Overview: This research is based on a nine month ethnographic study involving a large scale media consumption survey, participant/non participant observation and focus groups. By discussing cosmopolitanism as a form of internal heterogeneity, this research is reworking the prevalent idea that cosmopolitanism is an activity of the upper social classes by arguing that it is lower middle class Egyptian youth who are more deserving of the cosmopolitan label.

I'M EGYPTIAN, I'M MUSLIM, BUT I'M ALSO COSMOPOLITAN: THE UNLIKELY YOUNG COSMOPOLITANS OF CAIRO

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Worlds Apart: Which group would you consider more Cosmopolitan?

Group 1: Upper middle class (monthly income £2000)
- I attend an American University
  - Ahmed 19 years old
- I speak fluent English and French
  - Laila 19 years old
- I am always up to date with global fashion trends
  - Karim 21 years old

Group 2: Lower middle class (monthly income £190)
- I try to imagine myself as an Egyptian by taking unprivileged views from the West that we don't have here
  - Samah 23 years old

How they See themselves as Cosmopolitan: in their own words.

I'M EGYPTIAN
- I go to the Mosque
- I pray everyday
- I fast

I'M MUSLIM
- I want to see Egypt improve
- I like to learn from different cultures

I'M ALSO COSMOPOLITAN
- I support my country's football team
- I try to improve myself as an Egyptian by taking important values from the West that we don't have here
- I want to learn a new language

Global incorporated into Religion and Local = COSMOPOLITAN

Case Study of Sarah: An unlikely young cosmopolitan of Cairo

- Basic: Less than £60 a month
- Languages: Speaks only Arabic
- Travel: Never travelled outside of Egypt
- Media: Watches four hours of six different programs: daily BBC Arabic, CNN, Al-Jazeera, daily health, food, and culture, plus foreign global series

This supports a dialogic imagination (Beck 2002) which corresponds to the ‘coexistence of rival ways of thinking in the individual experience’.

Szerszynski and Urry (2006): Visuality and mobility of the mass media have allowed people to engage in imaginative travel.

Schein (1999): This has allowed individuals across the globe to imagine themselves as belonging collectively, beyond national borders, to a global communications culture

This takes place through the MEDIA which have become contemporary global windows connecting people to faraway cultures

This cosmopolitanism happens “within”; the very construction of cosmopolitanism takes place from the immediacy and intimacy of the local.

In contemporary times, even when the physical mobility of some groups is severely restricted, a global citizenry have become easily transported amongst different cultures from the comfort of their own living rooms.

Religion
- I'M MUSLIM
  - I go to the Mosque
  - I pray everyday
  - I fast

Local
- I'M EGYPTIAN
  - I respect other religions

Global
- I'M ALSO COSMOPOLITAN
  - I want to learn a new language
  - I watch global news events

Global incorporated into Religion and Local = COSMOPOLITAN

This case demonstrates the lower middle class to be a group with high cosmopolitan orientations

Media
- As they are important ‘windows onto the world’ that expose individuals across space to a global culture. This allows, even those with minimum cultural and financial resources, to feel a part of activities and events that are occurring many miles away. An intense desire for the global has been created through an increased exposure to a large range of exotic and different cultures via the television screen, and has been realised by engaging with spaces of the shopping street and urban sites of consumption, which have allowed global consumers to surmount the spatial constraint of their locality and engage in an ‘imagined cosmopolitanism’.

Cosmopolitanism as INTERNAL HETEROGENEITY

Not Westernization but the reflexive orientation of individuals to incorporate the global in to their own local repertoires.

(especially the)