Monoprix’ (Tunisian retail chain) and ‘Al Saraya’ (local Libyan retail chain).</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Egypt: Citizens hope to embrace the new identity by visiting touristic sites: ‘Qalaa’ (castle) and ‘Kahun’ (Pyramids village in Egypt).</p> <p>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.</p>
Symbols	<p>Egypt: Frequent visits to bazaars and souks and shopping malls.</p> <p>Libya: Frequent visits to bazaars, souks and to the sea side during weekends.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 &amp; S, H &amp; M).</p>	<p>Egypt: Citizens want to return to consuming local brands (e.g. Juhayna, Faragalla, EgyptAir, Etisalat Misr, Mobinil).</p> <p>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 &amp; G, Armani, United colors of Benetton, Ulker).</p>
Rituals	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Egypt and Libya: Ritual prayers for those involved in the revolution and mourning of killed family members.</p>	<p>Egypt: Citizens expect honor and reputation to remain important but anticipate that it will be hindered by ‘social surprises’ (i.e. polarizations 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.</p> <p>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.</p>

Social self

Values	<p>Egypt and Libya: Pressured to preserve regime hegemony and censor personal thoughts.</p> <p>Egypt: Previous regimes used to put down 'karama' (dignity) e.g. Egyptian embassies used to insult people and could be easily bribed.</p> <p>Libya: Caution taken when speaking amongst friends and family.</p>	<p>Egypt and Libya: United in call for changes. Embassies have shown greater tolerance and respect to locals because of new found collective unity.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Libya: Shopping in large groups. Listening to local/western music (previously forbidden). Ability to 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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 and legitimacy.</p>
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 and Libya: Observation of Ramadan and religious festivals.</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> <p>Egypt and Libya: celebration of a revolution and anticipation of future chaos and uncertainty.</p> <p>Libya: Ability to hold cultural events and music concerts during Eid celebrations.</p>
Rituals		<p>Egypt and Libya: Ritual prayers for those involved in the revolution and mourning of killed family members.</p> <p>Egypt: Food donations and food banks distributing food to the public and also the poor.</p>	

## Table 2: Examples of self in different phases of the revolutionary epoch

In table 2, an attempt is made to illustrate how the three types of self (extended, domestic and social) have co-constructed the transitional self in line with citizens history, happening and hopes. Table 2 includes details and examples pertaining to Values, artifacts, symbols and rituals.

This research makes some important theoretical contributions. To our knowledge, the study is the first to examine transformations of the self during a period of high environmental flux. To date, the literature on revolution has been largely tackled from a political or sociological lens rather than from the point of consumption. By taking into account the historical narratives through the contemporary events in flux and also capturing histories, happening and hopes, this study has been able to present an account of the dialectic between the extended self, domestic self and the social self. Each form of self has been affected by the political and social upheavals in some form or another. The result is a transitional self that is adapting to conditions of flux as it transitions through liminal periods. For instance, whilst the extended self in Libya has capitalized on new found freedoms by consuming western brands, the extended self in Egypt has reverted back to the safety of tradition. This is reflected through Egyptians traditional rituals of eating with the family and partaking in social gatherings that seek to embrace a newly discovered identity. Interestingly, across both countries, the transitional self is still tied to notions of the sacred (e.g. religious values) whilst at the same time is struggling with the degree to which local and western consumption symbols are profane.

A key finding is these factors are indeed intertwined in all sorts of complex ways that would be difficult to expose using orthodox theory testing approaches.

Sadly, our era may be evolving to include many more such epochs around the world and therefore an understanding of consumption in such periods of time would seem to be of some significant contemporary importance. Ostensibly, consumption may seem trivial, but we have identified that what may be deemed the more sacred religious, social and political events are intertwined with expectations of consumption and therefore is far from uncritically trivial. Notions of consumption such as profanity and sacralization may simultaneously drive polarization and unity in a single society during such an epoch. We identify that consumption hopes can be an important driving mechanism as well as being something that is constantly reformed during the epoch. However, consumption does not pause or stall, but merely changes. We have however focused on how these changes impact and are impacted on by notions of self. The comparison of the self (extended, domestic and social) throughout the three phases (history, happening and hopes) is valuable because it illustrates how consumers use rituals, values, symbols, and artifacts rituals to reflect their sense of self and make sense of their turbulent environment. This may help those involved in market making in such turbulence make some sense of their role. More specifically, in a collective transitional society, such as the Middle East with traditions of family honor and reputation, we find that the self is inextricably linked to the domestic and the social. Thus, this study identifies the tensions between the three forms of self. For instance, across the three phases, the self bypasses the domestic to engage with social

groups that are not approved or supported by the family. These social selves are hidden from the family because they are aware that they will affect the families' reputation in the community. Consequently, this paper makes a bold attempt at contextualizing transitions of the self and answers the call for greater theoretical knowledge in the Middle East. Our account would seem to cast considerable doubt on findings grounded in the preceding epoch as the changes in the self may cast a shadow of doubt over soundings taken when an earlier self was evident. More broadly our findings show that care should be taken in relying on soundings from a pre-revolutionary (or pre-epoch making) event when examining or conducting commerce in post-revolutionary epoch. We feel our research marks a rare attempt to study events in flux rather than wait until a period of stability occurs in which to conduct a study.

## Bibliography

- Abaza, M. (2001). Shopping malls, consumer culture and the reshaping of public space in Egypt. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 18(5), 97-122.
- Abaza, M. (2005). Today's consumption in Egypt. *ISIM Review*, 15, pp. 38-39.
- Abaza, M. (2006). *Changing consumer cultures of modern Egypt: Cairo's urban reshaping*. Boston, Brill Academic Publishers.
- Aboukheir, R. (2014). Sisi to follow Egypt's inauguration tradition. Retrieved on 10-06-14 from <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/2014/06/05/Sisi-to-follow-Egypt-s-inauguration-tradition.html>
- Ahuvia, A. (2005). Beyond the extended self: Loved objects and consumers' identity narratives. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(1), 171-184.
- Alvesson, M., & Gabriel, Y. (2013). Beyond formulaic research: in praise of greater diversity in organizational research and publications. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 12(2), 245-263.
- Alvesson, M., & Sandberg, J. (2011). Generating research questions through problematization. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(2), 247-271.
- Argyrou, V. (2013). *The gift of European thought and the cost of living*. New York, Berghahn Books.
- Arnould, E. J., Price, L. L., & Zinkham, G. M. (2004). *Consumers* (2nd ed.). New York, McGraw-Hill.
- Arnould, E. J., & Thompson, C. J. (2005). Consumer culture theory (CCT): Twenty years of research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4), pp. 868-882.
- Asgary, N., & Walle, A. H. (2002). The cultural impact of globalisation: economic activity and social change. *Cross Cultural Management*, 9(3), 58-75.
- Balakrishnan, M. S. (2013). Methods to increase research output: some tips looking at the MENA region. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, 8(3), 215-239.
- Barakat, H. (1993). *The Arab world: Society, culture, and state*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bayat, A. (2013). The Arab Spring and its surprises. *Development and Change*, 44(3), 587-601.
- Bayoumy, Y. (2014). Syria-Iraq 'caliph' incites Muslims to holy war. Retrieved on 10-07-14 from <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/07/01/uk-iraq-security-baghdadi-idUKKBN0F64RC20140701>
- Belk, R., Mayer, R., & Bahn, K. (1982). The eye of the beholder: Individual differences in perceptions of consumption symbolism. *Advances in consumer research*, 9(1), 523-530.
- Belk, R.W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(2), 139-68.
- Belk, R. W., Wallendorf, M. & Sherry Jr, J. F. (1989), The sacred and the profane in consumer behavior: Theodicy on the odyssey. *Journal of consumer research*, 16, (1), 1-38.
- Belk, R. W. (1990). Halloween: An evolving American consumption ritual. *Advances in consumer research*, 17(1), 508-517.
- Belk, R. W. (1990). The role of possessions in constructing and maintaining a sense of past. *Advances in consumer research*, 17(1), 669-676.
- Belk, R.W. (2014). Alternative conceptualizations of the extended self. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 42, 251-254.
- Belk, R. W., Price, L., & Peñaloza, L. (2013). Consumer culture theory: building community across borders. *Research in Consumer Behavior*, 15, xiii-xvii.

- Belk, R. W. (2013), Extended self in a digital world. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40, (3), 477-500.
- Belk, R.W. (2014). Digital consumption and the extended self, *Journal of Marketing Management* IN PRESS
- Brookes, F. & Kelly, P. (2009). Dolly girls: tweenies as artefacts of consumption. *Journal of youth studies*, 12(6), 599-613.
- Castells, M. (1996). *The rise of the network society*. The information age: Economy, society and culture. Vol. 1. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. London, Sage.
- Chernev, A., Hamilton, R., & Gal, D. (2011). Competing for consumer identity: limits to self-expression and the perils of lifestyle branding. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(3), 66-82.
- Cherrier, H., & Murray, J. B. (2007). Reflexive dispossession and the self: constructing a processual theory of identity. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 10(1), 1-29.
- Chitakunye, P., & Maclaran, P. (2014). Materiality and family consumption: the role of the television in changing mealtime rituals. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 17(1), 50-70.
- Clark, J. A. (2006). Field research methods in the Middle East. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 39(3), 417-424.
- Cleveland, M., Laroche, M., & Hallab, R. (2013). Globalization, culture, religion, and values: Comparing consumption patterns of Lebanese Muslims and Christians. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(8), 958-967.
- Cohen, N., & Arieli, T. (2011). Field research in conflict environments: Methodological challenges and snowball sampling. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(4), 423-435.
- Cova, B., & Cova, V. (2001). Tribal aspects of postmodern consumption research: the case of French in-line roller skaters. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 1(1), 67-76.
- De Mooij, M. (2013). *Global marketing and advertising: understanding cultural paradoxes*. Thousand Oaks: Calif: Sage Publications.
- Ekinci, Y., Sirakaya-Turk, E., & Preciado, S. (2013). Symbolic consumption of tourism destination brands. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(6), 711-718.
- El-Bassiouny, N. (2014), "The one-billion-plus marginalization: Toward a scholarly understanding of Islamic consumers." *Journal of Business Research*, 67(2), 42-49.
- Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J.R. (2000). Using narratives and autobiographical memories to discern motives. In S. Ratneshwar, D.G Mick, & C. Huffman (Eds.), *The why of consumption: Perspectives on consumer motives, goals, and desires*. New York: Routledge.
- Featherstone, M. (2006). Genealogies of the global. *Theory, culture & society*, 23(2-3), 387-392.
- Fromm, E. (1978). *To have or to be? A blueprint for mankind*. Reading, England: Cox & Wyman Ltd.
- Gainer, B. (1995). Ritual and relationships: interpersonal influences on shared consumption. *Journal of Business Research*, 32(3), 253-260.
- Ger, G., & Belk, R.W. (1996). I'd Like to Buy the world a Coke: Consumptionscapes of the "Less Affluent World". *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 19(3), 271-304.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Giddens, A. (1999). *Runaway world: How globalization is reshaping our lives*. London: Profile.
- Glaser, B.G. (1998). *Doing grounded theory: Issues and discussions*. California, The Sociology Press.
- Goulding, C. (2005). Grounded theory, ethnography and phenomenology: A comparative analysis of three qualitative strategies for marketing research. *European Journal of Marketing*, 39(3/4), 294-308.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N.K, Denzin, & Y.S, Lincoln, (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, pp. 105-117. California, Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). California, Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Hofstede, G., & Hofstede, G.J. (2005). *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, McGraw-Hill.
- Hogg, M. K., & Michell, P. C. (1996). Identity, self and consumption: a conceptual framework. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 12(7), 629-644.
- Holt, D. B. (2002). Why do brands cause trouble? A dialectical theory of consumer culture and branding. *Journal of consumer research*, 29(1), 70-90.
- Huang, V.Z., & Balakrishnan, M. (2013), Managing in uncertain times – a critical juncture for research in the MENA region. *Journal of Strategy and Management*, 6, (2), pp. 1-7.
- Hunt, S. D. (1994). On rethinking marketing: our discipline, our practice, our methods. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(3), 13-25.
- Inhorn, M.C. (1996). *Infertility and patriarchy: the cultural politics of gender and family life in Egypt*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Jafari, A., & Goulding, C. (2013). Globalization, reflexivity, and the project of the self: a virtual intercultural learning process. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 16(1), 65-90.
- Kalliny, M., & Benmamoun, M. (2014). Arab and Middle Eastern business research: a review of the empirical literature (1990-2013). *The Multinational Business Review*, 22(4), 442-459.
- Kienle, E. (2012), Egypt without Mubarak, Tunisia after Bin Ali: theory, history and the 'Arab Spring'. *Economy and Society*, 41(4), pp. 532-557.
- Kleine III, R. E., Kleine, S. S., & Kernan, J. B. (1993). Mundane consumption and the self: a social-identity perspective. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 2(3), 209-235.
- Mahajan, V. (2013), Understanding the Arab Consumer. *Harvard business review*, 91(5), 128-132.
- Markus H.R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98, 224-253.
- McCracken, G. (1986). Culture and consumption: A theoretical account of the structure and movement of the cultural meaning of consumer goods. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13 (June), 71–84.
- Midgley, G., (1990). *Systemic Intervention: Philosophy, Methodology, and Practice*, New York: Springer.
- Midgley, G. (1992). The sacred and profane in critical systems thinking. *Systems Practice*, 5(1), 1-15.
- Moaddel, M. (1992). The Case of the Iranian Revolution. *American Sociological Review*, 57(3), 353-379.

- Mojab, S., & Abdo, N. (2004). *Violence in the name of honour: Theoretical and political challenges*. Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Press.
- Morse, J. M., & Richards, L. (2002). *Readme first*. Thousand Oaks, Calif, Sage
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*, Thousand Oaks, Calif, Sage.
- Noble, C. H., & Walker, B. A. (1997). Exploring the relationships among liminal transitions, symbolic consumption, and the extended self. *Psychology & Marketing*, 14(1), 29-47.
- Obeidi, A. (2001). *Political Culture in Libya*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Osman, T. (2013). *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to the Muslim Brotherhood*. London, Yale University Press.
- Pargeter, A. (2012). *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi*. London, Yale University Press.
- Parnell, J. A., & Hatem, T. (1999). Cultural antecedents of behavioural differences between American and Egyptian managers. *Journal of Management Studies*, 36(3), 399-418.
- Rao, S., & Perry, C. (2003). Convergent interviewing to build a theory in under-researched areas: principles and an investigation of internet usage in inter-firm relationships. *Qualitative Market Research*, 6(4), 236-247.
- Rice, G., & Al-Mossawi, M. (2002). The implications of Islam for advertising messages: The Middle Eastern context." *Journal of Euro-marketing*, 11(3), 1-16.
- Rindfleisch, J. (2005). Consuming the self: New-age spirituality as "social product" in consumer society. *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, 8(4), 343-360.
- Robertson, C. J., Al-Khatib, J. A., Al-Habib, M., & Lanoue, D. (2001). Beliefs about work in the Middle East and the convergence versus divergence of values. *Journal of World Business*, 36(3), 223-244.
- Romano, D. (2006). Conducting research in the Middle East's conflict zones. *Political Science and Politics*, 39(3), 439-441.
- Rook, D. W. (1985). The ritual dimension of consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12(3), 251-264.
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). London, Sage.
- Sandberg, J., & Alvesson, M. (2011). Ways of constructing research questions: gap-spotting or problematization? *Organization*, 18(1), 23-44.
- Sandıkçı, Ö., & Jafari, A. (2013). Islamic encounters in consumption and marketing. *Marketing Theory*, 13(4), 411-420.
- Schouten, J. W. (1991). Selves in transition: Symbolic consumption in personal rites of passage and identity reconstruction. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17(4), 412-425. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2626836> .
- Shankar, A., & Fitchett, J.A. (2002). Having, being and consumption. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 18(5-6), 501-16.
- Shankar, A., Elliott, R., & Fitchett, J.A. (2009). Identity, consumption and narratives of socialization. *Marketing Theory*, 8(1), 75-94.
- Sidani, Y. M. & Thornberry, J. (2000). The current Arab work ethic: antecedents, implications, and potential remedies. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 91(1), 35-49.
- Springer, R., & Czinkota, M.R. (1999), Marketing's contribution to the transformation of central and eastern Europe. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 41(1), 29-48.

- Tessler, M., & Jamal, A. (2006). Political attitude research in the Arab world: Emerging opportunities. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 39(3), 433-437.
- Tetreault, M. A. S., & Kleine, R. E. (1990). Ritual, ritualized behavior, and habit: Refinements and extensions of the consumption ritual construct. *Advances in consumer research*, 17(1), 31-38.
- The World Bank (2014), 'Urban Population. Retrieved on 17-07-14 from. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS>. (accessed 17/07/14).
- Thompson, C. J. (1997). Interpreting Consumers: A hermeneutical framework for deriving marketing insights from the texts of consumers' Consumption Stories. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(4), 438-55.
- Thompson, C. J., Arnould, E., & Giesler, M. (2013). Discursivity, difference, and disruption: Genealogical reflections on the consumer culture theory heteroglossia. *Marketing Theory*, doi: 1470593113477889.
- Tian, K., & Belk, R. W. (2005). Extended self and possessions in the workplace. *Journal of consumer research*, 32(2), 297-310.
- Uskul, A. K., Oyserman, D., & Schwarz, N. (2010). Cultural emphasis on honor, modesty, or self-enhancement: Implications for the survey response process. In M. Braun, B. Edwards, J. Harkness, T. Johnson, L. Lyberg, P. Mohler, B.E. Pennell, & T.W. Smith. (Eds.) *Survey methods in multinational, multiregional and multicultural context*. NJ: John Wiley and Sons.
- Vandewalle, D. (2008). *Libya since 1969: Qadhafi's Revolution Revisited*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan
- Wallendorf, M., & Arnould, E. J. (1991). "we gather together": Consumption rituals of thanksgiving day. *Journal of consumer research*, 18(1), 13-31.
- Wattanasuwan, K. (2005). The self and symbolic consumption. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 6(1), 179-184.
- Wehrey, F. (2013), Libya's Revolution at Two Years: Perils and Achievements. *Mediterranean Politics*, 18(1), 112-118.
- Westjohn, S. A., Singh, N., & Magnusson, P. (2012). Responsiveness to global and local consumer culture positioning: A personality and collective identity perspective. *Journal of International Marketing*, 20(1), pp. 58-73.
- Zoubir, Y. H. (2000). Doing business in Egypt. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 42(3), 329-3