

4. Selfies and hypertextual selves on social networking sites

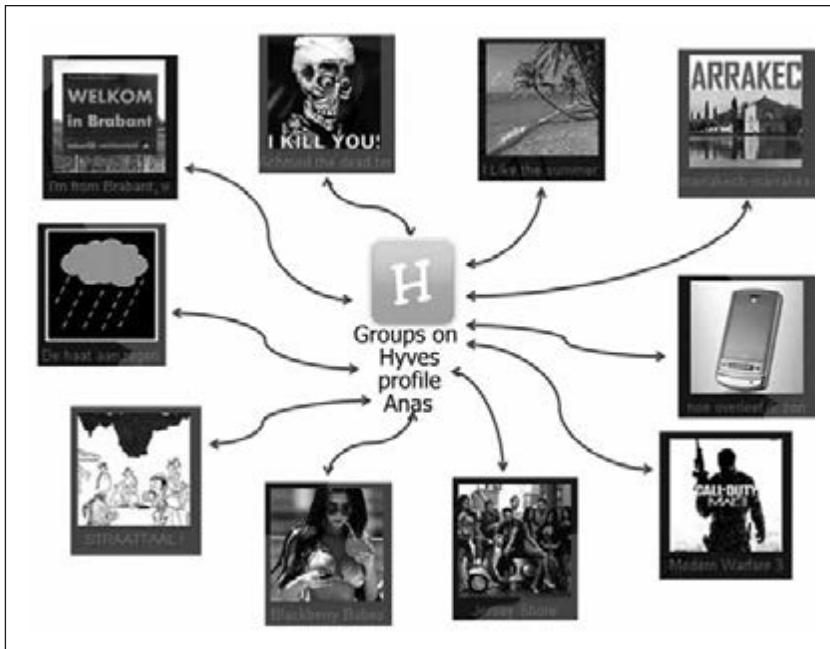


Fig. 12: Hyves groups thirteen-year-old Anas linked to on his Hyves profile page (July 22, 2011)

After joining a group on the Dutch social networking site Hyves, a hyperlinked icon appeared on the user's personal profile page. By joining these groups, users articulate hypertextual narratives of selves. Figure 12 shows the interest groups Anas, a thirteen-year-old rap fanatic, included on his profile page. From the top left he linked to "I'm from Brabant where the fuck you from?," a group referring to the province where he lives in the south of the Netherlands. "Achmed the dead terrorist," refers to the comical incompetent suicide bomber act performed by Jeff Dunham, an American ventriloquist. With "I Like the summer" he indicated to prefer warm weather. By having joined the group "Marrakesh," he published symbolic diasporic affiliations. His parents were born in Marrakech, in Morocco, and by listing this group Anas shows he is proud of his migration background. He connects with global youth cultural forms with the groups "how do I survive without a mobile phone," "Modern Warfare 3," "Jersey

Shore,” and “STREETLANGUAGE!.” The hyperlinked groups showcase his attachment to his mobile phone, to a first-person shooter video game, the MTV reality TV series and his preference for slang and urban youth culture. “Blackberry Babes” is a page where girls posted selfies taken with their mobile phones. The site was used for dating purposes, as it is dedicated to exchanging BlackBerry PingChat! messenger contact details. The group icon is exemplary for stereotypically gendered selfies that meet the dominant perspective of the heterosexual male gaze. Lastly he linked to “Hate the rain” as another reminder of his preference for summery weather.

The example is included to draw attention to the distinct youth cultural dynamics of social networking sites (SNSs), in particular, to its visually gendered and multi-axial hyperlinked dimensions. Although SNSs – like forums and IM applications – share a given set of affordances, users appropriate them in various socio-culturally specific ways. In other words, the “key technological features are fairly consistent,” however, the “the cultures that emerge around SNSs are varied” (Boyd & Ellison, 2008, p. 210). Nonetheless, scholars have noted there are “relatively few culturally specific online social network studies” (Grasmuck, Martin & Zhao, 2009, p. 161) and little research is done on “language-and-national-identity-specific” social networking practices (Siibak, 2009). Addressing the gap in the literature, in this chapter I develop two complementary partial perspectives to analyze social networking site user cultures of Moroccan-Dutch youth.

On social networking sites, users are expected to construct their digital identities by completing profile page interface and menu options. Users can, for instance, do so by publishing self-descriptions, status updates, selfies, hyperlinks, videos and music. Earlier empirical studies mostly focused on the typed narratives of SNS users (Siibak, 2009), in this chapter I focus on selfies and hyperlinking practices. Profile photos and hyperlinks are user-generated digital artifacts that can be taken into account as “objects to think with” (Turkle, 2007, p. 5), as they unlock sets of associations and layers of meaning. Selfies have been recognized to function as innovative ways to “see and shape ourselves” (Rettberg, 2014). Therefore, the following main question guides this chapter: how do Moroccan-Dutch youth perform their identities by publishing selfies and hyperlinks on their personal profile pages on Hyves and Facebook? As they become active agents over their own representation – bounded by the SNS habitus (profile template structures and peer norms) – I scrutinize which aspects of their identities they highlight in their profile photos and hyperlinked affiliations.

Besides the Wired Up survey findings, this chapter draws on in-depth interviews, a virtual ethnography of the digital SNS practices of six informants

and interviews with eight SNS group page founders and moderators. First, as I will elaborate in Section 4.1, Wired Up survey findings show that gender is one of the most important dynamics Moroccan-Dutch young people include on their personal profile pages. In this chapter I therefore focus on gender as the primary analytical category when examining the use of personal profile photos. These profile photos are mostly self-taken self-portrait photographs or selfies. Guided by my analysis in the previous chapter of stereotypically gendered display pictures in IM, I continue exploring whether a fetishization of male and female bodies is also dominant in the ways in which users present themselves in SNS selfies. Secondly, not wanting to obfuscate other axis of differentiation in my scrutiny of the SNS expressive cultures of Moroccan-Dutch youth, I additionally concern myself with the implications of intercultural encounters on social networking sites by interpreting how Moroccan-Dutch youth perform hypertextual selves on their profiles. I assess whether informants homogenously emphasize their ethnic backgrounds on their profiles and corroborate dominant views of failed multiculturalism and ethnic segregation or whether they rather express heterogeneous selves and identify beyond the singular ethnicized positions to which they often find themselves allocated.

This chapter is structured as follows. In Section 4.1, I introduce the meanings of Hyves and Facebook in the lives of my informants. Next, I set out theoretical underpinnings to grasp the impetus of teenager and cultural industry logics that operate (in the background of) online social networking sites. In Section 4.3, I assess how social networking site profile photos are imbued with gender and sexuality among Moroccan-Dutch youth. Section 4.4 develops further the figuration of hypertextual selves, theorizing hyperlinks to acknowledge cosmopolitan processes of networked belonging across difference through the digital performativity of gender, ethnicity, religion, and youth cultural fandom.

4.1 Moroccan-Dutch youth on Hyves and Facebook

In this section I introduce the third field site I studied on a case study basis by describing Hyves and Facebook in the words of the informants. I list reasons for joining these platforms, dynamics of setting up a profile page and discuss how personal profile pages can be used to signal affiliations. At the time of the fieldwork the popularity of Facebook was beginning to outgrow Hyves, however Hyves remained especially popular among the younger informants. In July 2011 Facebook for the first time attracted more

Dutch members in comparison with Hyves (4.9 million versus 4.8 million). At that time, two-thirds of users made use of both platforms. However, on December 2, 2013, Hyves ceased to exist as a social networking site, it is now a child-oriented video game platform. However, the argumentation developed in this chapter holds both for Hyves and Facebook (and alternatives including MySpace and Ello). Hyves was set up in October 2004 and was “named after beehives. The users are bees and the social network is the hive.” The space was developed to be nationally oriented and most content was posted in Dutch (Bannier, 2011, p. 587). During my fieldwork, its founders sold the site to owners of the Dutch conservative daily newspaper *De Telegraaf*. When that happened, fifteen-year-old Oussema mentioned he quit the site like a lot of other Dutch users, fearing the new owners would commercially exploit the site more extensively: *“I have deleted my account yesterday. I have heard that they will be sending a lot of advertisements.”*

Originally targeted toward students, Facebook became publicly accessible in September 2006, and a Dutch-language version was released in May 2008. On average, 829 million users across the world were active daily in June 2014 (Facebook, 2014), and in the Netherlands 8.9 million people were active on Facebook, of whom 6.1 million on a daily basis (Newcom, 2014, p. 7).

Table 6: The importance of social networking sites in the lives of Moroccan-Dutch youth (percentages, n = 344)

Would you miss Hyves and Facebook if you could not use them any longer?	<i>Completely not</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>Total</i>
Girls	38.7%	29.3%	32.0%	100%
Boys	42.3%	30.1%	27.6%	100%

Informants visited social networking sites on a daily basis. Ilana, a sixteen-year-old girl, said a profile page allows “*sharing your own photo's and videos, what you do in your daily life.*” seventeen-year-old Ferran made “*daily use of it. When I'm on the computer, I sign in to Hyves*” and he added his use is “*not an addiction but more of a habit.*” Sixteen-year-old Nevra felt it is “*standard*” to log on automatically. The Wired Up survey found that roughly two-thirds of Moroccan-Dutch young people reported they feel attached to the communication platform (see Table 6). Online social networking is interwoven into the fabric of everyday life, as is can also be illustrated with the verbs “facebooking” and “hyving,” which were common parlance among the interviewees.

In general, the younger interviewees aged between twelve and fifteen years old primarily used Hyves, while informants aged sixteen years old and upward preferred Facebook. Both aesthetic and functional differences were experienced between the two sites. Hyves offered more opportunities for customization in comparison with Facebook. Fifteen-year-old Hatim felt, *"Hyves, you can do more things with it, such as changing your background. With Facebook, it's only white and blue; it's not so nice. You cannot change the background."* Yethi, a fifteen-year-old boy, stated, *"Hyves is more colorful, Facebook is a bit dull."* Digitizing the passages from childhood to adulthood, informants moved from Hyves to Facebook, as older adolescents seemed to prefer the clean, orderly and more professional look of Facebook. Furthermore, unlike Hyves which was mostly frequented by Dutch-speaking users, Facebook enabled users to establish transnational contacts with those living in the diaspora outside of the Netherlands, as fifteen-year-old Wafaa says: *"The whole world doesn't have Hyves. You don't have access to your family members living in Belgium, Morocco, etc. on it. It's more the Netherlands."* In Hyves, a nationally bounded community was established, in contrast to the global reach of Facebook. Sixteen-year-old Ilana described this dynamic as follows: *"Hyves is mostly about what happens in the Netherlands. And on Facebook you have people from all over the world."*

Wired Up survey findings showed that Moroccan-Dutch youth on average befriended 239 contacts, close to the average of 250-275 Facebook friends American college students connect with (Walther et al., 2011, pp. 28-29). I am aware that the definition of friendship is stretched, as these numbers exceed the ten to twenty close traditional relationships people sustain on average (Parks, 2007). It is interesting that informants note a delicate line between privacy and public access. Motives collide. On the one hand, informants are interested in attracting new friends while they also want to maintain the privacy of their personal information. Platform settings complicate this process further. Facebook and Hyves differed slightly in the privacy options they provide and this difference offers a window into the balancing acts between maintaining privacy and attracting new friends users engage in. Friend lists impact upon one's popularity and attractiveness. In Hyves, informants noted they appreciated being able to allow the friends of their friends to access their profile page. This way, they could get in touch with new contacts from the networks of their friends. This option is not available on Facebook. Oussema illustrates this lack in privacy settings poses a problem: *"On Facebook I have opened up my profile page, because you cannot chose 'only visible for friends of your friends' – only 'for friends' or 'for everyone. On Hyves, the settings are 'not visible for anyone,' 'for friends,' 'for friends of friends,' 'for all Hyvers' and 'for everyone.'"*

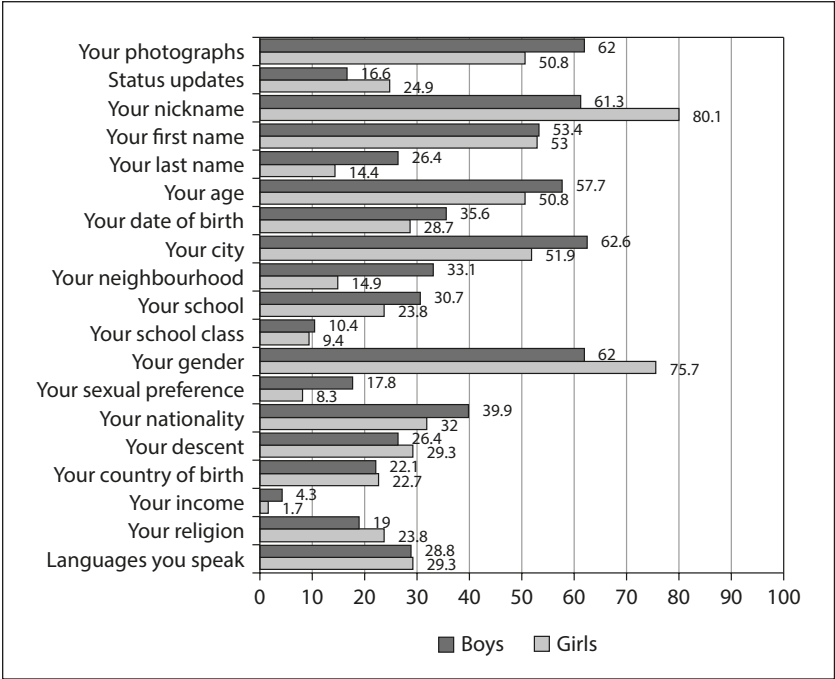


Diagram 7: Moroccan-Dutch youth self-reporting SNS profiling attributes (graph shows percentages, n = 344)

Self-profiling attributes

In the Wired Up survey, respondents were asked what self-profiling options they would make use of on their personal profile pages. Nicknames, gender and photos were the three most important self-profiling attributes Moroccan-Dutch youth reported using. More than two-thirds of respondents noted including those on their profile pages. Girls, in particular, frequently noted adding their gender and nicknames while boys reported showing location markers such as their city, neighborhood and school. Other markers that were frequently mentioned are age, first name, nationality, birthday, languages one speaks, and one’s descent (see Diagram 7).

In Chapter 3 I argued that IM users updated their multilayered display names in the onstage. Similarly on Hyves and Facebook, users can post nicknames and status updates on their personal profile wall for their friends to see. Sixteen-year-old Naoul saw her profile page on Hyves as her public presence on the web: *“It feels like your own sort of blog, your own site.”* On Hyves, users can enter a “w.w.w.” (who, what, where?), says thirteen-year-old

Tariq: *"so you can say where you are at the moment, what you are doing, and which places you will go."* Likewise, Facebook asks its users to write about "What are you doing?" in status updates. For instance, Oussema said he likes to update his status with his *"favorite phrases."* He engaged in various antiracist acts. For example, on August 26, 2011, he wrote *"don't be racist, be like a panda, they're black, white and asian."* His next update was during the night of August 30 *"sugar sugar sugar sugar parteeeee!"* referring to the festive conclusion of the fasting month of Ramadan.

Some users include a nickname on their page. Thirteen-year-old Inas said, *"Often users put, for instance, 'Moroccan' and this and that as their name."* Moroccan-Dutch youth engage in specific naming practices as on October 31, 2011, for instance, 3,724 users in Hyves included "Mocro" in their nickname, often combining it together with age, gender, sexual preference, religious, sport, music and other youth cultural affiliations. As I described in the introduction, the term "Mocro" is a Moroccan-Dutch honorary nickname stemming from Dutch-language rap and hip-hop culture. Through acts of bricolage, this term is innovatively combined with other markers of distinction in nicknames, such as "Mocro^boy-g6," "[^]mocro^girlsZz^," "MY OWN_MOCRO_STYLE" and "MocroLiciouz." In the following section I address motivations for self-profiling.

Motivations

Informants explained they especially valued the opportunity to visually represent themselves on social networking sites. Twelve-year-old Soufian noted that with Hyves profiles *"at a glance you see what people are like,"* which was different from platforms such as instant messaging: *"With MSN it's just talking, but with Hyves it's more about photos. You'll see more and get a chance to know more about a person."* Fifteen-year-old Hatim specified setting up a profile on Facebook *"is like introducing myself to someone, only on the Internet."* Fifteen-year-old Oussema said that users can include *"photographs of your friends, of yourself, your pet, your family, where you live,"* and that users can show *"what you like, where you are interested in, your sexual preference, males or females."*

In the interviews, being able to socialize was mentioned as the key reason to join social networking sites. Informants felt the urge to follow in the footsteps of their peers and set up a profile of their own. Fourteen-year-old Loubna, for instance, joined Facebook because she noticed her sisters having fun using it: *"My sisters always went on Facebook, so I thought, 'Yes, I'll set up a Facebook account, too.'" Similarly, thinking aloud about why he*

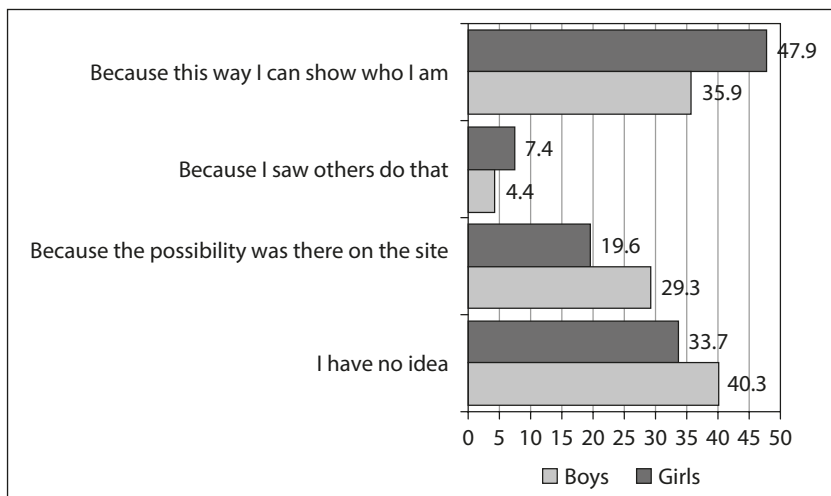


Diagram 8: Reasons for participating in self-profiling on SNSs (multiple answers possible, graph shows percentages, n = 344)

set up a profile on Hyves, fifteen-year-old Ryan said, *“I think I have made it because many children had one. And I thought ‘why don’t I make one,’ and then I made one.”*

In the survey, with the question “Why do you include things like music and photographs on your website?” respondents were invited to reflect on the reasons why they include certain attributes on their profile pages (see Diagram 8). More than girls, Moroccan-Dutch boys reported that profiling options such as photographs allow them to show who they are. Also they did so more often because of seeing others doing so. Girls more often responded they had no idea why they include certain things on their personal page. They also more frequently noted including elements on their profile pages after seeing the site offered the chance to do so. In sum, this section showed there is a variety of ways Moroccan-Dutch youth can articulate their individuality using online social networking sites. Different profiling opportunities give the user the opportunity to make visual statements about their ethnic, religious, gendered and youth cultural situatedness to an extended group of connected friends.

The red thread of the remainder of the chapter is woven from two specific dynamics. In Section 4.3, I focus on photographs and the portrayal of gender, the main themes in self-profiling. I study photographs and gender in tandem by analyzing the gendered gaze manifested in the profile pictures informants use. As the example I gave in the beginning of this chapter of the groups

Anas links to on his personal profile page implies, users are linked up with people beyond their own friend list on social networking sites. Upon joining a group, not only is the group icon included on individual personal profile pages, individual users are also linked together as their membership is made visible on the group page itself. Anas's example indicates users can simultaneously become an audience member across a variety of spaces. I unravel this dynamic further in Section 4.4 by considering cosmopolitan, intercultural encounters in hypertext networking. Below I first theorize the tension between desiring to articulate one's individuality and being guided by prestructured profiling options.

4.2 Theorizing the politics of online social networking sites

Social networking sites have been defined "as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 211). Constructing a profile on social networking sites is bound by technological restrictions, neoliberal incentives, and peer norms and expectations. In this section I explore these three dimensions one by one to situate informants' practices in the wider context of the intricate politics of social networking sites and their specific appeal for teenagers.

Templates and user cultures

Profiles on social networking sites provide a template within which users can act. This template structures, and thus bounds their behavior around "heavily politicised identity categories" (Cover, 2012, p. 182). Users can publicly disclose how they want to present themselves in a preformatted way by making use of the provided "templated biographical categories." How the template "is actually used, however, varies considerably" (Davis, 2010, p. 1111). Templated choices in Western-oriented platforms are essentially restricted to "cultural signs rooted in mainstream Western culture" (Donnelly, 2011, p. 173). These signs are ideological indicators of particular age group, gender and religious norms. Furthermore, interface decisions produce and reflect hierarchical ethnic and racial categorizations. By providing a limited set of options to choose from in the form of drop-down menu boxes to select, interfaces narrow "choices of subject positions available to the user," as

users are required “to choose ‘what’ they are” from a limited set of options. Lisa Nakamura added: “When race is put on the menu,” limited options render “mestiza or other culturally ambiguous identities” invisible when they are not “given a ‘box’ of their own” (2002, pp. 104, 120). In response to limited menu options, minorities have been found to publish elaborate ethno-racial narratives of self, for example, on Facebook. By doing so they can resist being silenced by “dominant color-blind ideologies” (Grasmuck, Martin & Zhao, 2009, p. 158).

The informants also noted menu-options in discussing their self-profiling. When asked how users can show their cultural or religious preferences, Oussema reflected that in Facebook “*there is a special box to publish your religion and I find it important to let that show,*” but he described there are alternatives when there is no menu option that suits profiling preferences: “*You can, for instance, type, ‘Yes, I have just had couscous’¹ – that is possible, but there is not really a box to register your culture.*”

Templated biographical categories and interface decisions – but also dynamic (and not fully controllable) user behavior – result in particularly embodied social networking spaces. Particular configurations of ethnic, gendered, and classed ways of being become dominant. For instance, Amanda Lenhart analyzed the differences between typical Facebook and Myspace users and noted “typically, MySpace users are more likely to be women, Hispanic or black, to have a high school education or some experience with college,” while “Facebook users are more likely to be men and to have a college degree” (2009, p. 6). American teenager preference for either one of these spaces reflects a reproduction of dominant social categories of ethnicity and social-economic status. Analogues to the 1960s “white flight” by white American families from city centers to suburbs, danah boyd observed a recent “networked exodus” of white, affluent teenagers toward Facebook (2012). Facebook started as a social network for Harvard University students and in the beginning year access remained intentionally limited to college students. In the years to follow, college-bound teenagers aiming for university are seeing access to Facebook and its “highbrow aura” as part of their rite of passage, while subculturally identifying teenagers are drawn to MySpace. While Facebook was seen as “mature,” “mainstream,” “safe” and “clean,” MySpace in turn became increasingly seen as “hyper-sexual,” “bling-bling,” “ghetto,” “unsafe.” Mainstream fears over the digital space of the “other” mirrors and magnifies societal divisions (boyd, 2012, pp. 203-220).

1 Couscous is a popular dish across North Africa and it is said to be a Berber invention (Escher & Wüst, 2010).

To a certain extent, a parallel can be drawn between these observations and the preferences for SNSs among the young people I interviewed. Those informants who noted having transferred from Hyves to Facebook mostly framed their move in terms of an age-based decision; in this way access to Facebook for them indicated a rite of passage from teenage life toward a more professional one. The younger informants considered Facebook dull, the older one's found Hyves too colorful.

Neoliberal SNS logics

The decisions over technological affordances and restrictions of the platforms the interviewees use are designed to meet commercial interests. Social networking sites are structured on the basis of commercial decisions, and their "code is law," channeling the behavior of people using their services (Mitchel, 1995, p. 111). SNSs are constructed as an "approximation of the social" designed to be commercially exploited (Ippolita, Lovink & Rossiter, 2009). Weighing costs and benefits for the young consumer is difficult as the terms of services of SNSs are extreme lengthy and complex. Although Facebook officially asks for parental consent and guidance for users under thirteen and Hyves asked parental permission for users under the age of sixteen, most survey respondents and interviewees, for instance, reported they had the autonomy to decide what they like to publish online. During the interviews it occurred to me that like most users, informants knew little about the conditions under which they exchange their time and personal information that gets monitored and monetized in return of their goals: access to communication, sharing of information and being able to socialize with their friends (see Shepherd, 2012). Besides having to pay for special features in Facebook games (like *Candy Crush Saga*), user activities are transferred into "commercial commodities" and "marketing campaigns" (Andrejevic, 2011, pp. 97-99). Although many considered privacy settings important, most were unaware of how Facebook connects advertisers to a specific relevant target audience on the basis of individual users' personal preferences, their behavior and their friends' behavior on the platform. The following exchange I had with fifteen-year-old Yethi is exemplary:

Koen Leurs: look, take this Facebook page

On this side [pointing to my Facebook profile which I have opened on my laptop]

Yethi: Ah here, like Nike and so on.

Koen Leurs: yes, this is because I have mentioned running, and next you'll see a Nike advertisement.

Yethi: Wajoo that's quite irritating heey [wajoo: slang for wow, pfft].

Koen Leurs: yes it is

Yethi: for real

Koen Leurs: yes its especially, they monitor all your data. They see who you befriend, and what all those people put online. They know quite a bit about you.

Yethi: those [people] from the advertisements?

Koen Leurs: yes

Yethi: I had not really considered that

Koen Leurs: so for instance if you talk about swimming, it might be that the next day you'll get an ad saying buy this jogging pants or something like that.

Yethi: For real? I didn't know that.

Koen Leurs: yes Facebook before did not really know how to make money, but they started to connect all those personal details, the things you become a fan of and you'll get specific

Yethi: advertisements directed at you personally, yes

The advertisements shown in Figure 13 illustrate how direct marketing algorithms may slot the digital profiling practices of the informants. The figure is a compilation of advertisements that appeared on my personal Facebook profile page. After a friend sent me a message about a new Red Hot Chili Peppers record coming out, advertisements from a Dutch company selling Red Hot Chili Peppers concert tickets appeared on my profile page. Processes of niche marketing along ethnic lines are visible in the top two advertisements. After I made reference to Morocco on my profile page and joining Facebook groups pertaining Morocco, my behavior was made knowable by the Facebook system.

As Facebook algorithms assigned advertisements of Prepaidunion.com and Etnoselect.nl to appear on my profile it shows I was recognized as a member of a marketable ethnic category (Gajjala & Birzescu, 2010). Using an image of the Moroccan flag and the question, "Are you looking for a nice gift?" Prepaidunion.com aimed to attract Moroccan-Dutch users of Facebook to its website: "Give call-credit to your family and friends in Morocco. Surprise them with an original gift and get up to 400% bonus. Order now." Using Facebook advertisements, the company sought entrance in the lucrative transnational telephone market. Similarly, using an image of the Moroccan flag, asking, "Are you also Moroccan?" Etnoselect.nl, a

Gesponsord
Een advertentie maken

Zoek je een leuk cadeau?
×

prepaidunion.com



Geef beltegoed aan je familie en vrienden in Marokko. Verras ze met origineel cadeau en ontvang nu tot 400 procent bonus. Bestel nu!

Ben jij ook Marokkaans?
×

etnoselect.nl



Ontvang enquêtes in de mail en vul ze in wanneer het jou uitkomt. Maximale vergoeding: 5 euro per enquête!

Red Hot Chili Peppers
×

pepetickets.nl



De Red Hot Chili Peppers geven op 16 oktober 2011 een concert in Ahoy. Bestel hier je tickets!

www.islamproducten.nl
×

islamproducten.nl



20% korting op de gehele assortiment. Gebruik code actiejan2012

Fig. 13: Facebook advertisements (advertisements appeared on October 16, 2011, and January 11, 2012)

commercial research company, sought to attract Moroccan-Dutch people to participate in survey taking and product testing: "Receive surveys in your mail and complete them whenever it suits you. Maximum reward: five euro per survey!" Facebook algorithms transfer practices and user-generated content into a value-generating ethnic niche-marketing opportunity.

Similarly, having joined groups related to Islam, an advertisement for Islamic products appeared. The company Islamproducten.nl used an image of a headscarf-wearing girl with the tagline "20% discount on our whole stock. Use the code actiejan2012." The advertisement, from "the largest islam webshop in the Netherlands," presented users with a particular gendered

configuration of religious preferences. These examples demonstrate how user practices are machine-readable as algorithms channel them into monetizable categories of ethnicity, religiosity and gender. The corporate logic of technological disciplining is a power relational field that seeks to place individual subject positions into knowable, slottable positions. This process, however, leaves room for agency, as Gajjala and Birzescu theorize: although “appropriation occurs” in corporate mainstreaming of subaltern identities through interface design and templates, “there is also a certain kind of empowerment also occurring simultaneously” (2010, pp. 77). Little is known about the relationship between the cultural industry and the use of social media among ethnic and religious minorities.

Teenager SNS logics

Considering the dense web of power relations unraveled above, one may wonder why adolescents invest significant time and effort in setting up and updating their profile pages after all. Their preferences can partly be understood by considering the desires, needs and expectations that may arise during their life phase of coming-of-age. The bottom-line is that the services social networking sites provide are appealing for teens, as they might feel empowered by them in having a say over their own identity representations and to facilitate peer verification, teen sociality, becoming (more) attractive and achieving a higher status (Boyd, 2007, 2008, 2014; Ünlüsoy, De Haan & Leander, 2012; De Ridder, 2014). Young people put in an effort in updating their profile pages hoping their peers will notice it. The amount of information American college students upload on their Facebook profile, for example, can predict the number of contacts they attract (Lampe, Ellison and Steinfield, 2007, p. 441). The more information users publish on their profile, the more traffic they generate to their page and the more people they befriend. Additionally, research on impression management in Facebook demonstrates that users who list a large number of friends on their profile page are perceived as being more “attractive,” “self-confident” and “popular” than users with a small number of friends (Kleck et al., 2007, p. 2).

By observing the ways in which their peers construct their identities on their personal profile pages, adolescents learn which social expectations and norms they need to meet in order to be accepted and liked (Boyd, 2007, p. 76; De Ridder, 2014, p. 24-26). Performing one’s identity in order to receive attention and verification from peers is a highly competitive activity; “it is a means to improve one’s reputation and status,” which might result in

“access to resources and social and practical solidarity” (Tufekci, 2008, p. 546). Hyves is used among young users to market themselves to their peers (Utz, 2008, pp. 236-237). For example, on SNSs selfies and other photos are used as identity building blocks that assist in sustaining peer groups (Van Dijck, 2008). Such online photo sharing transforms the boundaries between publicity and privateness (Lasén & Gómez-Cruz, 2009).

Attention-seeking activities – for example, through the use of particular selfies – on social networking sites are not gender neutral. Ashley Donnelly argues profile pictures are problematically gendered and sexualized and cultivated by masculine fantasies that dominate the Internet. In the United States, she noted, teens on Facebook are expected to “sell” themselves through their personal profiles to gain friends and access social capital. Young women in order to do so often have to “subscribe to heteronormative, patriarchal ideals” by engaging in “submissive presentations of self” in their profile pictures (Donnelly, 2011, p. 179). Meanwhile, among Muslim girls in Qatar, Rodda Leage and Ivana Chalmers found these girls use Facebook to practice juggling the conflicting gendered, religious and cultural norms they need to deal with. First, some girls opted out of social networking sites completely in fear of damaging their reputations; others participated minimally, for instance, refraining from the use of selfies in order to abide by stringent religious and cultural norms. Others used creative approaches, such as digitally manipulating their facial features in photographs, only showing parts of their body in pictures or crafting complete fantasy identities. A final group rebelled and disregarded strict cultural mores; taking a risk, they circulated personal photographs and befriended boys, while trying to keep their parents away from their digital profiles (Leage & Chalmers, 2010, pp. 31-40).

Feeling confident, accepted, attractive and popular are of particular relevance during the informants’ life stage of adolescence. Publishing specific information and visual material may assist in attracting a wider group of friends. An increase in the number of friends in turn may render the person behind the profile page more popular and attractive in the eyes of his/her peers and potential lovers. This investment is a form of labor that is of interest for the platform owners; the growth in personal information published on the site and an increase of site users imply commercially exploitable value gets added to the social network. In the end the user performs this labor for herself: “the future rewards of which include improved standing and greater opportunity” (Gregg, 2007). Below I consider two different perspectives to consider further the wider implications of the field site of social networking. I first focus on the gendered gaze in profile pictures, before considering hypertextual networking and intercultural encounters.

4.3 Selfies and the gendered gaze

In my discussion of MSN display photos I argued selfies are used to construct a gendered identity. Informants noted that display pictures used in instant messaging reflect ideals of masculinity and femininity through stereotypical poses: boys aim for looking “*tough*” while girls aim to show themselves as “*sensual*” and “*emotional*.” The interviewees discussed how they use display photos to show certain parts of their bodies. Girls, for instance, used pictures where they show their pouted lips while boys exhibited their muscled “six-packs.” This way, bodies are fragmented into sexualized objects. Analyzing the Wired Up survey findings, I discussed in Section 4.1 that gender and visual representation are considered key to self-profiling on social networking sites, too. Gender and photographs were singled out as two of the most popular attributes used among the respondents to decorate their personal profiles pages. In this section I explore further how the two are related.

“You’ll see more and get a chance to know more about a person.” This statement made by twelve-year-old Soufian is exemplary of the seeing-is-knowing motive many informants shared. On a social networking site, the profile picture of a user “stands in” for his/her body (Strano, 2008). Besides technological constraints that inscribe themselves upon user self-profiling, the ways in which users stand in for themselves in selfies put on social networking sites is also partly influenced by gendered peer norms and expectations. Guided by this assumption I focus in this section on gender as the primary analytical category in my analysis of how informants (perceive the) use of profile images.

Selfie ideals

In the Wired Up survey respondents were asked how they would show themselves in their profile pictures in order to be liked by their friends. With the question we aimed to learn more about the norms of online photographic self-depictions among young people. In designing the survey, we acknowledged that display pictures do not carry singular meanings. Therefore, respondents were invited to choose a maximum of three self-presentation labels. This opportunity was used, as the percentages add up to well over 100% for both girls and boys. The respondent’s answers enable reflection on impression management, expectations of appropriate self-presentations and ideal beauty standards among Moroccan-Dutch youth.

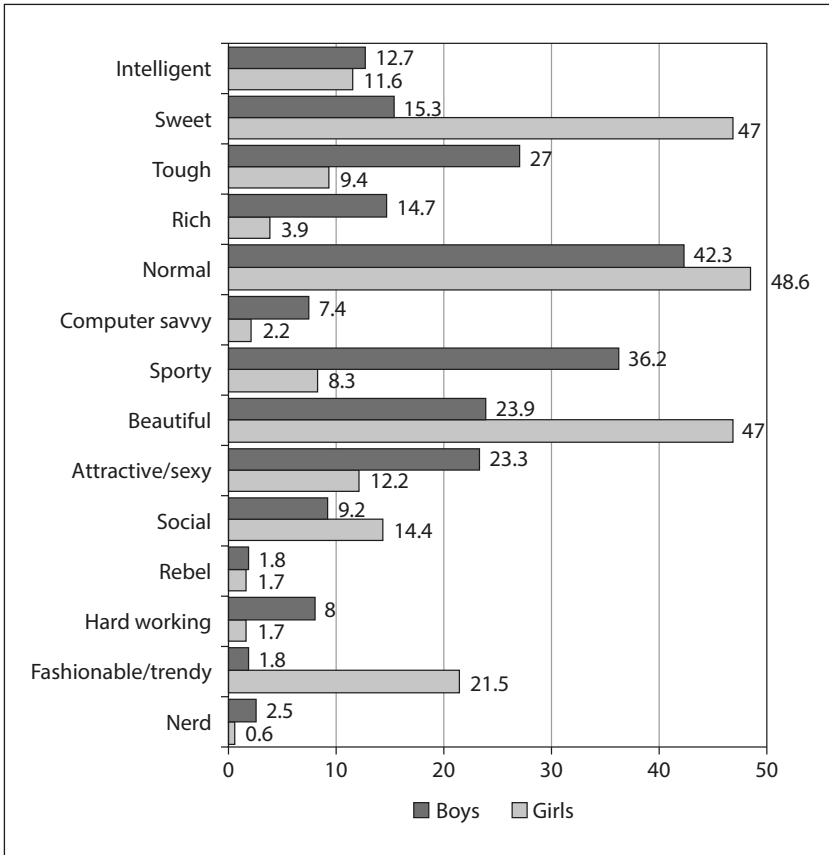


Diagram 9: Selfie ideals reported by Moroccan-Dutch youth (multiple answers possible, percentages, $n = 344$)

Most importantly, nearly half of the Moroccan-Dutch girls and boys in the survey sample reported they ideally would like to present themselves as “normal” in their selfies (Diagram 9). Besides wanting to being normal, boys and girls chose varying additional labels to report on their aspired self-presentation. Commonly chosen labels indicate that participating girls specifically desire to look “beautiful,” “sweet” or “fashionable/trendy” and “social” and to a lesser extent “attractive/sexy,” “intelligent” and “tough.” Boys want to come across as “sporty,” “though,” “beautiful,” “attractive/sexy,” and to a lesser extent “sweet,” “rich,” “intelligent,” “hard working” and “computer savvy” (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2012, pp. 446-447).

By asking respondents how they would like to show themselves in order to be liked by their friends, the survey findings revealed how Moroccan-Dutch

youth would ideally represent themselves. The informants reported seeking to meet expectations of what is normal and appropriate in selfie culture. Aiming for the appropriate standard was combined with dichotomous gender ideals. Girls reported their ideals were being beautiful and sweet, while boys aimed for a sporty image and toughness. Being expected to showcase certain attributes, these ideals reveal self-regulatory values young people negotiate with (Siibak, 2009). Each of these labels covers a distinct configuration of femininity and masculinity. Andra Siibak in Estonia (2009) and Michele Strano in the US (2008) have found similar self-presentation labels, for instance, girls aim to display ideals of female beauty on their online profile pages. These findings suggest shared (youth cultural) norms of gender that go beyond distinct locations and ethnic groups.

During the interviews, informants described a stereotypically gendered practice of profile photo selection. Oussema described that most boys showed themselves as follows: *"Look at how pretty I am. Look at how nice my eyes are as a ray of light shines in them,"* or they posed in their pictures with *"pumped up chests"* and aimed to go for a *"look at how tough I am, look at how muscled I am"* impression or, while girls *"lean forward,"* to show off their bodily curves and *"blow a kiss to the camera."* Fourteen-year-old Ziham said boys *"put up tough photos, where they put up their middle-fingers and so on,"* she adds that among her friends *"girls don't do that. They just show themselves wearing tight clothes or so, with untied hair."* According to sixteen-year-old Bibi, in some photos *"girls show their boobs almost popping out of their bras."* Fourteen-year-old Ayoub noted, *"girls put lots of make-up on"* or post selfies taken *"when they have just come from the shower."* Although individual informants often nuanced their own positioning, the majority of the informants gave a highly stereotypically gendered description of self-photograph ideals.

Andra Siibak found strikingly similar patterns in her visual analysis of photos posted to Rate.ee, the most popular social networking site in Estonia. She notes that stereotypes of the "porno-chic" are the source for dichotomous gender identities. In their attempt to meet social expectations of female physical attractiveness she found that girls met the norms and emphasized sexuality by smiling (which can be interpreted as a submissive position in the power/status hierarchy), stressing their slenderness, exposing their bodies and wearing clothes to stress their perfect body shape. Additionally, the majority of women were posing from a position of inferiority, submissively looking up at the viewers with canted heads *"so that the viewer was placed in a position of superiority."* Emphasizing

manliness, the “macho man,” for instance, posed next to a car or motorcycle (signs of hyper-masculinity) and exposes his bare athletic body for “the female gaze” (Siibak, 2007).

The particular ideal ways of showing noted by the informants signal hierarchical power relations. Girls desiring to come across as sweet and beautiful are more submissive and inferior to the tough and sporty image boys desire to project. Contrasting feminine and masculine self-presentational repertoires exposes forms of patriarchal subordination that get perpetuated and magnified online. In expressing themselves on social networking sites, users build on cultural signs of desirability that originate from a patriarchal belief system:

Collective, societal ideologies that favor youth, Western standards of beauty (thin, white, tall, able-bodied, etc.), and conformity are dominated by a patriarchal system that genders traits as either “masculine” or “feminine” empowering the masculine while devaluing the feminine. (Donnelly, 2011, p. 174)

Although users themselves decided to publish certain selfies exposing their naked bodies, their choices are to a certain extent guided by the ideals and expectations of an imagined audience of peers. SNSs are “heavily peer-controlled normative spaces” and their habitus constructs “what types of self-representations are socially acceptable” (De Ridder, 2014, p. 24). Informants frequently brought up their audiences during the interviews, and getting reactions from peers was highly valued. For example, sixteen-year-old Bibi noted she is always eager to read reactions and learn about others’ opinions when she posts a photo on Facebook: *“It is so interesting, because on Facebook you can react on pictures. And I’m really like ‘Oh, someone is reacting to my photo.’ You know, I am very curious.”* Photographs are used to attract attention. Fifteen-year-old Hajar noted that boys go on Facebook where they “search for girls that they like,” and they will then “react to photos, you know, to ask the girl out on a date and so on.” And they allow users to gain status. Fourteen-year-old Ayoub noted you could become very popular when you post good photos. His friend uploaded a photo and asked everyone “to give respect to the photo.” Similar to the “Like” button on Facebook, on the social networking site Hyves, users could click a “Respect” button that allows friends to express their acknowledgement of a photo. Ayoub added this is done because *“when you have a photo, and a lot of people have reacted to it, on that day, it will appear on ‘The Story of the Day,’ the opening page of your Hyves friends.”*

Meeting the gaze: Objectification and/or representation

The question arises whether female submissive self-portrayals and the objectification of selfies must be understood purely as a lack of empowerment. Can it also be a strategic decision by users to publish distinctly feminine photographs to their profile page? Online, a complex dialectic can be recognized between disempowering objectification and agentic representation: “images of women on the Web exist along a continuum from objectification to representation” (Blair & Takayoshi, 1999, p. 7). The objectification of women cannot be fully attributed to the male gaze only, as women themselves also navigate the continuum “consciously and unconsciously in their own production of electronic discourse” (ibid.). In the blogosphere, some female writers participate consciously in the objectification of their bodies in their attempt to secure a large audience: they “purposefully use their sexuality and beauty as a way to attract readers” (Ratliff, 2007, p. 3). Similarly, on social networking sites, young female users who conform to and identify with vanity and beauty ideals in their profile images might feel pleasure and empowerment when receiving attention and attracting a large audience to their personal profile pages. For example, Kathrin Tiidenbeg describes how sexy selfies allow their makers to reclaim their bodies. One of her informants, for example, appropriated a new gaze: “self-shooting gave her a way to care for herself” which “taught her to feel sexy in her body” (Tiidenbeg, 2014). In addition, historically, based on restrictive cultural and Islamic principles women and girls were rarely allowed to be photographed in Morocco (McMurray, 2001, p. 78). This still holds for some Arab Muslim girls, as, for instance, Leage and Chalmers found to be the case in Qatar (2010, pp. 34-35). Uploading selfies, Moroccan-Dutch girls can take up self-expression liberties they may lack offline.

These forms of power and agency also have their obvious wide-ranging drawbacks, including exploitation and narcissism. Facebook may encourage “narcissistic behavior”: “narcissists appear to be attractive on Facebook because they are strategically posting pictures that make them appear sexy and attractive” (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008, p. 1311). Other critics argue that selfie poses are mostly based on real-time viewing instead of autonomous self-contemplation. Increasingly self-taken with smartphones, the distance between camera and subject is restricted to an arm’s length, lacking opportunities for “meaningful self-reflection,” it can therefore be argued that the habitus of social networking sites may be “conditioning users to look at themselves as surface objects, rather than encouraging them to engage in meaningful self-reflection” (Wendt, 2014, p. 24).

The tension between being either a subject of the gaze or object of the gaze can be drawn out further with feminist psychoanalytic theory. This framework reminds us that the

sexual economy of looking at a photograph (not just erotic or pornographic ones) represents the heterosexual male gaze. Psychoanalytic terms, such as scopophilia (the pleasure in looking), voyeurism, and fetish are theoretically structured around a male viewer and his pleasures/traumas. (Zarzycka, 2009, p. 159)

In feminist film theory, presuming an asymmetrical relation between the “active” men and “passive” women, the male viewer derives his pleasure from a voyeuristic objectification of female bodies. Male fantasies are projected on female bodies, which are styled accordingly for erotic and sexual impact (Mulvey, 1975). In the case of uploading selfies to one’s profile page, a girl’s internalization of the gaze might indicate she seized the opportunity “to be in charge of her to-be-looked-at-ness” (Smelik, 2009, p. 185). This opportunity, however, becomes increasingly difficult as the celebrated visual ideals of youth, fitness and beauty are becoming more and unrealistic and unattainable, especially in the present era of widespread digital manipulation. In a search for conformity, this entails disciplining the body with dieting, fitness, and consuming products from the beauty industry as well as managing certain poses, the “duck face” and other facial expressions besides learning to use smartphone filters and digital photo processing software (cf. Foucault, 1978). In their attempts at gender stereotypically inscribing themselves in the desiring gazes of masculinist objectification, girls’ aspirations to meet the male fantasy may be impossible to completely fulfill. Again punctuating the myths of utopian digital disembodiment, when falling victim to the heterosexual male gaze and sensing their digital photographic self-depictions do not meet its ideals, girls might not feel valued as full human beings.

Victimization and cautionary measures

A statement seventeen-year-old Ferran made can be taken to further nuance the potential for agency in the Moroccan-Dutch context. He thought some Moroccan-Dutch “*girls are a bit more loose, because they do not really have contact with boys, real contact*” away from the Internet. Taking the opportunity to have more freedom and befriend boys online, Ferran added, “*some Moroccan girls put up crazy pictures that they shouldn’t have done.*” He hints at the fact

that acts of online experimentation may have very serious consequences. The discussion in the prior chapter of Naoul and Inzaf's friend who was severely beaten up after engaging in MSN webcam intimacy is an exceptional, but brutal reminder of negative repercussions. As seventeen-year-old Sadik noted, users are not always conscious of the consequences of the ways they depict themselves in their profile images, they do not "*realize what can happen*":

Sometimes you see the craziest things on Hyves, weird things that make you wonder, "Okay, if your dad know about this, you would not have Hyves anymore." Some people take nude pictures and put them on their Hyves. Thinking that is a fun thing to do until the wrong person comes across them.

Girls, but also boys, feeling urged to upload revealing profile pictures may fall victim to being "broomed" ("*bezemen*" in Dutch). In Dutch sexist and homophobic street language, the dismissive label "*bezem*" stands for "hooker" in the case of girls and "homosexual" in the case of boys (Hamer, 2010). Fifteen-year-old Hatim explained: "*People can take your image, and save it to their computer, and edit it and put it on a site. For instance, people put up a video on YouTube called Hookers of the City which included a lot of photographs.*" Figure 14 is a still taken from a "*bezem*" YouTube video. The maker's nickname "*Bezemswalla*," includes a reference to brooming, but also "*walla*," Arabic and Berber for "I swear." The video consists of a compilation of photographs displaced from profile pages of Moroccan-Dutch boys and girls. The photos are accompanied with abusive commentary such as "blowjob slut" and "homo." The still shown in Figure 14 displays a girl who looks upward at the viewer from the corner of her eyes and she leans on a tough-looking guy. The maker of the video clip has edited the photograph by including the statement "hooker of twelve" years old.

Even though the video was deleted from the YouTube servers shortly after its publication, the 62,000 plus people who have watched *Bezems 2010.!!* illustrate video circulation is rapid. YouTube users flagged the video as inappropriate, and eighty-one people clicked the "Dislike" button, versus thirty people who clicked the like button. When trying to access the video, users are now shown the following message: "This video has been removed because its content violated YouTube's Terms of Service. Sorry about that" (Bezemswalla, 2010). Such materials, however, can spread across video-sharing sites with great speed making it difficult to completely remove them from the Internet. Victimized young people through brooming is a new semi-anonymous form of cyberbullying, hostile behavior which reshifts power balances. Similar to the disturbing example discussed in the previous



Fig. 14: Still from *Bezems 2010.!!* uploaded by user Bezemswalla on YouTube (February 8, 2010)

chapter, for example, ex-lovers carry out these practices to digitally take revenge after relationship breakups. Once profile photos are lifted from their original intimate, yet semi-public contexts, feelings of empowerment in successfully attracting friends and achieving popularity thus might also rapidly dissolve after being victimized and rendered helpless.

Judging from the informants' descriptions and YouTube search results this practice is observable among young people of a variety of backgrounds in the Netherlands but it seems to be especially prevalent among Moroccan-Dutch youth, indicating how conflicting gender and sexual morals affect migrant girls in specific ways (which also became apparent in Chapter 3 on instant messaging). Hyves cofounder Raymond Spanjar wrote in his book on the history of the social networking site that virtual bullying seemed to be "especially prevalent among allochthonous girls and the victim is portrayed as a slut." This is not without dangers, as he cited from a desperate e-mail he received from Hyves user Fatima: "Raymond you have to help me. Please delete that fake profile of mine, the one on which I'm doing a striptease. My brothers will kill me once they see me" (2011, p. 133).

Similar to how Qatari Arab girls were found to employ creative methods to safely express themselves on Facebook (Leage & Chalmers, 2010, p. 41), interviewees report to take cautionary measures to monitor their privacy and reputation. For instance, fourteen-year-old Senna shared she restricted herself in publishing personal photos, selecting only a few, and publishing them not publicly but only for her friends to see: *"I have put up only some photos, but it's not like anyone can see them, I don't like that."* She kept a close watch over the people she befriends, and she unfriended contacts whenever she felt it was necessary to control her reputation. On most social networking sites, by default, information published to profile pages is public. Sixteen-year-old Nevra, who shared her fear of the phenomenon of brooming. She also became more cautious about placing photographs on Hyves, and she made sure to *"make the profile invisible, only visible for my friends."* Fourteen-year-old Kenza listed fictive personal information while fifteen-year-old Meryam shared she chose a creatively spelled pseudonym instead of her real name when she set up her profile page on Facebook.

In this way, Meryam renders it more difficult for nonfriends to locate her personal profile page. She noted fearing being easily traceable on Facebook, as people with bad intentions would be able to download her pictures and digitally manipulate them: nowadays people *"can take your head and paste it onto another body,"* adding *"I have heard from girls in other cities that they have completely been ruined on the Internet."* Subverting Facebook's "real name culture" policy, a number of other female interviewees chose to adopt a similar strategy of choosing pseudonyms in order to make it more difficult for their profile page and photos to be found. Joe Sullivan, Facebook's chief security officer, argues that Facebook promotes a "real name culture," arguing that "Facebook's real name culture creates accountability and deters bad behavior since people using Facebook understand that their actions create a record of their behavior" (2010, p. 2). Some informants claimed to adapt the space to their own preferences. They were of the opinion that policy instilled forms of peer accountability were insufficient. They argued that pseudonyms, fictive information, making one's profile invisible and consciously choosing what pictures to upload were better ways to monitor one's reputation and deter bad behavior.

In-betweenness

Lastly, I want to offer a final nuance to the ways in which profile photos are imbued with gender and sexuality by noting that their norms do remain open to subversion. Niels van Doorn recognized the constructedness of networked

performance of gender and sexuality in the social networking site MySpace. Similar to how Moroccan-Dutch youth uploaded stereotypical selfies for their peers to see, he argued that a shared social context is established through the circulation of artifacts that invoke particular meanings for a specific imagined audience. Building on Judith Butler, he noted a citation and reiteration of gender and sexuality norms in social networking site practices. Following the digitally articulated sexual encounters of gay, lesbian and heterosexual people he found that in their resignification of norms of “decent behavior” the constructedness of gender and sexuality can be unmasked and the “gender binary” can be transgressed (Van Doorn, 2009, pp. 5, 17). In a similar way, informants did underline that they do not necessarily always conformed to the dominant gender stereotypical modes of visual representation I have described so far. For instance, Oussema specified that he positioned himself “*in-between, always in-between*” in his profile images. He stated:

I like sports a lot, but I also like computer games a lot, so I'm a bit in-between.... I'm not a chubby kid, but also not super muscled. I'm not like "look at how tough I am," but also not like "look at how nice my eyes are in the photo," it's more a bit in between.

In the next section I shift the focus from using selfies to perform an attractive stereotypically gendered self, to using hyperlinks for a more multiaxial performance. Besides photos, hyperlinks are visual statements that are part of the larger visual narrative of self users compose on their personal profile pages. On profile pages, users can use hyperlinks to communicate their associations to their friends. In the following section, the articulation of hypertextual selves is analyzed as a micro-political act.

4.4 Hypertextual selves and the micro-politics of association

Selfies are only one element of the rich visual narrative of self users can construct on their profile page. I argue in this section users author their hypertextual selves by publishing hyperlinks on their profile pages. Following the adage “you are what you link” (Adamic and Adar, 2001), mapping hypertextual selves reveals users’ micro-politics of association. The informants chose to express themselves mostly as cosmopolitan individuals through performing a variety of identifications. Their engagement with various alignments may subsequently involve a growing reflective awareness of different trajectories.

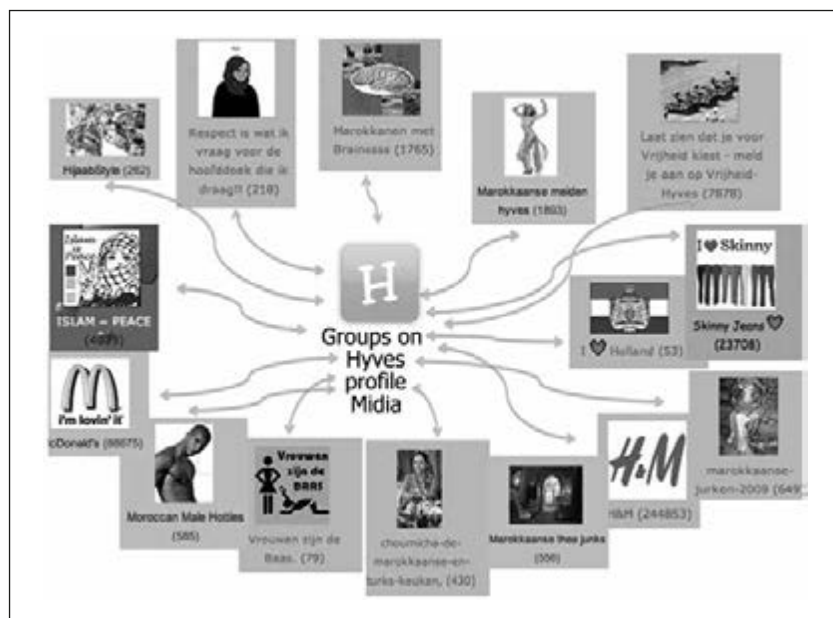


Fig. 15: Hyves groups Midia linked to on her Hyves profile page (April 15, 2009)

For example, in Figure 15, the icons of the groups thirteen-year-old Midia hyperlinked to on her Hyves profile page are shown. She connected to a variety of groups ranging from feminist interests (“Women in Charge”), gendered ethnic solidarity (“Moroccan girls hyves”), Dutch nationalism (“I love Holland”), to food cultures relating to both migration backgrounds (“chouchicha-the-Moroccan-and-Turkish-kitchen,” “Moroccan tea junkies”) as well as global junk food (“McDonald’s”). She expressed her religious affinity (“ISLAM = PEACE”) and claimed recognition of her headscarf (“Respect is what I ask for the headscarf that I’m wearing!!”). She published preferences for clothing styles ranging from stylish headscarves (“HijaabStyle”), Moroccan dresses (“moroccan-dresses-2009”) and global fashion trends (“Skinny Jeans love” and the brand “H&M”). Additionally she joined the groups “Moroccan Male Hotties” and “Show you chose for Freedom – sign up for the Freedom-Hyves.” These groups varied in member-size from fifty-three members who joined the group “I love Holland” to nearly 250,000 members who joined “H&M.” Joining these groups, hyperlinked icons are published on Midia’s profile. The icons that appear on her profile page can be compared to buttons and badges with statements that may be worn as fashion accessories. Taken together, these different visual statements cover a cosmopolitan spectrum of interests, belongings and affiliations (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2014a).

As an example of a space invader tactic, hypertextual selves operate on three levels. Empirically, mapping out the hyperlinks is exemplary for how to “diagnose cultural change” by means of digital methods (Rogers, 2013, p. 5). Theoretically, hypertextual selves are meaningful cultural signifiers as they allow for the expression of fragmentation, discontinuity, multiplicity, layering and bricolage. In the specifically grounded context of migrant youth, the hypertextual affordances of SNS’s can be taken up as a multi-cultural assemblage to relate to local, transnational and global contexts. Politically, mapping hypertextual selves provide grounds to intervene in mainstream discourse on migration, multiculturalism and integration by acknowledging the micro-politics of intercultural encounter. Following hyperlinks provides a new mapping of the ways in which migrant youth mobilize various resources to establish the grounds for defining themselves and for relating to the local, transnational and global contexts around them, particularly those contexts that are cultural, social and political.

Midia’s links provided a glimpse at how she acquired taste for difference, showing her wordliness. She navigated the intersectional multiplicity of her personal gender, sexual, diaspora, religious, ethnic and youth cultural trajectory. Actively revaluing her contextual fields, she connected the categories of Islam and Dutch nationalism. Dutch right-wing politicians dominantly frame these two as irreconcilable. Simultaneously, she countered negative perceptions of Islam as a violent religion and she advocated for greater tolerance of veiling practices among Muslim girls. Dialoguing with her Muslim female peer group, she reframed the veil as a stylish fashion element. The representative profile page linking practices show unexpected hypertextual coalitions of second-generation migrant youth as space invaders: they align with majority groups through affiliating with global youth food preferences, activism and clothing styles.

The literature also suggests hyperlinking provides insight into migrant identification processes. For example, on the online social networking site Hi5, Nikkei youth (second-generation Japanese-Peruvians) were found to express their individuality by decorating their personal profile page with texts, audio, photos, and videos. “A starburst” of diverse affiliations was thus created, including those that signal Japanese-ness such as the Hello Kitty brand, anime videos, Kanji writing, kimonos, and Japanese celebrities. Nikkei also hyperlinked to “Latino” and “Chino” (Chinese) elements (Aoyama, 2007, pp. 104-110). Aoyama concluded that the groups to which Nikkei youth link on their profile pages “stretch across a large and varied scope of topics, including that of national, racial/ethnic, and cultural identities” (*ibid.*, p. 2). Nikkei youth, similar to Anas’s and Midia’s linking

practices, published hypertextual selves that illustrates the dynamics of a joyful convivial heterogeneity. Thus, rather than simply continuing migrant cultural legacies, migrant youth are actively transforming those in ways that resonate with the dominant local and global youth cultures in which they grow up.

Profile pages consist of a dynamic hypertext based on Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) coding. HTML is the protocol enabling online pages to be linked to one other, constituting the backbone of the Web. These linked files are in essence at equal distance from each other. As well as being a technological device, hypertext is also a metaphor to think with. Hypertext incorporates multiplicity as the examples of groups Midia linked up with display. Simultaneously different pathways are possible, as hypertext allows “multiple entryways and exits” and it “connects any point to any other point” (Landow, 2006, pp. 58-61). Already in the early days of the Internet, Donna Haraway recognized that hypertext implies making connections, but it does not foreground or forecloses certain areas of the Internet. Borrowing Haraway’s words, approaching profile pages from the perspective of hypertext enables me to make an “inquiry into which connections matter, why, and for whom” (1997, pp. 128-130).

In this section I develop my understanding of hypertextual selves further to shed light on cosmopolitan, convivial networked belonging in social networking sites. First, I recognize self-profiling (including hypertextual linking) as a fandom practice. I ground my analysis in Wired Up survey findings and informants’ discussions of cultural self-profiling on social networking sites. Subsequently I zoom in on intercultural encounters by detailing how Moroccan-Dutch and ethnic-majority Dutch youth both report to express affiliations to food, celebrities and music artists that pertain to their own ethnic backgrounds. However, these groups also express the desire to publish international food, celebrities and music artists’ affiliations. Subsequently, I turn to hypertextual performativity of self and argue informants’ linking to group pages is an example of conviviality that allows me to rethink multiculturalism from below.

Cultural self-profiling as fandom

In expressing a variety of affiliations, Anas and Midia actively revalued her ethnic, religious and gendered embeddings. Users on Hyves actively branded themselves toward their peers (Utz, 2008). Similar to how on Facebook users can press the “Like” button to show their appreciation of a page, video or uploaded selfie, people performed their affiliations on Hyves. Here I want

to consider, in particular, digital fandom practices. Investigations of fan cultures stress the relevance of studying how individuals as dedicated and participatory audience members select from the repertoires of popular culture. Deliberative consumption of cultural and media artifacts enable pleasure, individuality and identity construction. Fans use media products to express their own culture, by selectively “poaching” media texts and favored significations (Jenkins, 1992). Fandom is an ongoing process of “capital accumulation” (Fiske, 1992, p. 42): Fans are active consumers who become often, and especially in digital settings, also producers and distributors of content. Fandom arises from engagements and confrontations with “dominant value systems” and it can therefore be associated “particularly with those disempowered by any combination of gender, age, class and race” (Fiske, 1992, p. 30). In studies of digital fandom, the focus has, however, mostly been on “the default fanboy,” which presumes a geeky, young, white, middle-class, heterosexual male (Gatson & Reid, 2012).

Hyperlinking to groups and pages is one example of engaging in fandom practices on social networking sites. The dynamics of performing ethnicity as fandom practice can be illustrated by considering how belonging to the Berber culture is made public. Sixteen-year-old Bibi, for instance, noted she joined the “Imazighen Hyves group” to include a Berber flag icon on her profile page: *“an Amazigh flag of the Berbers, these kind of things I do have, so people will see what my culture is.”* In my interview with Rafik, the twenty-one-year-old moderator of the “Imazighen” group on Hyves, he shared that he started the group in April 2007. He compared his group to the Hyves group celebrating the famous Dutch football club PSV Eindhoven. *“On your personal profile page within the social networking site, you can list your interests, but you can also do this through a Hyves group. A PSV fan would join a PSV Hyves group, for instance.”* The difference with the football group site lays in the fact that the Imazighen Hyves group concerns ethnic or diasporic affinity. Rafik describes the goal of his site as follows:

My Hyves group concerns a group of people from North Africa, who are known as Imazighen. “Imazighen” means “free people” and is a reaction to colonists, the Arabs, who wanted to impose their culture to the indigenous people of North Africa (the Imazighens). In almost all of North Africa this assimilation succeeded, however in Morocco and Algeria there are still Imazighen people who are conscious of their identity and history. Lots of them are in the Netherlands (and whose forefathers worked here in the Netherlands as guest workers) and to stimulate their search of identity (which is restricted in Morocco and Algeria) I have started this Hyves.



Fig. 16: "I'm a Berber Soldier," archived from <http://imazighen.hyves.nl> (September 19, 2009)

Rafik is himself aware of the fact that he provides Hyves users an avenue for ethnic identity expression. Instead of or next to becoming a fan of a famous sports club, Hyves users can opt to join the "Imazighen" page to perform their ethnic affiliation online. On this page, Moroccan-Dutch youth expressed the Berber elements of their identities. The following English-language exclamations posted on the message board are illustrative: "😄❤️IMAZIGHENNNNN!!!❤️😄" (June 3, 2009), "I LOVE AMAZIGH AMAZIGH IS THE BOOOOOOOM" (March 6, 2009), "Amazighen!! 4-Evaah" (August 18, 2008) and "Amazigh. My Pride. My Life" (April 11, 2008).

Figure 16 is an image uploaded to the Imazighen page that clearly displays how attributes are lifted from their original contexts to create new meanings. This act of visual poaching illustrates the intertextual dimensions of digital fandom. The image shows a cartoon figure of a fair-skinned youngster holding a gun with the saying "I'm a Berber Soldier." The picture presents a complex hybrid of symbols. Strikingly, the Aza, a central Berber symbol, is included.² It has traveled far. The Aza derives from an ancient alphabet and was taken up in the Berber alphabet. The Berber movement included the Aza in the blue, green and yellow Berber flag. Moroccan-Dutch youth have mixed the Aza with other expressions of global youth culture. The gun and textual exclamation are, for instance, expressions lifted from the

2 The Aza is a letter from the Tifinagh Berber alphabet. The letter is included in the blue, green and yellow Berber flag. In parallel with the meaning of the Berber word "Amazigh," the letter symbolizes Berbers to be "free people" (Sache, 2009).

contexts of global (English language) hip-hop toughness. This exemplifies how ethnicity is performed through a detour of youth cultural reembedding. The observed group page is considered safe enough to circulate textual and visual statements to an intended audience of fellow Berber-identifying youth or interested individuals. Digital Berber fandom identification is one example of cultural self-profiling. Other hyperlinked groups include “the Netherlands was partly made possible by allochthonous people,” that, for example, Ryan linked to. This group aimed to emphasize the hard work carried out by non-Western guest workers in the Netherlands. The group was set up “for all allochthonous and autochthonous who support a multicultural society.”³ As I noted in the introductory chapter, Ryan masked Moroccan affiliations while playing computer games, however, by linking to this group Ryan showed he felt confident enough to identify with the guest-worker history of his parents on the territory of his personal profile page. Reversing the labels “allochthonous” and “guest worker” from negative stigmas to a positive affiliation, Ryan proudly showed the icons of the group on his personal page. By joining the “Michael Jackson,” “Nike Air Max” and “South Park” groups, he connected with global youth cultural forms of popular music, sneakers and TV-series, respectively. Also he signaled his support for various causes by joining groups that range from countering racism and Islamophobia with “The Anti-Wilders Hyves,” to “Stop Aids Now!,” “Unite Against Cancer” and “anti-animal cruelty.”

Wired Up survey respondents were asked to reflect on how they engage in various forms of online cultural self-profiling. From piloting and participant observations, a list with cultural self-profiling options was generated. The respondents were asked to select from this list which things they would

3 Page visited on October 19, 2011. According to Dutch government definitions, the term “*allochtonen*” (“allochthonous” in English) concerns inhabitants of the Netherlands who were born in a “non-Western country” (they are labeled as the “first generation”) or people from which at least one of the parents was born in a “non-Western” country (the “second generation”). Defined against allochthonous people, autochthonous are those of Western descent. The constructed binary opposition between autochthonous and allochthonous Western and non-Western groups is problematic. In every dichotomy one side is favored over the other, resulting from the presentation of particular kinds of information in particular kinds of ways. The side not favored is Othered. In this case, migrants hailing from “Western countries” are on the good side of some sort of divide, while migrants from “non-Western countries” come from the “wrong” side of this divide. As such, people coming from the first are seen as the standard and the norm, as being more advanced and sophisticated, while people in the latter category are seen as backward, exotic, primitive, uncivilized, “oriental” Others (Said, 1979). The label “allochthonous” is now increasingly also a substitute for speaking about Muslims (Leurs, Midden & Ponzanesi, 2012, p. 156).

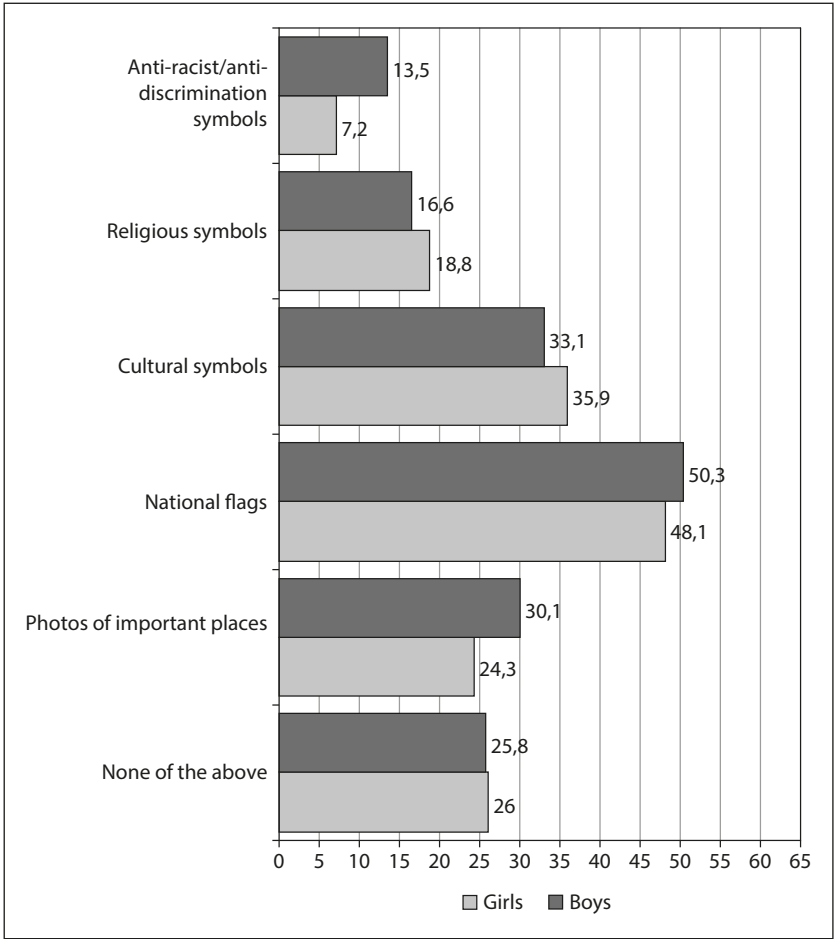


Diagram 10: Moroccan-Dutch youth cultural self-profiling on SNSs (multiple answers possible, graph shows percentages, n = 344)

link to and include on their profile page. Diagram 10 displays cultural self-profiling preferences among Moroccan-Dutch girls and boys.

A quarter of Moroccan-Dutch youth reported they do not put any of these cultural self-profiling things on their personal page. The option to include national flags was popular among boys and girls. Roughly half of them reported incorporating their national flag on their profile page. Girls listed they would include cultural symbols like the Aza discussed above, while boys more often listed they include pictures of important places on their page. Furthermore, religious symbols were more frequently listed by girls, while antiracist or antidiscrimination signs or texts, were more popular among boys.

During the follow-up interviews, informants reflected further on their self-presentations. Underlining ethnic pride and wearing the headscarf as an important identity marker, thirteen-year-old Inas described her construction of a personal profile page as follows, *"It's like, I'm wearing a headscarf. When I post a photo of me wearing a headscarf, you can, so to say, see that I have an Islamic background. And with my name and so on."* Furthermore, interviewees report highlighting their attachment to Islam by showing they are a member of groups pertaining to Islam on their online profile page. Similarly, Facebook allows minorities to affirm their self-expressions, which is important as a "positive adjustment to diverse environments depends on the development of healthy cultural identities among adolescents" (Grasmuck, Martin & Zhao, 2009, p. 180). However, Eighteen-year-old Safae reported that signaling Muslim affinities sometimes backfires: *"I have a girlfriend, and she wears a headscarf. On Hyves she got a message from someone stating, 'We live in 2010 – a headscarf is outdated, it's something from the past.' That was bad – you can't say that. I feel that is discrimination."* This remark once again emphasizes how offline social divisions also color digital behavior. As such, minorities may remain space invaders in social networking sites. When informants engage in digital fandom practices and mark their ethnic or religious background they remain vulnerable to being dismissed as backward. However, in return, Moroccan-Dutch Hyves users actively respond to such acts of racism by disrupting stereotypes, a process which shows similarities to the typed contestations of allocated positions on online discussion boards.

Consider, for example, the Hyves groups Ryan links to on his profile page. Having joined the "Allochthonous Hyves group" an image appeared on his page that read "Netherlands was partly made possible by Moroccans."



Fig. 17: "Error," archived from <http://trotsopmarokko.hyves.nl> (October 23, 2009)



Fig. 18: "100% Marokaan," archived from <http://trotsopmarokko.hyves.nl> (October 23, 2009)

Similarly, by linking to "Proud to be Moroccan," Ryan made an additional visual statement. Figures 17 and 18 are other examples of images that ironically and reflexively play with Dutch mainstream representations of Moroccan-Dutch young people. The figures were downloaded from the "Proud to be Moroccan" group page. On the page, a large collection of similar images was collected, as Hyves users were invited to share their personal profile images there. Cultural profiling is taken up to publish being proud of one's minority background.

Figure 17 reads, "ERROR, this Moroccan is too dangerous to be depicted in a picture." Figure 18 is a critical reading of what it means to be allocated a position as Moroccan-Dutch: "10% are thieves, 15% are poor, 45% are illegal, 10% are on welfare, 20% are unemployed, in sum 100% Moroccan." The figure reveals some of the ways Moroccan-Dutch youth perceive to be stereotyped. In my interview with Abdelilah Amraoui, the founder and moderator of the "Proud to be Moroccan" group, he noted that he started the page as a joke in response to *Trots op Nederland* (Proud of the Netherlands), a Dutch conservative party lead by right-wing politician Rita Verdonk, and to be able to gather information and remind fellow Moroccan-Dutch youth of Moroccan-Dutch role models such as footballers and musicians. These examples display agency on the side of ethnic-minority youth to create alternative fandom positions by circulating new signifiers of Moroccan-Dutchness. As I illustrated with the notion of carnivalesque I used to analyze the field site of discussion forum discussions, distinct normative frameworks guide humor.⁴ Ethnic jokes are mostly only accepted when made by a member of the

4 In the art scene similar counterinitiatives emerged where Moroccan-Dutch artists ironically and reflexively played with negative stereotypes. Consider, for instance, the 2005-2006

group joked about: “Blacks joke about Blacks, Turks about Turks” (Kuipers, 2008, p. 8). They establish a bond of mutual understanding by circulating jokes about themselves as being dangerous, thieves or poor on the “Proud to be Moroccan” Hyves group page where fellow Moroccan-Dutch youth congregate. Through their participation in this fandom counterculture, they establish a shared identity and a mutual sense of belonging.

Differential networking

Inspired by the notion of hypertextual selves, the Wired Up survey was designed to capture differential profiling activities that stretch across and mix local, migratory and global affiliations. More specifically respondents were asked whether they showed food, music and celebrity preferences on three locality dimensions (host, migrant or transnational cultures) on their profile page (see Table 7). For instance, on the topic of celebrities the survey asked respondents to tick a box indicating whether they would show Dutch celebrities, famous migrants and international stars.

I zoom in on two themes in the self-profiling of Moroccan-Dutch and ethnic-majority Dutch youth. Firstly, the table shows that compared to Moroccan-Dutch respondents, majority Dutch respondents participate relatively more in all three strands of Dutch self-profiling. More than girls, boys list Dutch food preferences, while girls favor Dutch music and celebrities. Conversely, Moroccan-Dutch respondents are more active in all three forms of migrant cultural self-profiling. Moroccan-Dutch boys list migrant background food and celebrities preferences more than girls, while they equally participate in migrant-background music profiling. Migrant self-profiling allows informants to highlight migrant identity alignments. One way to do so is joining a group related to Berber culture (as I have discussed in the prior subsection). This feeling of affirmation both holds for Moroccan-Dutch as well as ethnic-majority Dutch young people who report including Dutch cultural food, music and celebrities on their page. It should thus be noted that opportunities to manifest ethnic dimensions of one's identity are taken up by both Moroccan-Dutch as well as majority Dutch youth. Singling out migrant affiliations among Moroccan-Dutch youth and Dutch affiliations among majority Dutch youth does, however, not paint the full picture.

Kunstmarokkanen (Art Moroccans) contemporary art project. The name is a pun that hints at the negative label of “*Kutmarokkanen*” (Moroccan cunts), commonly used when dismissing Moroccan-Dutch boys who misbehave (see <https://web.archive.org/web/20080904070633/http://www.kunstmarokkanen.nl/index.php?page=10>).

Table 7: Self-profiling cultural affiliations (n = 344 Moroccan-Dutch and 448 ethnic-majority Dutch respondents)

<i>Self-profiling cultural affiliations</i>		<i>Moroccan-Dutch girls</i>	<i>Moroccan-Dutch Boys</i>	<i>ethnic majority-Dutch girls</i>	<i>ethnic majority-Dutch boys</i>
Self-profiling Dutch culture	Food	6.6	12.9	31.4	41.6
	Music	4.4	4.9	19.7	19.1
	Celebrities	8.3	12.9	24.7	19.1
Self-profiling migrant cultures	Food	40.3	48.5	16.3	18.2
	Music	61.3	61.3	17.2	24.4
	Celebrities	48.6	51.5	7.1	12
Self-profiling international cultures	Food	30.9	36.2	32.6	34
	Music	61.9	40.5	82.8	71.3
	Celebrities	30.9	28.2	40.2	34.4
I do not include the following preferences	Food	16	23.3	55.2	44
	Music	48.6	41.7	21.2	14.2
	Celebrities	37.6	36.8	48.1	53.1

Politically relevant, the differences between how the two groups engage with global cultural affiliations are generally smaller and more ambiguous. The results indicate (printed bold in the table) that international affiliations constitute the liminal space of intercultural encounter for ethnic-majority Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch young people. Almost one-third of every Moroccan-Dutch boy or girl and ethnic-majority Dutch boy or girl participates in profiling international food and celebrities preferences. The category of music preferences is a more prominent space of intercultural grouping as two-thirds of Moroccan Dutch girls and 40% of boys and over two-thirds of ethnic-majority Dutch boys and girls selected it.

Cosmopolitan perspectives

The hyperlinking practices discussed above were found to cover a wide spectrum of affiliations. Moroccan-Dutch youth link across cultural difference and geographical distances. As an example of bottom-up multiculturalism, the SNS profiling practices of migrant youth indicate “transnational activities and identifications do not need to constitute an impediment to integration” (Snel, Engbersen & Leerkes, 2006, p. 304). In contrast to claims over digital exclusion and segregation, they can become space invaders by articulating a multiplicity of identifications. The ways in which they perform their digital identities in the form of hypertextual selves provides

grounded, empirical evidence of the actually existing everyday realities of digital conviviality. Beyond political, governmental, scholarly and mainstream media understandings of the failure of top-down multiculturalism, multiculturalism is in action from the bottom up in convivial perspectives and forms of cohabitation. There is potential for empowerment in such interactional processes that render “multiculturalism an ordinary feature of social life” (Gilroy, 2005, p. xv). Users may each express their individual cultural identifications on their profile pages. For example, on Facebook, the selfies, status updates and videos used to express identifications show up on the timeline of their friends. As these postings may include a wide variety of affiliations, SNS users may have to navigate a situation of being digitally thrown together with difference (Leurs, 2014b). The articulation of hypertextual selves exemplifies how users negotiate a situation of digital throwntogetherness in a progressive way. By combining various ethnic, gender, religious and youth cultural affiliations, hypertextual selves published by the informants empirically sustain their cosmopolitan perspectives.

The aesthetic of hypertext has been theorized to resonate strongly with migrant multiple identifications. Jaishree Odin argued that border subjects operate in contact zones. In their engagement with digital practices, they establish a hypertext aesthetic characterized by discontinuity, fragmentation, multiplicity, assemblage and technocracy (2010). She proposed this hypertext aesthetic

represents the need to switch from the linear, univocal, closed, authoritative aesthetic involving passive encounters characterizing the performance of the same to that of non-linear, multivocal, open, non-hierarchical aesthetic involving active encounters that are marked by repetition of the same with and in difference. (Odin, cited in Landow, 2006, pp. 356-357)

Her theoretical reflection on hypertext can also inform an empirical mapping of actual online linking practices of migrants. Hyperlink practices on social networking sites allow Moroccan-Dutch youth to express innovative networked forms of belonging in their dealing with oppositional ethnic, gendered, religious and youth cultural motivations of continuity and change. Intercultural encounters take place in the networked space of global cultural belongingness. (Dis)located between the local and the global, such spaces arise from “the point at which boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and otherness, of ‘us’ and ‘them,’ are contested” (Brah, 1996, p. 205).

On Hyves and Facebook, users can stake out their differential positionalities. In the words of my informants, thirteen-year-old Ilham compared SNSs

with MSN and argued that on MSN “*you see one side of someone*” while a profile page “*allows you to show more of yourself*.” Eighteen-year-old Mustafa noted, “*You see how open a person can be, that he has a lot of fun, because a whole lot of information can be put up about a person.*” He added that personal profile pages allow users to show different sides of themselves: “*may provide a better glance at the life of a person, so you cannot really dismiss someone like ‘Oh, yeah, that’s him and he is like that.’*” Analyzing hypertextual narratives of selves reveals how identities are neither fixed nor singular but are dynamically constructed at the crossroads of different affiliations.

Online social networking sites such as Hyves and Facebook therefore may offer a glimpse at how migrant youth articulate cosmopolitan perspectives. Anas’s and Midia’s hypertextual outlook illustrates their cosmopolitanism positioning “which involves crossing the borders of separate worlds (nations, religions, cultures, skin colors, continents, etc.) and whose oppositions must or may lodge in a single life” (Beck, 2000, p. 75). Informants were found to hyperlink to cultural affiliations that are generally seen as incompatible. The space where hypertextual selves gather is space of digital interaction where heterogeneity and diversity can become ordinary. As an example of how youth cultures include intercultural encounters, joining groups in social networking sites offer ethnic-minority and -majority youth a platform for self-expression, cross-cultural exchange and active encounter. Fostering multiplicity by bringing different orientations together, youth culture may offer grounds for the contestation of racisms, nationalisms and ethnic absolutisms.

Hypertextual performativity of self in the production of digital space in social networking sites is, however, not always simply enabling. Users are economically exploited as online social networking sites collect personal data, including the hyperlinks user make, which are sold for niche-marketing purposes. Safae’s remarks on online discrimination remind us that ethnic-cultural and religious expressions such as wearing a headscarf did not meet the mainstream norm of Hyves’s expressive culture. Also, peer pressure impacts on the ways young people articulate their hypertextual selves, comparable to how peer expectations have an influence over the way users self-photograph themselves along the lines of gender and sexuality. From a reaction by Mustafa I learned that peer-pressure dynamics are also at work in joining groups:

When many people have joined something, you may think, “Oh, that is [OK]” or “I don’t really think it would be nice to belong to it, but I do join after all, because many people have joined.” [Sometimes you may feel as if] you do not do it for yourself, but for someone else.

Trinh T. Minh-ha states that fragmentation denotes a way of living with differences at the margins, where “one finds oneself, in the context of cultural hybridity always pushing one’s questioning of oneself to the limit of what one is and what one is not” (1992, pp. 156-157). This process of questioning oneself is complicated further as teenagers with a migration background also have to negotiate whether or not to conform to – sometimes demanding – varying peer norms and expectations.

Finally, as the digital realm is increasingly policed, certain minoritarian practices become restricted as well. Especially with the recent scares over Islamic State’s online recruitment of disenfranchised Muslim youth, authorities treat digital Muslim/migrant networks as risks to society: “Migrant digital networks are increasingly conceptualised as an Internet security threat, in particular after September 11th and the rise in Islamophobia” (Kambouri & Parsanoglou, 2010, p. 30). New technologies thus also present new tools for the monitoring, surveillance and disciplining of migrant bodies (ibid., p. 10, 30). For instance, when Facebook administrators were asked by Israeli Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs Minister Yuli Edelstein to take down an Arabic-language page calling for a third Intifada against Israel to liberate the Palestinian territory, they first prided themselves on the Facebook “Terms of Service” for promoting freedom of expression and deliberation:

While some kinds of comments and content may be upsetting for someone – criticism of a certain culture, country, religion, lifestyle, or political ideology, for example – that alone is not a reason to remove the discussion. We strongly believe that Facebook users have the ability to express their opinions. (Cited in Protalinski, 2011)

Under increased Israeli government pressure, the page was, however, deleted soon after by Facebook administrators (Protalinski, 2011). Similarly, political activity was restricted within Hyves. Its founder, Raymond Spanjar, chose to forbid anti-groups such as “Anti Geert Wilders” because these acts also flood the screens of the advertisers. Advertisers do not want their product to be associated with political struggles (2011, pp. 137-138).

In sum, hypertextual selves performed on personal profile pages may be taken to reflect the cosmopolitan multiplicity of Moroccan-Dutch youth identification. Hypertext as an in-between space where different points of articulation can meet and in-between identities can be expressed presents a strong example of how emancipation can be fostered through bottom-up multicultural interaction. However, racism, victimization, peer pressure,

surveillance and commercial incentives leave their imprint on the ways Moroccan-Dutch youth articulate their hypertextual selves and engage in intercultural encounters with various social networking site users.

4.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, I focused on visual representations and hyperlinking practices as two distinct ways the self is performed on social networking sites. I described how technological restrictions, user cultures, corporate motives and peer norms shape a particular age, gender, and religiosity-based habitus on social networking sites. The informants follow critical cues of their peers about what to show in their profile photos and I argued that popularity and attractiveness (key facets to the life stage of adolescence) explain the ideals of stereotypically gendered selfies. Certain versions of femininity and masculinity were found to be hegemonic. These are powerful ideological models, to which users aspire in order to achieve social acceptance, make new friends, find romance and gain popularity. Achieved through interactions but abiding by hegemonic standards, some young people may find empowerment by being in charge of their to-be-looked-at-ness and may feel self-confident in successfully attracting a wide audience to their profile page. For girls I argued this means taking a narcissistic and submissive pose reflecting awareness of the heterosexual masculine gaze. Bodies are disciplined to meet these expectations, but versions of femininity are increasingly becoming unattainable, leading to frustration and a loss of (peer-generated) self-worth. Additionally, exposing oneself implies susceptibility to victimization practices ("brooming") that may put an end to the sense of agency users may have affectively felt.

Secondly, I analyzed in-between forms of identification on social networking sites. I assessed how hypertextual selves are articulated through fandom forms of cultural self-profiling. Forming a response to discrimination and exclusion, Moroccan-Dutch youth turn to more positive experiences such as identification with their descent and/or their religion in social networking sites. They are also inspired by global youth culture. In their cultural self-profiling online, the younger generations not only tap into migrant heritage elements. Second-generation migrant youth are actually actively transforming the legacies of their parents in connection with the dominant global youth cultures in which they grow up. The analytic lens of hypertext is useful to consider bottom-up representations of decentered, cosmopolitan identities that signal the bankruptcy of the clichéd images of

Islamic, migrant youth as backward, radicalized or oppressed. Furthermore the links imply that intercultural encounters with multiple others take place in the space of social networking sites. Considering the hypertextual in-between positioning of Moroccan-Dutch youth in their interaction with young users of a variety of backgrounds as a form of convivial networked belonging not only helps to produce a new understanding of multiculturalism, but also assists in discovering the emancipatory possibilities in everyday culture. In the next chapter I consider affective identification in the field site of YouTube.

